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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Wednesday, May 6, 2015

—

Speaker: The Honourable Andrew Scheer

CONTENTS

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

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, May 6, 2015

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

• (1405)

[*English*]

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

[*Members sang the national anthem*]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*Translation*]

CLAUDE DAGENAIS

Mr. Jean-François Larose (Repentigny, FD): Mr. Speaker, today I would like to congratulate Claude Dagenais, who spent the last 25 years building Auto-Chem in Repentigny despite the many roadblocks that financial institutions set up to thwart him.

Mr. Dagenais was recognized as exporter of the year by Lanaudière's international development association. I would especially like to congratulate him on a number of major achievements. He has passed on his know-how and business sense to his son, Jean, who now runs the company, and to the community through his mentoring work.

Despite several offers from competitors, he was committed to keeping that expertise in Repentigny and keeping his jobs in our community. Among many other things, he helped ensure that all children in the riding whose parents struggle to provide them with breakfast have a full belly before starting their school day.

Mr. Dagenais, on behalf of the people of our community, I thank you.

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[*English*]

SRI LANKA

Mr. Patrick Brown (Barrie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this year marks the sixth anniversary of the battle of Mullivaikkal, in the Sri Lankan war, in May 2009.

I stand with the thousands of Tamils who lost family members in the final stages of the Sri Lankan genocide. This humanitarian catastrophe saw thousands of civilians shelled by the Sri Lanka government as they escaped the no-fire zone. According to the United Nations, between 40,000 and 70,000 Tamil civilians were killed during the final phase of the war in Sri Lanka. The Sri Lankan government has still failed to show progress in ensuring justice for the victims of these terrible human rights crimes.

During the month of May, Tamil Canadians from coast to coast to coast will gather to participate in multi-faith memorial services to honour their loved ones. It is also a time to reflect on the principles of peace, democracy, and equality that we are able to enjoy here in Canada.

I am proud of the many contributions Tamil Canadians have made in our country. They have embraced our cultural landscape, exemplifying the very best of the Canadian community spirit.

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MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

Mr. Kennedy Stewart (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in Canada citizens have a greater risk of developing multiple sclerosis than they do anywhere else in the world. As someone who comes from a family that has been directly impacted by this disease, I know first hand the important role we, as members of Parliament, play in supporting those affected by MS.

We must ensure that the 100,000 Canadians living with MS receive quality life-long care and support and that we continue to advocate for the hard-working caregivers who help their loved ones get through the daily challenges of life with MS. Above all, we must accelerate our research efforts for Canadians living with severe forms of this disease, for which there is no treatment or cure.

Today I am wearing a carnation to show my solidarity with the MS community. I encourage constituents in my riding to join with me by sharing this message on social media and by getting involved in a local MS event, such as an MS walk or bike tour. This statement is dedicated to my sister, Julia Stewart. I urge each of us to join the fight to end MS.

*Statements by Members***VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS**

Mr. Scott Armstrong (Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, late last night, in the community of Joggins, 10 Cumberland County fire departments responded to a massive fire. Seven buildings were burning, including homes, a church, and the Masonic Hall.

The responding fire departments included Joggins, River Hebert, Advocate, Port Greville, Parrsboro, Southampton, Amherst, Springhill, Leicester, and Truemanville. The Oxford department provided coverage in the Springhill area during the fire.

The vast majority of these firefighters were volunteers who left the comfort of their own homes and their families to protect the lives and property of others. Thanks to their efforts, the fire was contained and no lives were lost. It should never be lost on those of us who live in the rural parts of this country the contribution our first responders, including our firefighters, police, emergency service personal, and others make on our behalf. They spend hundreds of volunteer hours training to fight disasters just like what we saw in Joggins last night.

Our hearts and prayers go out to the community members, particularly those who lost their property.

* * *

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Liberal Party, I want to acknowledge our front-line law-enforcement officers across Canada for the commitment they make each and every day to our safety and to the security of our neighbourhoods and communities.

This being National Police Week, it is important that Canadians take this opportunity to reflect on the work the men and women in uniform do, which at times places them in harm's way. Across the country, police officers and police services are present within our communities and take direct action in response to criminal activities, social unrest, and even mental health issues. As well, they contribute to public confidence in safe communities.

Throughout National Police Week, I ask all members to reflect on the contribution made not only by front-line officers but also by the members of their families. It is the families that share most directly the risks and challenges faced by those serving in police services across Canada. We thank them.

* * *

• (1410)

[*Translation*]

DONALD SAVOIE

Mr. Robert Goguen (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Donald Savoie, one of the laureates of the 2015 Killam Prize. These honours are awarded every year to Canadian researchers who have made outstanding contributions to research over the years.

[*English*]

I cannot think of a more deserving recipient than Mr. Donald Savoie, a leading expert on public policy and federalism. Professor

Savoie holds the Canada Research Chair in Public Administration and Governance and is the founder of the Canadian Institute for Research on Regional Development at l'Université de Moncton.

Mr. Savoie is also an Officer of the Order of Canada, a member of the Order of New Brunswick, and a fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. His published research can be widely found in bookshops from coast to coast. He is truly an expert in Canadian governance.

[*Translation*]

Congratulations, Mr. Savoie.

* * *

[*English*]

TRIBUTE

Mrs. Carol Hughes (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Peter Chalykoff from Wawa, who is celebrating 25 years as a deacon. Those who know Peter will attest to his eternally positive attitude and infectious engagement in the communities he serves as deacon in Wawa and Hawk Junction. His friends say he seems to know everyone and is always ready to help.

Born into a large family, Peter grew up active in the church, but his path toward becoming a deacon was not a straight line. In fact, Peter drifted away from the church as a young adult but found his way back, ultimately becoming part of a group of parishioners who wanted to serve in a larger role. Under the guidance of Fathers Randy Thomas, Jim Kessler, and Mark Vault, Peter studied diligently and was ordained as a permanent deacon on May 6, 1990.

A special mass to celebrate Peter's silver anniversary will be held this Saturday at St. Monica's Catholic Church where friends, family, and the congregation will show their appreciation for Peter Chalykoff and his 25 years of faithful service to the community.

Congratulations, Peter.

* * *

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

Hon. Laurie Hawn (Edmonton Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada has the highest rate of multiple sclerosis in the world. Not only do 100,000 Canadians live with the disease, but their families, friends, and communities do as well.

As Canadians, we have a two times greater risk of developing MS than if we lived in France, a 13 times greater risk than if we lived in Argentina, and a 27 times greater risk than if we lived in Pakistan. MS is Canada's disease, and we have to join to fight across the nation.

Statements by Members

The unpredictability and sometimes invisible nature of this disease creates a challenge for Canadians living with MS and their caregivers, as it affects their employment and financial security as a result. Canadians with MS need our support to ensure continued employment, while respecting the daily challenges they face.

Today and for the month of May, MS Awareness Month, Canadians are wearing carnations to show solidarity with the MS community in the fight against MS. I urge each of us to join this fight to end MS in our lifetime and to affect positive change in the lives of those impacted by the disease today.

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**MEMBER FOR HALIBURTON—KAWARTHA LAKES—
BROCK**

Mr. Barry Devolin (Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, about six weeks from now, this House will rise for the last time in the 41st Parliament, and I will be one of the more than 35 MPs who have decided to leave this place, by choice.

I have enjoyed the 11 years I have spent here, but like all hon. members, I can only do my job because of the support I get from my staff. Therefore, I would like to thank my staff both here in Ottawa and back in Lindsay in my constituency office.

Beyond my staff, also like all members, I can only do this job because of the support I get from my family. As we approach Mother's Day, I would like to speak to the two most important women in my life, my mother, June Devolin, and my wife, Ursula Devolin. I thank them for the support they have given me over the years that allowed me to do my job in this place.

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[*Translation*]

PORTNEUF WOMEN'S CENTRE

Ms. Éline Michaud (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to recognize the first anniversary of the founding of the board of directors of the Centre Femmes de Portneuf.

Created on May 8, 2014, this community organization is dedicated to providing women with a place to meet new people and talk to each other, as well as sharing information and taking concrete action to improve the conditions and quality of life of the women in the greater Portneuf area.

The staff at the Centre Femmes de Portneuf has worked very hard to make a difference and become a strong voice for the women of Portneuf.

After just one year, this centre has a number of important achievements to its credit, including establishing a women's exhibition, hosting coffee hours, creating community engagement groups, as well as promoting the services available to women in the region.

All of the work done by Julie Blackburn, chair of the board, and her entire team is quite impressive. I want to thank each and every one of those women who invest so much in making the Portneuf RCM a great place to live, where everyone is treated equally and with respect.

● (1415)

[*English*]

TAXATION

Mr. Bryan Hayes (Sault Ste. Marie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government makes no apologies for ensuring middle class Canadians are aware of the measures that put more money back in their pockets.

For example, we want Canadians to know about the new family tax cut and enhanced universal child care benefit, which will benefit 100% of families with children, the vast majority of benefits going to low and middle-income families

The Liberal leader's plan will do the exact opposite. Instead of a family tax cut, he will bring in a family tax hike.

Unlike the NDP or the Liberals, Canadians like those in my riding of Sault Ste. Marie can depend upon this government to leave more money in their pockets.

* * *

ALBERTA ELECTION

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, to quote Alberta's premier-elect, "This is what change looks like".

I think we made a bit of history last night. An early spring blizzard hit Alberta, but it did not dampen our spirits because we also experienced an orange chinook.

Albertans looked in the mirror and decided it was time for change, a monumental change. Albertans embraced Notley's message that they did not need to repeat history, instead they could make history, and make it they did, electing the first strong majority NDP government for Alberta.

The NDP ran on a platform of hope, putting families first and ensuring a genuinely sustainable resource development for Alberta.

I look forward to working with my constituent, Rachel Notley, premier-elect of Alberta.

As the media have said about Rachel Notley, "This is what a political phenomena looks like". Indeed.

* * *

TAXATION

Mrs. Susan Truppe (London North Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the leader of the Liberal Party has shown his priority for middle class families, high taxes.

Instead of a family tax cut, he introduced a family tax hike. The Liberal leader will raise taxes on families earning less than \$60,000, who use tax free savings accounts. The Liberal leader admitted that he needs to raise taxes to fill the \$2 billion hole in his plan.

The Liberal leader will have no choice but to raise taxes, including taking away income-splitting for pensioners and taking away the tax free savings accounts entirely.

*Oral Questions***MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS**

Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, May is MS Awareness Month.

In what has become a tradition in this place, the MS Society is here to pin carnations on MPs to bring attention to this challenging disease.

Canada is famous for hockey in the world, but we are infamous because we have the largest number of MS sufferers globally.

While there is no defined cause for multiple sclerosis, new research tells us that there are many factors: lifestyle, environmental, genetic and biological. We must do more research. There is no cure for MS. New treatments continue to evolve, allowing people to be able to work and live better lives, although there is still workplace discrimination.

Those with MS and their families face financial challenges, the stress of caregiving and the need for home retrofits.

I encourage all members to reach out to local MS chapters in their regions, learn about MS and the needs of these Canadians, and commit to funding research into causes and finding a cure.

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TAXATION

Mr. Parm Gill (Brampton—Springdale, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government designed our family tax cut and the universal child care benefit to ensure that every Canadian family with children will have more money in their pockets to help make ends meet.

That is because we know that Canadian families know how best to spend their hard-earned money. The Liberal leader does not want a family tax cut, he plans to bring in a family tax hike. Liberals do not like our Conservative plan to give money back to Canadian families because they think Canadians will spend it on beer and popcorn.

In fact, I think the member for Toronto Centre spoke for all Liberals when she said, "Amen to raising taxes".

* * *

• (1420)

ALBERTA ELECTION

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): Mr. Speaker, history was made in Alberta last night.

The Prime Minister and most of his Alberta cabinet colleagues and MPS woke up today to an NDP MLA and an NDP premier.

Indeed, the good folks of Alberta voted for change, and a fresh start. They voted to end 44 years of Conservative rule and reject the ways of the old-style parties.

They voted to elect Rachel Notley and the Alberta NDP to be their strong, stable majority government. Albertans proved that you can vote for the change they want and actually get it. Albertans voted to build a more diversified and resilient economy. They voted for better health care and a good education for their children. They voted for good jobs and a new sustainable approach.

We want to extend our hearty congratulations to premier-elect Rachel Notley. Her campaign was optimistic, forward thinking, and respectful.

As we approach October 19, 2015 we are again reminded of what the late Jack Layton said so often, "Don't let them tell you it can't be done".

Congratulations Alberta NDP.

* * *

TAXATION

Mr. Robert Sopuck (Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the leader of the Liberal Party admitted that his plan for higher taxes has a \$2 billion hole in it. The Liberal leader admitted that he will have to raise taxes on people earning less than \$60,000 a year by cancelling their expanded tax free savings accounts.

He admitted that he would replace the Conservative family tax cut with a Liberal family tax hike. He admitted that he would get rid of the universal child care benefit, yet he also admitted that after all those tax hikes, he would still have a \$2 billion hole.

We know how the Liberal leader will fill this \$2 billion hole. He will have to raise taxes. With the Liberal leader's opposition to income-splitting for families, we can be sure he will also cancel income-splitting for seniors.

Middle class Canadian families know they can trust the Prime Minister and our Conservative government to keep their taxes low and to protect the benefits they already receive.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[*Translation*]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Deschamps report describes an alarming number of cases of harassment and sexual assault within the Canadian Armed Forces. The report also shows that military and civilian leaders have failed miserably when it comes to finding a solution to these problems.

Despite these appalling revelations, the Minister of National Defence has said that he is going to ignore eight of the 10 recommendations made in the report.

Does the Prime Minister think it is acceptable to ignore eight out of 10 recommendations?

Oral Questions

Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of National Defence and Minister for Multiculturalism, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what the hon. Leader of the Opposition just said is completely and 100% false. The Chief of the Defence Staff was clear last week: the Canadian Armed Forces accept the 10 recommendations set out in the report and are taking this matter very seriously.

Sexual misconduct of any kind has no place in the Canadian Armed Forces. The military has already begun to implement two of the recommendations. It accepts the other eight and has appointed Major-General Whitecross to implement them.

[*English*]

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Deschamps report says very clearly that military leadership turned a blind eye to rampant harassment and sexual assault.

Another brave soldier has just come forward to report sexual assault, Corporal Esther Wolki. Corporal Wolki had to go to the media because commanders refused to take her reports seriously.

These soldiers have fought for us. It is time we fight for them. This is the Prime Minister's responsibility.

Will he stand up and tell his minister that two out ten is not a passing grade when it comes to ensuring that women in our military are not subject to sexual harassment? His mark is 20%.

Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of National Defence and Minister for Multiculturalism, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government and Canadian Armed Forces agree with the leader of the opposition. I believe all Canadians believe that any form of sexual aggression is totally inappropriate in the Canadian Armed Forces and must be dealt with in the severest way possible.

It is why the Chief of the Defence Staff appointed Madam Justice Deschamps to lead this inquiry. It is why he has accepted all 10 recommendations. It is why he has appointed General Whitecross to implement those recommendations, and not 2 of the 10, but 10 of the 10.

* * *

• (1425)

ETHICS

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, on April 22, the Prime Minister claimed that, as head of government, he knew that Mike Duffy was a resident of P.E.I. because Duffy signed a declaration stating that he was a resident of P.E.I. before he was sworn in. Those are the Prime Minister's nominations.

Will the Prime Minister provide that declaration, which he said existed prior to the nomination, to Canadians? He said that Duffy signed it before being named. Canadians have a right to see it.

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the constitutional principle on this has been clear for almost 150 years. As members know, the case is before the courts. It would be inappropriate to comment on evidence before the court.

At the same time, we know that the leader of the opposition is just one of 68 members of the NDP caucus who owe \$2.7 million. The leader of the opposition himself owes taxpayers \$400,000.

I would encourage him to actually pay that \$400,000 and encourage the rest of the members to do the same.

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the problem is that this evidence is not before the courts, contrary to what the member just said. The problem is that evidence does not exist.

What the Prime Minister said here in the House was that he had a document signed by Duffy prior to the nomination. In the same way, he said that he accepted, with regret, the resignation of Nigel Wright and then boasted on radio in Atlantic Canada that he had fired the sorry son of a gun.

That is the difference. One cannot say one thing and its opposite day after day and expect Canadians to believe it.

Where is the document? Where is the declaration that the Prime Minister of Canada told Canadians existed, which was signed by Duffy prior to his being named to the Senate?

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, again, it would be, obviously, inappropriate to comment on evidence that is before the court.

However, when the member talks about a sorry son of a gun, it is actually NDP members who owe Canadian taxpayers, 68 of them, \$2.7 million. Another 23 of them owe over \$1.1 million.

We know that the leader of the opposition has, within his own office, a union member doing partisan work against the rules of this House. The NDP accepted \$350,000 in illegal union donations, robocalls, and it goes on and on. Pay it back.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, here is the problem: in the beginning, the Prime Minister said that he had never given instructions to Nigel Wright.

Then, we learned from a signed email that Nigel Wright said that he had the good to go from the Prime Minister. Next, the Prime Minister said that he had regretfully accepted Nigel Wright's resignation. Finally, he boasted that he was the one who sent Mr. Wright packing. Both versions cannot be true.

Here in the House, on April 22, the Prime Minister told Canadians that before appointing Mike Duffy to the Senate, he had obtained a signed declaration from Mr. Duffy indicating that he was a resident of Prince Edward Island, as required under the Constitution. Canadians have the right to see that document, otherwise, they will not believe that it exists.

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I already said, this matter is before the court and so it would be inappropriate to comment.

Oral Questions

However, there are other questions. For example, why did the member for Québec funnel nearly \$30,000 that was intended for her riding to an illegal office in Montreal?

I hope that the member for Québec will do the right thing and pay the people of Quebec City back that \$30,000.

* * *

[English]

TAXATION

Mr. Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in 2006, the Prime Minister started giving thousands of dollars in benefits to wealthy families like his and mine. Now, 10 years later, he is giving them a \$2,000 tax break and thousands more each year. When will he understand that those families do not need the help?

Fairness means asking those who have done well to help those who need it the most. Why not cancel those tax breaks and benefits for the wealthy?

• (1430)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in 2006, the Prime Minister brought in the universal child care benefit for every family in Canada. He brought it in for families with incomes of \$20,000. He brought it in for families with incomes of \$30,000. He brought it in for families of \$40,000. However, the Liberal leader thinks that all of those people are too rich and, as a result, he would raise their taxes.

His plan has a \$2 billion hole, which he admits. Economists say that his tax increases do not raise enough money to fund his spending. The only way he can fill his hole is through more high taxes on the middle class.

Mr. Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a \$2 billion tax break that favours the wealthy, a higher tax-free savings limit for the wealthy and thousands more in child benefits for those who need the help the least, that is the Prime Minister's plan.

Our plan offers thousands more every year, tax free to those who need it most. Why did he not instead use every nickel to help the middle class and those working to join it?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal leader should know that budgets do not balance themselves, and neither does his platform.

He admits there is a \$2 billion hole in his platform. On top of that, economists say that his proposed tax increases will not raise the money necessary to fund his expensive promises. He has a massive financial hole. The only way to fill that hole will be higher taxes on the middle class. He already wants to take away income splitting from families. We know he would take it away from seniors too.

[Translation]

Mr. Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, every year for almost 10 years now, the Prime Minister has been giving billions of dollars in tax relief to families like his and mine. The Prime Minister has misplaced priorities.

Our plan shows that we can give more to families who need it most by asking for a little more from those who have the means.

Why did the Prime Minister not choose to help the middle class and those who are working hard to join it?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal leader already admitted that there is a giant \$2 billion hole in his plan. What is more, economists say that these tax increases will not be enough to fill the hole he created with his election promises.

What do the Liberals do when they do not have enough money? They increase taxes for families. The hon. member already said that he wants to scrap income splitting for families. He will do exactly the same thing for seniors.

[English]

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadian families are looking for help in the face of rising costs like child care and housing. Instead the Conservatives plan to waste billions on an income-splitting scheme that will not benefit 85% of Canadians. That is just slightly worse than the Liberal tax scheme that would also spend billions and would leave the bottom two-thirds of Canadians behind.

Last night, voters clearly showed they were tired of the same old choices when it came to economic policy. What will it take for those Conservatives to get the message?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the message from Albertans and from all Canadians is they do not want higher taxes. That is why we have cut taxes. The family tax cut and benefits put more money in the pockets of 100% of families with kids. The income splitting for families saves up to \$2,000 for couples with kids. Our increased universal child care benefit will pay almost \$2,000 per child under 6 and \$720 for kids 6 through 17.

The Liberals and NDP have billions of dollars in promises. The only way they could pay the price of those promises is by raising taxes on the middle class. That is why middle-class Canadians will elect this government.

[Translation]

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the middle class is losing ground. However, it is the same old story with the other parties.

Oral Questions

The Conservatives are going to waste billions of dollars on income splitting, which will only benefit 15% of Canadians. The Liberal tax plan will also cost billions of dollars and will give nothing to two-thirds of Canadians.

Will the government abandon its budget, which only benefits the wealthiest, and introduce a real plan for the middle class?

• (1435)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is what we are doing by reducing taxes for families and increasing the child care benefit. Income splitting and the family tax cut will give nearly \$2 billion to families with children. Our increase in the universal child care benefit, the UCCB, will provide almost \$2,000 for every child under 6 years of age and \$720 for every child between 6 and 17.

The Liberals and the NDP are making election promises worth billions of dollars, which they will finance with tax increases. That is why the middle class will choose the Conservative Party.

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ALBERTA ELECTION

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, what is clear is that Canadians are ready for change and for a leadership based on principles.

Yesterday Albertans voted for a government that will promote economic growth and prosperity for all Albertans. They voted in favour of a diversified economy that will create good jobs. Albertans also voted to put an end to the roller coaster boom and bust cycle.

Will the Conservatives now work with the provinces to take a responsible and, especially, sustainable approach to economic growth?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is what we are doing by lowering taxes for the middle class.

We increased the limit for tax-free savings accounts, and 60% of TFSA users earn less than \$60,000 a year. The New Democrats and the Liberals want to eliminate this benefit by increasing taxes for people who earn less than \$60,000 a year.

We are putting money directly into the pockets of parents and taxpayers. The New Democrats and the Liberals would increase taxes. That is why Canadians will reject them.

* * *

[English]

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, Albertans made their voices heard loud and clear. They are tired of the Conservatives' unbalanced boom and bust approach. Instead, they voted for a diversified and more resilient economy. They voted for optimism and principles. They voted for a government that would build bridges and open markets, and be a good partner in creating value-added, sustainable jobs for all Albertans in all sectors.

Will the Conservatives here finally get the message from Albertans and work with the provinces on a new, more progressive approach to resource development?

Hon. Greg Rickford (Minister of Natural Resources and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario, CPC): Mr. Speaker, responsible resource development creates jobs and economic growth, while protecting the health and safety of communities and the environment. We look forward to the opportunity to work with the new premier.

There is no question that market diversification is an imperative. Countries around the world are looking for that kind of partnership with Canada. We offer fiscal stability and political stability. Moving forward with Alberta, we look forward to the opportunity to serve those new markets and continue to develop our resources responsibly.

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ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, responsible economic development requires a more constructive relationship, not just with the provinces but with indigenous peoples. The government has refused to engage respectfully. It has refused to build partnerships and respect indigenous rights.

However, as Alberta premier-elect Rachel Notley noted yesterday, we can be better partners and we can learn from our mistakes. Will the Conservative government take Alberta's lead, implement Bill C-641, and respect indigenous rights in Canada?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the highest form of aboriginal and treaty rights acknowledgement and protection is constitutional protection. Section 35 of the Constitution of Canada does that.

Furthermore, the human rights of all Canadians, including aboriginals, are protected by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and other constitutional guarantees. We do not need any legislation that is lesser than the Constitution of Canada.

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I suggest the minister across listens to premier-elect Rachel Notley's speech yesterday, when she said that her government had been entrusted to be better neighbours and better partners with indigenous peoples in Alberta. She looks forward to consultations and to learn from indigenous peoples in her province.

The federal government has disrespected indigenous peoples time and time again. Will it take Alberta's lead? Will it stand up and respect the rights of indigenous peoples as it goes forward? Will things turn out the way they turned out yesterday?

Oral Questions

•(1440)

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to learn from the member that Alberta will follow the lead of the federal government.

Whenever we tried to give human rights, basic rights, to first nations in our country, that party and the member voted against it. I am talking about marital property rights. Why would they vote against them?

Furthermore, anytime—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, please. Unfortunately, the minister has run out of time. I would ask members to come to order. There is quite a lot of chatter back and forth.

The hon. member for Alfred-Pellan.

* * *

[Translation]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Rosane Doré Lefebvre (Alfred-Pellan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is not too late for the Conservatives and the Liberals to change course and listen to the millions of Canadians who oppose Bill C-51.

Experts, jurists, business people and even former prime ministers agree: Bill C-51 is ineffective and dangerous and will undermine our security and our rights.

Will all of the parties join us today in rejecting Bill C-51 and protecting Canadians' rights and freedoms once and for all?

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is not too late for the New Democrats to wake up and take steps to protect the more than 30 million Canadians who were attacked by terrorists here in Ottawa and in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu.

We increased police resources seven times, and the New Democrats were against that. We implemented measures to fight terrorism and strategies to prevent it. They were against that too. Recently, we announced measures enabling our agents to exchange information with our partners. Once again, the NDP was against that. Again this evening, they are going to vote against this bill.

However, Canadians can count on a Conservative government to protect the Canadian people.

Ms. Rosane Doré Lefebvre (Alfred-Pellan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadians do not have to choose between their safety and their rights, despite what the other parties would have them believe. Both the Liberals and Conservatives have stood in this House and made all kinds of pronouncements that prey on people's fears.

We in the NDP will not allow fear to triumph over our principles. We will stand up today to defend our rights and our freedoms, and we will oppose Bill C-51.

Will the Liberals and the Conservatives follow our lead?

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I invite the NDP members to be

guided by the Supreme Court, which has said that the Security Intelligence Review Committee is a model that strikes a balance between the protection of information and the procedural rights of individuals.

When will the New Democrats join us in taking measured, effective action? Will the NDP support our budget, which doubles resources?

What I really want to say is, "Wake up, NDP!"

[English]

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today New Democrats are joining over 100,000 Canadians who are calling on Liberals and Conservatives to do the right thing and stop Bill C-51.

Tonight this House will take a final vote on this dangerous bill. It is the last chance for Liberal and Conservative members to stand up for our rights and freedoms and vote against a bill that we all know is fatally flawed.

Will the government take this last opportunity to change course? Will it listen to so many experts and so many Canadians and scrap this dangerous bill?

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is the last time for the NDP to join the Muslims Facing Tomorrow, the American Islamic Forum for Democracy, to join the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, because they say we need strong tools that also protect the rights of Canadians.

We need to make sure that the jihadi international terrorists who are threatening us are prevented from acting by filling the gap of our information sharing. We will stand up for Canadians. Let us vote tonight to have a safer country.

* * *

•(1445)

[Translation]

TAXATION

Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the leader of the Liberal Party is proposing to lower the tax rate for the middle class. It is a simple and fair plan that applies to everyone. Today, I am giving the Conservative government another chance to answer this question, because Canadians deserve a straight answer.

Are the Conservatives, like the NDP, against having a new tax bracket for people who earn \$200,000 or more in order to give back to the middle class, yes or no?

[English]

Yes or no?

[Translation]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal leader should know that budgets do not balance themselves. His election platform is not balancing itself either. The fact remains that there is at least a \$2 billion shortfall. What is more, economists say that these tax hikes will not collect enough money to fill the other holes in his plan. He will have to increase taxes for the middle class in order to fill the financial holes in his plan.

This includes eliminating income splitting for seniors.

[English]

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if we focus on the middle class and all those working so hard just to get there; if we focus on fairness and growth and giving everyone a decent chance to succeed; if that is our objective, then Canada should have a bigger and better child benefit, one that is clean and simple, fair and tax free across the board, one that provides more help to nine out of ten Canadian families, middle and lower income families, the ones that need that help.

It is basic common sense. Why is the government against it?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a multibillion dollar financial hole is not common sense. It is the opposite, in fact.

The Liberal leader admits he has a \$2-billion hole, but on top of that, economists say that his tax increases will not be sufficient to fund his billions in additional promises. This is a massive hole that the Liberals would fill by raising taxes on the middle class.

The Liberals admit they would cancel income splitting for families. They would also have to do it for seniors, among other tax increases necessary to fill that massive hole.

Will the Liberal member stand up now and explain how he will fill that financial hole?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am the one member of this House who actually balanced a budget.

These guys inherited 10 Liberal balanced budgets and created \$150 billion in new Conservative debt. This government is a fiscal fraud.

Now the Conservatives are punishing single moms and dads, who can never qualify for income splitting, but they are gifting a \$2,000 tax break every year to those earning a quarter of a million dollars.

Why are Conservatives against a tax cut for the middle class, across the board, and why are they against a better child benefit, more generous and fair?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there is nothing generous or fair about raising taxes on the middle class, which is exactly what the Liberal Party would have to do. The Liberals admit that they have a \$2-billion hole in their plan. On top of that \$2-billion hole, economists say proposed Liberal tax increases will not be sufficient to cover the costs of Liberal spending promises. We know what Liberals do when they have multibillion-dollar financial holes. They raise taxes on middle-class Canadians.

Oral Questions

They already admit that they are going to raise taxes by cancelling income splitting for families. They will do that to seniors, too.

* * *

[Translation]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Ms. Éleine Michaud (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, after being forced to remove images endangering our special forces soldiers from the Web, the Prime Minister's Office had to admit that it made a serious mistake.

However, again yesterday, a senior official said that these images did not violate security protocols. That is ridiculous. Our soldiers were obviously put at risk by this propaganda campaign.

How could the Prime Minister have let this happen? Was there no one in his office who thought to say that it might not be a good idea?

• (1450)

Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of National Defence and Minister for Multiculturalism, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when concerns were raised about certain images, the government immediately took them down to verify whether protocols had been properly followed.

After another review, the government decided that two of the videos should not have been posted. We regret the error, and we are reviewing the protocols for the publication of such images.

[English]

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this so-called error is shocking.

DND obviously knew that any images that could identify our special forces were a security risk. That is why it requires journalists to sign an undertaking that they would not publish such images.

Why, then, did no one in the PMO stop to think that its video violated these very simple rules promulgated by DND? Why did it later claim that DND had actually approved the video when that was not true? Why did the Prime Minister allow our troops to be put at risk to have a photo op for himself?

Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of National Defence and Minister for Multiculturalism, CPC): Mr. Speaker, contrary to the member's inaccurate assertions, as the Chief of the Defence Staff has said in a statement issued last night, there was no risk to personnel, which is why there is no requirement for any Canadian Armed Forces personnel to be withdrawn from Operation Impact.

The government regrets the error and will take every possible measure to ensure that it is not repeated in the future.

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP): Why did he tell the journalists, Mr. Speaker?

Oral Questions

It has been six days since Madam Justice Deschamps tabled her devastating report into the systemic problem of sexual harassment and assault in our military: a fundamental disregard for the rights of women. We need confidence that the report's recommendations be fully implemented, not just studied or deemed interesting ideas, and that there be a review of the military justice system that so utterly failed these women and men.

Will the minister act swiftly to personally ensure that all recommendations are fully implemented and will he commit to a review of how the military justice system handles these cases?

Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of National Defence and Minister for Multiculturalism, CPC): Mr. Speaker, once again, of course, sexual assault of any kind, in any aspect of Canadian society, is completely deplorable and unacceptable. That is particularly true in the Canadian Armed Forces, which is why General Lawson commissioned this report by former Madam Justice Deschamps and it is why he and the military leadership have committed to implementing all 10 of its recommendations. Progress has already been made on two. I think, realistically, we cannot expect all 10 recommendations to be implemented in six days; however, General Whitecross has been charged with this mandate and is making progress.

We will ensure that the job is completed to ensure that the Canadian Armed Forces is a safe environment for women and all people to work in.

[Translation]

Ms. Mylène Freeman (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, NDP): Mr. Speaker, does the minister understand how urgent this situation really is?

According to the report by Justice Deschamps, harassment and sexual assault are not taken seriously by senior staff and leaders in the Canadian Armed Forces. The report clearly accuses the Canadian Armed Forces of maintaining a culture that is hostile toward women. That is a disgrace to Canada. It is degrading and insulting to all of the women who protect and defend our country.

Does the minister realize how serious this situation is and is he prepared to personally commit to changing it?

Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of National Defence and Minister for Multiculturalism, CPC): Mr. Speaker, obviously all Canadians, all parliamentarians and all military personnel agree that sexual assault is completely unacceptable. That is why the Chief of the Defence Staff asked Justice Deschamps to conduct a review, that is why the Canadian Armed Forces accepted all 10 recommendations and that is why Major-General Whitecross was appointed by the Chief of the Defence Staff to implement the recommendations.

Obviously, as minister, I will be keeping a close eye on the military's progress in implementing these recommendations.

* * *

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mrs. Joy Smith (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, of all the crimes in the Criminal Code, child porn is one of the worst of the worst. The idea that criminals are exchanging materials that exploit

our most vulnerable in our society is a deeply troubling one. Canadians want to know that the individuals who partake in this kind of trade will face justice and have to answer for their actions.

We have heard today of an important operation aimed at countering child porn. Could the Minister of Public Safety update the House regarding the details?

• (1455)

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will, but let me thank the great member for Kildonan—St. Paul for her outstanding commitment against human trafficking and child exploitation.

I would like to inform the House that more than three dozen people have been arrested in connection with a child pornography ring operating in 17 countries, one of whom is an individual who may have had more 2,000 victims.

[Translation]

We will continue to target these people who are going after our treasured young people, and we will continue to protect our children. We will put these criminals behind bars. We will put legislation in place, such as our sexual predator registry.

* * *

[English]

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Robert Chisholm (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, NDP): Mr. Speaker, when it comes to giving benefits to the wealthy while ignoring the rest of us, Conservatives are consistent. Less than 40% of unemployed Canadians receive unemployment insurance benefits, but instead of improving access and making sure that the unemployed can put food on their table, the Conservatives chose instead to use the EI account to give benefits to the wealthy Canadians who do not need them. This money belongs to workers. Why are the Conservatives raiding the EI fund to pay for their bad policies?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member's question is false. In fact, the budget put out a policy wherein the EI account balances over time and EI premiums pay for EI benefits.

What the NDP wants is a 45-day work year, where people would work for 45 days and then they would collect EI for the rest of the year. This would cost billions of dollars. Of course, workers and small businesses who employ them would pay for it through higher payroll taxes.

We believe the opposite. There will be a surplus in the 2017 year and we will use it to cut premiums by 21%.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP): Mr. Speaker, if you are among the 1.3 million Canadians without work, you are certainly not a priority for the Conservatives. In their latest budget, instead of using the EI surplus to help the far too many unemployed workers, they instead chose to offer programs that will almost exclusively help the wealthiest.

Less than 40% of unemployed workers qualify for EI, so when will the Conservatives stop using the premiums paid by workers and employers to finance their election goodies instead of supporting workers when they are going through difficult times?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the question is false. There was a deficit in the EI fund during the recession. The fund is now paying back that deficit. In 2017 we will lower premiums for workers and employers by 21%.

The New Democrats want to bring in a 45-day work year. People would work for just 45 days to be eligible for one year of EI. That is ridiculous.

* * *

QUEBEC BRIDGE

Mr. Denis Blanchette (Louis-Hébert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday my leader and I announced that the NDP has a realistic and practical solution to resolve the Quebec Bridge painting problem, a problem that the Conservatives have allowed to fester for 10 years. I will introduce a bill requiring owners of heritage rail infrastructure, such as the Quebec Bridge, to maintain the historic state of that infrastructure at the owners' expense.

Does the minister agree with our solution?

Hon. Denis Lebel (Minister of Infrastructure, Communities and Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our Conservative government is the only one to have come up with a proposal that would enable us to move forward with our partners—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: The hon. minister has the floor. I would ask the members to let him answer the question.

Hon. Denis Lebel: Mr. Speaker, the NDP's proposal is nothing but a political mirage. Given the House of Commons' schedule from now until the end of the summer and the upcoming election, they know perfectly well that they will never vote on it. This is one more indication that they are not taking their work seriously.

We will continue to do our work by putting meaningful proposals on the table, not mirages like this one.

● (1500)

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, to get elected 10 years ago, the Conservatives made fun of the Liberals, saying that they could not even get a bridge painted.

The trick is to pretend to have the money, provided that CN puts in \$100 million, even though it is not obligated to do so, since the courts ruled in its favour. Here is the trick: a Conservative

government that said, "Our regions in power", when what it really means is, "Our regions left to rust". If they wanted, they could pass that bill. One, two, three.

Why all the usual dithering?

Hon. Denis Lebel (Minister of Infrastructure, Communities and Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we know that the member ran a photo contest for the Quebec Bridge. He probably did not have a picture of his leader in front of the bridge.

We worked hard to invest the \$100 million—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

[English]

The Speaker: Order. The minister has been asked a question and he is in the process of answering it. Members need to come to order to allow him to do so.

The hon. Minister of Infrastructure.

[Translation]

Hon. Denis Lebel: Mr. Speaker, the NDP just got out of its own commitments with CN regarding what they want to do. CN must immediately respect its commitment to the people of Quebec City.

With our partners, we have invested \$100 million. CN has to do its part. A bill is not going to change that.

* * *

[English]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Ms. Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, DND forbids the media from taking pictures of Canadian Forces members in Iraq and Kuwait, saying it would put them and their families in direct danger, but the Prime Minister's taxpayer-funded propaganda site clearly showed the troops' faces. The government first claimed it did nothing wrong, then blamed the department, and then backtracked and admitted its mistake. This is a mistake, by the way, that the minister has also made.

Who will the Prime Minister fire, or will no one be held to account for putting our troops and their families in danger?

Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of National Defence and Minister for Multiculturalism, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have made no such mistake. We have only ever posted images released by the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces for public consumption.

With respect to the matter this week, obviously an error was made, and that is regrettable. The images were removed as soon as this was brought to the attention of the Prime Minister's Office. The protocols are being reviewed to ensure that such an error does not occur in the future. The Chief of the Defence Staff has issued a statement indicating that this has not placed members of the Canadian Armed Forces in harm's way and that therefore none will be removed from the theatre.

Oral Questions

I think it would be more responsible for the member to engage in issues like this factually, rather than with over-the-top exaggeration.

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INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Ms. Chrystia Freeland (Toronto Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, speaking of shameless photo ops, despite hundreds of thousands of dollars spent on ceremonies and announcements, the CETA deal has stalled.

Conservative rhetoric on trade just does not match the results. There was a \$3 billion trade deficit in March, a historic record. Our share of western export to Asia has been cut in half, and we are at risk of being kicked out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

The government prefers talking points over market access, photo ops over real export opportunities for Canadian businesses and Canadian workers. When will the Conservatives take some real action on trade?

Hon. Ed Fast (Minister of International Trade, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is this Conservative government that has taken action on trade. In fact, over the last nine years we have concluded trade agreements with 38 different countries and there are many more to come.

Compare that to the awful Liberal record on trade. Over 13 long years, there were three small trade agreements. The Liberals got absolutely nothing done.

This government understands how important trade and investment are in driving future economic growth in our country. The Liberal Party has proven time and again that it has absolutely no credibility on trade.

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SENIORS

Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today many parliamentarians are fasting to raise awareness about hunger in Canada as part of Food Banks Canada's Every Plate Full campaign.

Seven per cent of seniors in Canada depend on food banks. Even though they receive pension benefits, they just do not have enough to make ends meet. No one, and certainly no senior, should ever go hungry.

Why are the Conservatives refusing to implement a national seniors strategy that would allow our seniors to retire in dignity?

Hon. Alice Wong (Minister of State (Seniors), CPC): Mr. Speaker, when it comes to seniors poverty, our government has a record we can be proud of.

Canada has one of the lowest seniors poverty rates in the world, thanks in part to our actions, which include removing hundreds of thousands of seniors from the tax rolls completely, making significant investments in affordable housing for low-income seniors, and introducing the largest GIS increase in a quarter century.

Canadians know that they can count on our government to deliver for seniors.

• (1505)

[Translation]

Ms. Isabelle Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, NDP): Mr. Speaker, seniors deserve better than that.

A recent report by a trustee in bankruptcy in Ontario clearly shows that seniors and pre-retirees are making up a growing proportion of people declaring bankruptcy and that they are deeper in debt than young people are.

By increasing the eligibility age for the guaranteed income supplement and old age security to 67, the Conservatives are only making life more difficult for our seniors.

Why is the government turning its back on seniors and, worse yet, why is it hindering their financial well-being?

[English]

Hon. Alice Wong (Minister of State (Seniors), CPC): Mr. Speaker, again, when it comes to seniors poverty, our government has a record we can be proud of.

Canada has one of the lowest seniors poverty rates in the world, thanks in part to our actions, which include removing hundreds of thousands of seniors from the tax rolls completely, making significant investments in affordable housing for low-income seniors, and introducing the largest GIS increase in a quarter century.

Canadians know that they can count on our government to deliver for seniors.

Those members voted against each and every one of them.

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TAXATION

Mr. Dean Allison (Niagara West—Glanbrook, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I travel through my riding speaking to parents about how they plan to save enough money for their kids to attend school, play hockey and partake in extracurriculars, which defines what it means to be a kid here in Canada, their answer has been the same, that this government's family tax cut and enhanced universal child care benefit, which benefits 100% of families with children, is the answer.

Could the Minister of Employment and Social Development please give the House an update about the benefits of our government's plan to support Canada's middle class?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the family tax cuts and benefits put money in the pockets of 100% of families with kids.

The increase in the universal child care benefit to \$2,000 per child under six and \$720 for kids six through seventeen will help many families, in fact, all of them. The income splitting or family tax cut will help families where one spouse earns more than the other.

Oral Questions

The Liberals said that they want to take that away, raising taxes on millions of families, but if they are going to take away income splitting for families, we can count on them to take it away from seniors. We will not let them do that.

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INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Trinity—Spadina, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I see the members on that side cannot get the Minister of Finance to answer a question either.

Twenty-seven mayors from Ontario's largest cities were in Ottawa this week. They are feeling a little ignored. They are tired of being treated unfairly by the Conservative government. There is no new money for infrastructure this year, after no money last year. Roads, bridges, transit, they just do not build themselves. Cities need some help.

I have been asking the Minister of Finance to explain, but he is as tough to find these days as a Tory in Alberta; tough to find.

Why do these mayors have to wait? Why can these mayors not get help this year from the government? Why can they not get help now?

Hon. Denis Lebel (Minister of Infrastructure, Communities and Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is the longest and largest infrastructure plan in Canadian history. We already transferred \$2 billion last year out of the gas tax fund. We will do the same this year. We will continue to do that all across the country, in support and in respect of jurisdictions with the provinces and municipalities.

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MARINE SAFETY

Mr. Ryan Cleary (St. John's South—Mount Pearl, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in yet another devastating blow to marine safety in Canada, the St. Anthony Coast Guard communications and traffic centre in Newfoundland will close later this year.

Distress calls for the Great Northern Peninsula will now be answered outside the area, even outside the province. The mayor and residents of St. Anthony are waving red flags. The Conservatives are sacrificing the safety of our mariners.

Lives are on the line. When will the government make the safety of our mariners the number one priority?

Mr. Randy Kamp (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, CPC): Mr. Speaker, while I appreciate the member's question, he seems not to understand the changes that are being made.

Through investments made by our government, we are replacing decades-old equipment with modern state-of-the-art technology in strategically located centres. This new technology will improve workload so that our highly trained Coast Guard employees will have an even greater ability to focus on the services that they provide.

The member will find detailed information on the Coast Guard website and I encourage him to review it.

● (1510)

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Mr. John Carmichael (Don Valley West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians know that our government is providing more choice, lower prices and better services for their cellphone plans. Unlike the opposition parties who want higher taxes and thus higher prices, we will continue to support policies that lead to more competition, lower prices and lower taxes.

Could the Minister of Industry please give the House an update on our government's reaction to yesterday's decision by the CRTC?

Hon. James Moore (Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the CRTC decision from yesterday is an important contribution to ensuring that we have more competition in Canada's wireless sector. By putting a cap on roaming rates and ensuring that access to roaming is going to be accessible to new players, it is going to create more competition all across this country.

We have put more spectrum into the hands of the private sector, and therefore Canadians, than any government before in Canada's history. It is essential that we keep having policies that will keep us competitive so consumers have more choice, lower prices and more competition in all regions of Canada.

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[Translation]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Ms. Paulina Ayala (Honoré-Mercier, NDP): Mr. Speaker, a number of Canadians are currently stuck in Nepal. Many of them are looking for alternative ways to get out of that country because our government does not have enough resources on the ground.

However, other foreign nationals are not running into the same problems getting services from their government. How does the minister explain the fact that Canadians stuck in Nepal are still having a hard time getting consular services from their own country?

[English]

Hon. Lynne Yelich (Minister of State (Foreign Affairs and Consular), CPC): Mr. Speaker, we thank the Canadian Forces for their hard work in evacuating Canadians out of Nepal. On three separate occasions, a C-17 has been available to evacuate Canadian citizens that require assistance. We deployed additional consular staff to help deal with the crisis. We have a dedicated staff that worked around the clock for the emergency watch and response centre. We sent hundreds of emergency travel documents to assist travel. Consular operations are being run out of the Canadian consulate in Kathmandu and New Delhi.

I urge Canadians and their families, if they have more concerns, to contact the emergency watch and response centre.

Routine Proceedings

[Translation]

SPORTS

Mr. Jean-François Larose (Repentigny, FD): Mr. Speaker, in April, during Autism Month, I informed the Minister of State for Sport about the situation of a young gymnast from Repentigny, in Lanaudière, whose dream is to participate in the Special Olympics. Even though he has the talent and his family is offering to pay his way and even though it is extremely important for people with autism to have a role model, his dream is being shattered by Special Olympics Canada, which does not recognize gymnastics as an official sport.

The Minister of State for Sport told me that he would look into this. Can he tell me when he will make his decision?

[English]

Hon. Bal Gosal (Minister of State (Sport), CPC): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to congratulate this young man for his accomplishments. My office is working with Special Olympics Canada to make sure that this matter is dealt with.

We are proud of supporting our athletes, especially Special Olympics Canada. We had \$10 million in last year's budget and \$20 million for Olympians and Paralympians this year. We are proud of our investment in sports.

POINTS OF ORDER

[English]

DECORUM

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have such enormous respect for the House. It has been 11 years of great service.

If I said anything that was untoward in any heckles yesterday, I would withdraw those remarks because I want to show my respect for this institution that we are all called to serve.

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member for that.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

The Speaker: I have the honour to lay upon the table the report of a Canadian parliamentary delegation concerning its visit to the United Kingdom, January 19 and 20.

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GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8) I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 18 petitions.

[Translation]

CANADIAN SECURITY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 32 (2), I would like to table, in both official languages, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service 2013-14 public report.

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● (1515)

[English]

INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1) I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian delegation of the Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, respecting its participation at the 59th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, held in New York on March 11.

Mr. Gordon Brown (Leeds—Grenville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1) I have the honour to present, in both official languages, four reports of the Canadian delegation of the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group.

The first report concerns the 2014 Annual Meeting of the Western Governors' Association, held in Colorado Springs, Colorado, United States, June 9 to 11, 2014.

The second report concerns the 54th Annual Meeting and Regional Policy Forum of the Council of State Governments' Eastern Regional Conference, held in Baltimore, Maryland, August 3 to 6, 2014.

The third report concerns the Annual National Conference of the Council of State Governments and the Annual Meeting of the Council of State Governments-WEST, held in Anchorage, Alaska, United States, August 9 to 13, 2014.

The fourth, and last, report concerns the 2014 winter meeting of the Western Governors' Association, held in Las Vegas, Nevada, United States, December 6 and 7, 2014.

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COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr. David Christopherson (Hamilton Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, is the 15th report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts on Chapter 3, Mental Health Services for Veterans, of the Fall 2014 Report of the Auditor General of Canada.

Mr. Malcolm Allen (Welland, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the chair of the committee. I want to tell the House about the hard work the the committee has done. On this side of the House, we appended an additional report to that main report, which talked about how we needed to ensure that our veterans would get the mental health services they deserved.

The Auditor General was clear that it was not happening under the Conservative watch. It needs to change and will have to continue to change, and that is not happening. Clearly, the Surgeon General said that it was untimely, as did the deputy minister. Veterans do not get the services they need and we need to ensure that happens.

Mr. David Christopherson: Mr. Speaker, I also have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 16th report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts on Chapter 6, Nutrition North Canada—Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, of the Fall 2014 Report of the Auditor General of Canada.

Pursuant to Standing Order 109 of the House of Commons, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response for the 15th and 16th reports.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND NATIONAL SECURITY

Mr. Daryl Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 11th report of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, on Bill C-42, An Act to amend the Firearms Act and the Criminal Code and to make a related amendment and a consequential amendment to other Acts. The committee has studied the bill and has decided to report the bill back to the House with an amendment.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Leon Benoit (Vegreville—Wainwright, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 11th report of the Standing Committee on Natural Resources in relation to the main estimates for 2015-16.

* * *

● (1520)

[Translation]

NAVIGATION PROTECTION ACT (MONTMORENCY RIVER AND OTHER RIVERS AND LAKES)

Mr. Jonathan Tremblay (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord, NDP) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-673, An Act to amend the Navigation Protection Act (Montmorency River and other rivers and lakes).

He said: Mr. Speaker, water is one of the most important natural resources for future generations, and it is crucial that we conserve and protect it for everyone. I am introducing this bill because the government has failed to meet this objective.

I want to thank the watershed organizations that lent their expertise and contributed greatly to the drafting of this bill. These organizations, like watersheds themselves, are real watchdogs for our waterways. They do very important work and carry out substantial projects with few resources.

In collaboration with my colleagues from the Quebec City region, I conducted some extensive public consultations to hear from the people we proudly represent here in the House of Commons. The results speak for themselves. Our lakes, rivers and waterways must be protected for future generations and for the preservation of our ecosystem.

Routine Proceedings

In a riding like Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord, which stretches along the majestic St. Lawrence River and is full of salmon rivers and drinking water basins, it is especially true that water is central to our identity and our economy. That is why restoring federal environmental protection measures will play an important role in the long-term health of our watersheds, which are essential sources of drinking water in our regions, and will also play an important role in salmon enhancement and habitat restoration.

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

* * *

[English]

PETITIONS

IMPAIRED DRIVING

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am presenting a petition that sadly informs the House that Bradley Arsenault, age 18, Kole Novak, age 18, and Thaddeus Lake, age 22 were tragically killed by a drunk driver that chose to drive while impaired. The Arsenault, Novak and Lake families have been left devastated.

Families For Justice is a group of Canadians who have had a loved one killed by an impaired driver. These Canadians believe that Canada's impaired driving laws are much too lenient. They want the crime to be called what it is, vehicular homicide. It is the number one cause of criminal death in Canada. Over 1,200 Canadians are killed every year by a drunk driver.

Families For Justice is calling for mandatory sentences for vehicular homicide and for Parliament to support Bill C-652, Cassandra's law.

[Translation]

INTERNATIONAL AID

Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP): Mr. Speaker, during the last constituency week, I had the pleasure of meeting with a delegation from Development and Peace, which is very active in my community. It discussed with me the issue of respect for the rights of small family farms to store, trade and use seed.

This organization has collected hundreds and hundreds of signatures in the riding from people who are calling on the government to adopt international aid policies that support small farmers, especially women, and recognize their vital role in the struggle against hunger and poverty, to ensure that Canadian policies and programs are developed in consultation with small farmers, and to ensure that they protect the rights of small farmers in the global south to save, use and freely trade their seed.

*Routine Proceedings**[English]*

CANADA POST

Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition from hundreds of Canadians who ask Parliament to reverse the plan to axe our long-treasured postal services because it will kill jobs, eliminate door-to-door delivery, close post offices and has drastically increased postal rates. There are 6,000 to 8,000 workers who will lose their jobs and 5 million households will lose door-to-door delivery over the next five years, which will hurt seniors and disabled Canadians in particular.

The petitioners call upon the Government of Canada to reverse the cuts to service announced by Canada Post and to look to things like postal banking to augment our postal service.

● (1525)

GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS

Mr. Frank Valeriote (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have several petitions signed by over 150 people from in and around Guelph to bring to the attention of the government the possible negative health effects of GMOs, the negative impact GMOs have on organic and non-GMOs crops, the inability of farmers to save their own seeds, and the concern about the absence of labelling GMO food.

The petitioners ask the government to put a moratorium on the licensing and release of further GMOs, including, and especially, the release of GMO alfalfa.

[Translation]

LATIN-AMERICAN HERITAGE DAY

Ms. Paulina Ayala (Honoré-Mercier, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition concerning Latin-American heritage day.

Several dozen people of Latin American origin want their communities to be recognized for the work they are doing across Canada. They support Bill C-635 to designate October 5 as Latin-American heritage day throughout Canada.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Ms. Paulina Ayala (Honoré-Mercier, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I also want to present a petition signed by many Canadians about making life more affordable:

We the undersigned residents of Canada draw the attention of [the Government of Canada] to the following: ...practical proposals to cap ATM fees at 50 cents per transaction, widen access to low-interest credit cards...

[English]

VETERANS

Mr. Matthew Kellway (Beaches—East York, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition today to ensure the dignity of all of Canada's veterans.

The signatories to the petition want to point the House to the fact that although veterans and their families deserve our deepest gratitude and respect and deserve to be taken care of, many veterans and their families cannot access adequate health care, pensions and other vital services, and now struggle with the closure of front-line Veterans Affairs offices.

The petitioners call upon the Government of Canada to implement improved services, such as quality home care, long-term care and mental health care for our veterans and their families.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, violence against women is an abomination, yet in communities across Canada, women and girls of all ages face violence every day. Violence drives over 100,000 women and children out of their homes and into shelters each year.

The petitioners call upon the government to work in partnership with the provinces, territories and stakeholders to develop a national strategy and action plan to end violence against women and to hold a national public inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women in Canada.

[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Réjean Genest (Shefford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition for a fair employment insurance system.

We call upon the Government of Canada to reverse the devastating changes it has made to EI and restore fair access to decent EI benefits for jobless workers.

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition signed by 382 residents of the wonderful riding of Sherbrooke who joined together to tell the Government of Canada and the House of Commons that they are committed to protecting small farmers and, most importantly, to protecting the right to use and freely exchange seeds.

I want to thank them for submitting this petition, and I am proud to present it on their behalf.

[English]

PALLIATIVE CARE

Mr. Marc Garneau (Westmount—Ville-Marie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour of presenting this petition regarding the inclusion of palliative care in the United Nations' sustainable development goals, specifically recognizing that hospice and palliative care is an essential component of national health systems.

The petitioners ask the Government of Canada to call for the inclusion of hospice and palliative care in the United Nations' sustainable development goals.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am being bombarded in my office in Toronto by my constituents from Parkdale—High Park with messages of opposition to Bill C-51.

Routine Proceedings

I am pleased to once again present petitions on behalf of about 150 people in my riding of Parkdale—High Park. They are very concerned that our rights and freedoms would be threatened by giving sweeping new powers to CSIS without adequate oversight.

They are calling on every member in the House of Commons to join together and defeat Bill C-51.

• (1530)

CENTRES OF INNOVATION

Mr. James Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions today.

The first is from citizens of Denman Island, the west coast of Canada, and Vancouver Island, all the way to Leamington, Ontario, in support of Motion No. 501.

The petitioners note that this motion calls for the establishment of regional centres for innovation that bring together integrative medicine with allied professions to collaborate, research, and document low-cost, low-risk health care options.

The second petition, also in favour of Motion No. 501, comes from constituents in the London, Ontario area. They note that the strategy of Motion No. 501 will be open to new models of care: delivery and discovery, be holistic in character, patient-centred, emphasize the importance of wellness promotion and disease prevention, and empower the patient with information and choice.

[*Translation*]

CANADA POST

Mr. Sylvain Chicoine (Châteauguay—Saint-Constant, NDP): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my constituents in Châteauguay—Saint-Constant, I want to present a petition signed by about 200 people from the Châteauguay region. They are clearly indicating that they are opposed to the cuts to Canada Post's services. With this petition, they are saying that they very much want to continue receiving home mail delivery.

[*English*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Craig Scott (Toronto—Danforth, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to present a petition coming out of the St. Paul's riding in Toronto.

The residents of the Christie Gardens retirement home ask that the government adopt a carbon policy that applies a fee to greenhouse gas emissions at their source of production in Canada or port of entry into Canada, increase the fee over time, and distribute 100% of the money raised from the fee equally among all Canadians.

I would like to note that the lead signatories include: Bruna Nota, the former international president of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom; Ursula Franklin, the world renowned scholar; and Lois Wilson, the former moderator of the United Church of Canada.

ELECTORAL REPRESENTATION

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to table two petitions.

The first is a petition on fair electoral representation, which has been signed by literally dozens of ordinary Canadians in my riding and the neighbouring riding of Victoria.

It calls to abandon our winner take all first past the post system, and put in a fair system that would allow representation regardless of political belief or place of residence in a fairly elected Parliament, where the share of seats held by each political party more closely reflects the popular vote.

SOUTHERN RESIDENT KILLER WHALES

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the second petition calls on the Government of Canada to bring in an action plan to protect the southern resident killer whales, in support of my Motion No. 460.

This has been signed by dozens of ordinary Canadians who are drawing attention to the fact that more than 13 years ago, southern resident killer whales were designated as endangered, and no action plan has been put in place by either Liberal or Conservative governments.

KOMAGATA MARU

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition signed by many constituents of Winnipeg North. They are asking that we recognize that the Punjab assembly in India unanimously passed a resolution calling on the Canadian Parliament to apologize for the *Komagata Maru* incident.

This incident was a dark moment in Canada's past. In 1914, 352 passengers aboard a steamship were denied entry into Canada based on discriminatory immigration policy.

The petitioners are asking for a formal apology in Parliament with respect to the *Komagata Maru* incident.

* * *

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if Question Nos. 1113, 1114 and 1119 could be made orders for return, these returns would be tabled immediately.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*Text*]

Question No. 1113—**Ms. Charmaine Borg:**

With regard to government funding for internet services, broken down by department and individual project, for each fiscal year since 2005-2006: (a) what amount was spent on the deployment of wired broadband internet services and infrastructure (i) in total, (ii) broken down by region; and (b) what amount was spent on the deployment of wireless broadband internet services and infrastructure (i) in total, (ii) broken down by region?

(Return tabled)

*Government Orders***Question No. 1114—Hon. John McKay:**

With regard to government libraries, in each fiscal year since 2006-2007 inclusive: for each departmental or agency library, including former libraries which are now closed, what are the (i) budgeted, (ii) actual expenditures for (a) the acquisition of books, monographs, serials, or other publications in print form; (b) subscriptions to academic, scholarly, professional, or specialized journals in print form; (c) subscriptions to newspapers, magazines, or other serial publications, other than those enumerated in (b), in print form; (d) subscriptions to academic, scholarly, professional, or specialized journals in electronic form; (e) subscriptions to newspapers, magazines, or other serial publications, other than those enumerated in (d), in electronic form; and (f) subscriptions to electronic databases?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1119—Mr. Jack Harris:

With regard to Canadian support being provided to Ukraine, the Declaration of Intent between the Department of National Defence of Canada and the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine of December 8, 2014, in Kiev, the subsequent deployment of Canadian military personnel to Ukraine to train Ukrainian forces, and Canada's commitment to helping Ukraine in the strengthening of its security forces and its social and democratic institutions: (a) what activities are being carried out with the Ukrainian forces, the Ukrainian government, or civilians, with respect to (i) strengthening the capacity of Ukrainian security forces, (ii) promoting institutions that serve the wellbeing of Ukrainian society, (iii) training Ukrainian personnel in areas of policing, medical and personal protective measures, (iv) enhancing Ukrainian democratic institutions; (b) how many Canadian personnel are involved, in total and in each of the categories of activities mentioned in (a), further broken down by whether they are civilian or military; (c) are the deployed personnel members of the RCMP, the Canadian Armed Forces, or other institutions, agencies or organizations and, if so, what are these other institutions, agencies or organizations; (d) what are the measures of success used in evaluating progress on the objectives mentioned in (a); (e) what progress has been made on the objectives mentioned in (a) since the signing of the Declaration of Intent referenced above; (f) who is directly responsible for the leadership and oversight of the deployment to Ukraine; and (g) what form does the government expect future Canadian cooperation with and support to Ukraine to take?

(Return tabled)

[English]

Mr. Tom Lukiwski: Mr. Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

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

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1535)

[English]

PIPELINE SAFETY ACT

The House resumed from April 30 consideration of the motion that Bill C-46, An Act to amend the National Energy Board Act and

the Canada Oil and Gas Operations Act, be read the third time and passed.

Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to have another chance to speak on the slightly amended version of Bill C-46, the pipeline safety act and of course, this is legislation that would amend the National Energy Board Act and the Canada Oil and Gas Operations Act, with the idea of strengthening the safety and security of federally regulated pipelines in Canada.

In fact, this legislation is long overdue and represents some progress. The Liberal Party recognizes that pipelines are a critical part of our energy infrastructure. We know that Canada must always strive to have the safest pipelines in the world. In fact, we have many thousands of kilometres of pipelines within Canada transporting both oil and gas and sometimes other products, but mainly those two, and they form an important part of our economy. People use those products every day in a variety of ways, so those pipelines play an important role and it is vitally important that they be safe.

However, we do not believe that we have to make a choice between protecting our environment and growing our economy. We have to do both. That is an important responsibility. Across this country, Liberals support projects that offer responsible and sustainable ways of getting our resources to market, while at the same time respecting indigenous rights, protecting our natural environment and earning the trust of local communities.

In fact, approximately 1.4 billion barrels of oil cross provincial and international borders every year. It is important that legislation like Bill C-46 clarifies the audit and inspection powers of the National Energy Board which regulates federal pipelines.

I should point out that many of the pipelines in Canada are not federally regulated because they are within the boundaries of a province, but they do not cross boundaries of a province or international boundaries between Canada and the U.S.

As we heard recently at the Standing Committee on Natural Resources, Bill C-46 implements a number of measures under the headings of prevention, preparedness and response, and also liability and compensation.

Prevention, of course, is critical as we must make every effort to ensure that a spill does not occur in the first place, obviously. The bill includes some sentencing provisions for environmental damages as well as additional audit and inspection powers for the National Energy Board. Of course, this raises the question of whether the NEB will do the job it is supposed to do. That would be a concern for members going forward as we watch whether the powers it is given in the bill are utilized properly.

Hopefully, the government will ensure the the NEB has the necessary resources to carry out these audits and inspections because a number of stakeholders said they were concerned about it. I am concerned about it after the recent budget. There is a question whether it has enough funding.

In fact, the NEB indicated that funding for several programs related to pipeline safety will be sunseting in the next few years. It is up to the government to bring forward sufficient funds for the NEB to do the job of protecting Canadians and ensuring that these pipelines are operated in a safe manner. I think that needs to change.

Government Orders

In the event of a spill, Canadians need to have confidence that pipeline companies and the National Energy Board will respond in an appropriate manner. Bill C-46 would require companies operating pipelines to hold sufficient financial resources to cover any potential costs associated with a spill. Companies would also be required to hold a minimum level of accessible financial resources to ensure immediate response to a spill happening and that they have the financial capacity to do that. That is an important measure and I certainly support that.

Also, in exceptional circumstances, where a company is unable or unwilling to act, the NEB would have the authorization to take control of a spill response and it would have the authority to compel reimbursement of costs associated with a spill because if the NEB is incurring costs at the expense of the taxpayer, it should be reimbursed by whoever is responsible for the pipeline in general.

It is the company operating it that is going to be liable and that is why under this legislation absolute liability is provided for. In other words, whether or not negligence was provided, if a company is the owner-operator of that pipeline, it will be responsible for it. That is very important.

• (1540)

Finally, with respect to liability and compensation, the bill invokes the polluter pays principle with the goal of holding major pipeline companies liable for costs and any actual losses or environmental damages resulting from a spill. It includes a set of new measures which provide for no-fault or absolute liability set at a minimum of \$1 billion for major oil companies, and the legislation contains the number of provisions relating to the abandonment of pipelines.

[*Translation*]

Bill C-46 seeks guidance from the National Energy Board on the application of the best available technologies for pipeline construction and operations. It also sets out how government will be required to work with aboriginal communities and industry to develop a strategy to better integrate aboriginal peoples into pipeline safety, including planning, monitoring, incident response and related employment and business opportunities.

While I noted earlier that Bill C-46 is a step in the right direction, that does not mean that no concerns were expressed about this particular bill. We have seen concerns raised over the potential impact of leaving many of the proposed changes in Bill C-46 to the discretion of cabinet and the National Energy Board. The Union des producteurs agricoles raised several points in a written submission, including their concern about the definition of “ground disturbance” in the legislation and how this will impact the cultivation of crops like alfalfa. They also expressed concern about whether the timeframe for claims should be tied to the time when a leak is discovered or the time when it occurred. Obviously, I believe that it should be tied to the time when the leak is discovered.

[*English*]

Ecojustice lawyer Ian Miron testified regarding the shortcomings in the legislation. He called for more guidance around the assessment and calculation of damages for the loss of non-use value in relation to public resources. Mr. Miron also suggested that, as drafted, the bill

is best described as polluter might pay as opposed to polluter pays, as the government is suggesting.

Mr. Martin Olszynski of the law faculty at the University of Calgary offered suggestions to strengthen the wording of the bill with regard to environmental damages. Mr. Olszynski said that the federal cabinet should be required to make regulations setting out a process for environmental damages assessment within a prescribed timeframe.

Unfortunately, the Conservatives failed to put forward any amendments during the clause-by-clause consideration of Bill C-46 and they killed all but two of the amendments tabled by opposition members.

One of the amendments, which was adopted, will mean that an aboriginal governing body would be able to be reimbursed for expenses they may incur in responding to a spill. I think that is a good amendment.

Without that amendment, the category of entities that could get reimbursed for reasonably incurring expenses in relation to a spill, in other words for a cleanup, were limited to “Her Majesty in right of Canada, or a province or any other person”.

That would not include an aboriginal first nation and in my view it would also not include a municipality either. That is why there was, in fact, another amendment proposed to add the word “municipality” to that list, but I suppose the government side was not authorized. It did not have the green light, we might say, to say yes to that change, which would have been harmless and a good one.

The question of whether or not the province is authorized or the municipality, since municipalities are creations of provinces, is not clear at all. It might have been a very good clarification to have in the bill. Unfortunately, I am afraid the Conservatives did not support that.

The second amendment deals with a section of the bill which said that the NEB may recover funds to compensate those affected by a spill. In this case, the word “may” was changed to “shall”, another good change. At least there was some minimal accommodation and I suspect members opposite on the Conservative side would incorrectly and falsely claim that they were completely flexible on our amendments.

• (1545)

I know that the Minister of Natural Resources is fond of pointing out that between 2008 and 2013 more than 99.999% of oil transported in federally regulated pipelines was moved safely. That is a great record. Our pipeline companies deserve recognition for this achievement. However, we also need to look to the future. We need to take every step possible to continue to prevent spills, to put in place the proper measures to efficiently and effectively clean up spills, and to assign appropriate liability when spills do occur.

Canada must have the safest pipelines in the world. We need to ensure that this pipeline safety act is designed to achieve that goal.

Government Orders

The NEB has been given increased regulatory control over 73,000 kilometres of pipelines that transport more than \$100-billion worth of oil, gas, and petroleum products across Canada annually. That is a lot of pipelines and a lot of value to our economy and also a lot of concern about the impact that would have on our environment if it was not dealt with properly.

Bill C-46 would build on previous moves, giving the NEB the authority to increase the number of pipeline inspections and doubling the number of yearly safety audits.

The NEB has also been asked to provide guidance on the best available technologies for pipeline construction and operations. Obviously, that is why we are hoping that the NEB will be given the resources to do that job and that it will do it properly. We will have to keep an eye on that. That is, I think, one of the important responsibilities of this chamber. It is to keep an eye on that and watch the statistics as time goes on.

We have seen measures that set out how the government is supposed to work with aboriginal communities and individuals to develop a strategy to better integrate aboriginal peoples and pipeline safety operations, including in planning, monitoring, incident response, and related employment and business opportunities.

Clearly, these and other measures in Bill C-46 signify a much-needed overhaul of the liability regime for federally regulated pipelines. The no-fault liability, the additional authorities given to the NEB, and the measures for abandoned pipelines are welcome, and the Liberal Party will therefore support the legislation.

Ms. Joan Crockatt (Calgary Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for his support for the legislation.

One of the things he raised is funding for the National Energy Board. I am sure he is aware that in the budget, the National Energy Board would receive many millions of dollars, \$80 million, in fact, in increased funding.

I wonder if he would talk about that funding and what the money would be used for.

Hon. Geoff Regan: Mr. Speaker, I spoke in my comments about the nature of the new responsibilities the NEB would have. We will have to wait and see, as time goes on, whether sufficient resources are there. I am not sure about that. We will have to wait and see.

Also, it is important to see how, in actuality, the NEB would enforce the rules and the powers it would be given. My hope is that it would exercise those controls in a responsible way, but as I said, it is important for this House to keep an eye on that.

Ms. Chris Charlton (Hamilton Mountain, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I worked closely with the member from the Liberal Party on the bill as it was making its way through committee, so we heard many of the same witnesses, obviously, and perhaps drew some of the same conclusions.

I completely agree with him that a bill that purports to implement the polluter pay principle actually falls far short of doing that when so many of the provisions in the bill would actually be left up to the discretion of either the National Energy Board or cabinet.

I suspect that the solution to fixing the problem of the discretionary powers of the cabinet and the lack of confidence

Canadians have in those powers we will need to resolve in the next election, and I look forward to the NDP forming the government after October 19.

However, I want to ask the member questions about the discretionary powers of the NEB. Canadians do not have very much confidence in the National Energy Board right now, either. I wonder if the member would talk about what amendments he thinks it is necessary to make to the National Energy Board, whether he believes it ought to be a complete overhaul of the NEB, and what specific amendments he would support when it comes to the future of the National Energy Board.

• (1550)

Hon. Geoff Regan: Mr. Speaker, it is nice to have hon. friends asking questions. They are members I sit with on the committee, and I enjoy working with them there.

My colleague talked about the issue of confidence, which I think is so important. In fact, one of the things I think we have seen eroded badly over the past decade under the Conservative government is the confidence Canadians have in environmental regulation generally.

The first thing that has to change is the attitude of government. I look forward to the election changing that, and of course, I heard my hon. colleague. My expectations are a little different from hers. I am looking forward to a Liberal victory in the election in the fall. We can leave that to the electors to decide. We all have faith in democracy and are obviously willing to accept its results. I hope we will see a new government, with the Liberal Party, of course, perhaps with support from other parties on measures like this, the kinds of measures that would create more confidence among Canadians about environmental regulation.

That is where it starts. We can certainly look at the question of what amendments are needed in terms of the power of the NEB and its discretionary powers. I think we should take some of those powers out of cabinet.

What we need is a National Energy Board that has the respect of Canadians and the confidence of Canadians, but again, that depends on the kinds of signals that are sent from government. We do not need government signals suggesting that people who are concerned about environmental matters are radicals or renegades, the kind of signals we unfortunately sometimes get from the government.

Mr. Ted Hsu (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I was wondering if I could ask my hon. colleague to perhaps look past several elections rather than to the next election. All too often we have the government passing legislation establishing a penalty for this or that and feeling that it has accomplished something and can forget about the problem for a while.

What kinds of things does my hon. colleague see five, 10, and 20 years down the line in terms of making resources available so that regulations are enforced and there are enough people to conduct inspections, for example, or look out for the unexpected things that may happen in the future?

Government Orders

Hon. Geoff Regan: Mr. Speaker, it is not that uncommon that questions I get from my own side are sometimes, in some ways, more challenging.

That is a challenging question, because it asks me to go quite a distance ahead and to imagine the unexpected things that may happen in the future. That is challenging.

I think we will see a shift in our energy sector in Canada and in the way we use energy. Certainly we have seen a considerable effort to reduce energy use to be more efficient in the way we do things in our households and workplaces. That will continue.

I think we will see an increase in the use of renewable energy in a whole variety of ways. That is going to be an interesting process.

We saw the news last week about a new power wall that a major company in the U.S., of course, has introduced. It is a very large lithium battery for the home. If people have, for instance, photovoltaic solar panels on the roof, they can actually store the power that comes from those when the sun is shining and have it available when it is not. In some locations, power can actually be drawn down at night, for example, when power is cheap, and then used in the day.

We are going to see a variety of changes. I do not think most of us are probably all that worried about the safety impact, although it is something that has to be watched. For any new technology we have to examine the safety impact.

When we talk about pipelines, it is hard to project today how important they will be in our lives in 30 or 40 years. I think we are going to see them continue to be used for a few decades yet, but there may be new uses. There may be new infrastructure for which we need to have regulations to make sure that they are built and operated in a way that is safe for Canadians and safe for our environment.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if my colleague might expand on the importance of what we call a social contract when we look at the environment. How important is it that we consult and work with the many different stakeholders to develop a social contract that would allow us to look at pipelines and other important national grids that are on the horizon?

• (1555)

Hon. Geoff Regan: Mr. Speaker, it is going to be interesting to see how we go forward, because there has been a change in the attitudes of Canadians and communities toward natural resource projects over the past decade or two. It means that the government has to do a much better job today, and so does industry, of reaching out to communities, consulting them, and understanding them and their differences. We know that different communities across the country, whether aboriginal communities or otherwise, have different issues, different challenges, and different capacities. Each of those things has to be considered in these consultations. However, the fact that there is so much concern out there is an indication of how important it is that the government change its attitude.

We have seen the Conservative government's attitude being one of wanting to shove things through in a hurry. We find, in fact, that this

diminishes social licence. It actually makes it harder to get projects completed and built, and it increases resistance.

I think people want to see a government that is serious about the environment and that takes its responsibility to review projects and assess them environmentally in a serious manner. People will want to see that before they have confidence in the role of the NEB and the process of environmental assessment generally across this country so that those projects that should go forward will be able to do so.

Ms. Joan Crockatt (Calgary Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am going to be splitting my time today with my hon. colleague from Saskatoon—Humboldt, with whom I have the honour of sitting on the natural resources committee.

It is great to stand in the House and talk about this bill today. This bill, the pipeline safety act, is a really important bill for every Canadian who cares about the environment, and I think that is all of us. In fact, the pipeline safety act is really the embodiment of the kinds of things that I talk about with the people I represent in Calgary Centre all the time, which are the environment and energy.

Our government is firmly committed to making sure that as our energy industry is developed, so too are we caring for the environment at every single stage. This bill is really one of the poster children in our platform of how we care for our environment at the same time as we put things in place to continue to develop and enjoy the benefits of our energy industry in Canada.

All Canadians can be proud of and confident in this bill. What we have heard from the NDP today is a little hypocritical. They say that Canadians do not have confidence in our pipelines when we know they have a 99.999% safety record. We have gold standard legislation, like we are putting forward today. All Canadians need to be aware that we have among the best or the best systems in the world for regulating the environment, and this bill is a very key part of that.

At every turn, our government has demonstrated that it has a steadfast commitment to ensuring that Canada's national network of pipelines is world class, that our pipelines are the safest that they can possibly be, and that we maintain a very strong commitment, as I have said, to the environment at the same time as we seek to grow our industry. The pipelines can contribute safely to our economic growth and energy independence. The pipeline safety act that we are bringing forward would do all of these things. It is part of the comprehensive, responsible resource development plan that we have.

People in my riding of Calgary Centre know very well that we have a lot to celebrate when it comes to our natural wealth. We have the third largest proven oil reserves in the world, we are the fifth largest producer of natural gas, and we want to get those products to market. These resources will remain trapped in the ground if we cannot develop what are the safest, most reliable ways to transport them to their markets at home and abroad.

The pipeline safety act would give us a kind of gold standard. It sets out very clear parameters that help to ensure the safe operation of pipelines so that they can be some of Canada's national energy infrastructure projects for the 21st century, some of our most important. The importance of this legislation really cannot be overstated.

Government Orders

Bill C-46 is another way our government is strengthening our environmental protection while continuing to protect jobs, so important now, and opportunities for Canadians in all regions of the country. Last year, we did a study on the across-Canada benefits of the oil and gas industry and we heard from people in every single province about how this industry was creating economic well-being for all of them, from coast to coast to coast.

Equally important is that this legislation mirrors what we have done with marine, rail and offshore safety. It is based on some key pillars and one of them, in particular, I think British Columbians should be especially aware of. They had asked for world leading practices around spill prevention and response as one of the five conditions in British Columbia, and this bill would answer that. Number one of the pillars is incident prevention, number two is preparedness and response, and number three is a system for liability and compensation. Therefore, the entire umbrella is covered by this very important bill. We believe it is a really important and responsible approach to pipeline safety.

This bill would modernize our regulatory review of major resource projects by eliminating duplication and providing investors with the kind of predictable beginning-to-end timelines that they need. That is in our responsible resource development plan.

We have improved environmental protection and bolstered aboriginal engagement. Bill C-46 also clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of the key players in our energy industry, the National Energy Board and different levels of government so that pipeline operators are clear, everyone is clear.

● (1600)

Finally, the legislation reflects a responsible approach to consensus building. I agree, that is an important component here. It incorporates amendments from our all-party House Standing Committee on Natural Resources. We have heard from some of the members recently. I am privileged to sit on that committee.

Let us talk about the amendments, because there was a reference to amendments not being included. Nothing could be further from the truth. We actually made amendments and accepted amendments from the other side of the House. There were two important changes that were included in the bill for third reading. We agreed with those and have included them.

The first amendment is clause 48.12 (1). It adds aboriginal governing bodies to the groups that could recover costs and expenses in responding to a pipeline release. This is so that in the unusual event where there might be a pipeline release, our aboriginal governing bodies could feel free to move in and take action and know that they would be compensated.

The second amendment is a little further down in the bill. It is clause 48.17 (1). It would require the National Energy Board, subject to Treasury Board approval, to recover funds from industry that happened to be advanced by the government.

These are really solid recommendations that enhance what was already a very strong piece of legislation and a world-class regime for pipeline safety.

I want to talk a little more about committee testimony, because we heard some really interesting and strong support for the legislation in committee. We heard one expert witness describe the legislation as "...much needed and quite frankly, long overdue". Who was it who said that? It was Ian Miron from Ecojustice Canada.

Another witness praised the legislation for its language on environmental damages. That was Martin Olszynski, from the University of Calgary. He said that the language on environmental damages is "simple and comprehensive". That is great to know. In most instances we felt comfortable that the existing language had hit the mark, but in two places we agreed as a committee that these amendments were warranted. As we can see, there is co-operation in Ottawa.

The result is we now have an even better bill that would significantly improve pipeline safety. I want all Canadians to be confident and proud of that. That is what committee reviews provide. They provide this kind of oversight where we have expert witnesses we call in to come and provide testimony to legislation. We kind of put the legislation to the test. We poke holes in it. We have an opportunity to ask questions. We make sure it is airtight. If there are any issues, then we fix them. We do that on every single bill.

I also personally welcomed the opportunity to discuss a lot of the issues with some key leaders in the pipeline industry. One was Jim Donihee, acting chief officer for the Canadian Energy Pipeline Association. Another was Robert Blakely, the Canadian operating officer with Canada's Building Trades Union. They are passionate, well-informed people who actually do support pipelines and want to make sure we have a world-class safety regime that can give Canadians confidence in their operations.

I pressed both witnesses on the nuts and bolts of the bill. Their responses were both impressive and reassuring. When asked about the quality of the work and the care that was taken by the men and women who are working on these kinds of projects, Mr. Blakely said, "The truth is, we live here". They want the best possible pipeline because this is their home. I live here too. All Canadians live here, and I think we all share that same goal.

Mr. Donihee echoed that kind of commitment on behalf of the Canadian Energy Pipeline Association. He said:

... the member companies, which I have the privilege of representing, share in the desire to ensure that we operate the safest possible pipeline transmission system that will benefit our nation.

They all live here too.

When asked about the additional responsibilities that would be placed on the pipeline industry in the legislation, he said their goal is a zero spill safety record. That is incredibly laudable. He said the industry does not just take what the government regulations are. It seeks to even better them. That is why we have world-class safety regulations here. However, we also have an industry that is firmly committed to meeting and exceeding those world-class standards. That is very worth remembering.

Government Orders

The bill would embody the polluter pay principle in law. It holds companies absolutely liable for any incidents, regardless of who is at fault, or regardless of negligence. It would ensure that companies have the financial resources to respond to incidents. It would give the National Energy Board the authority and resources to clean up spills and recover costs if the board has to step in on what would be exceptional circumstances.

•(1605)

In conclusion, this kind of inclusive approach, which also gives first nations a place here as very strong partners, is the kind of approach that residents in my riding of Calgary Centre want to see, and I think all Canadians want to see. It is these kinds of things that make Canada so great. With the right policies, the right investments and the right decisions, we can shape our nation's destiny.

[*Translation*]

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, naturally, the NDP completely agrees with the polluter pays principle and with sustainable development. That is why we support the notion of liability for the pipelines.

This bill could have been even better. I would like to take this opportunity to commend the three NDP MPs who did an excellent job in committee: the member for Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, the member for Hamilton Mountain, and the excellent member for Edmonton—Strathcona. We proposed some 20 amendments in committee, but unfortunately they were not well received.

Committees play a very important role in improving bills. The committee is not a place for partisan politics. Why did the Conservatives not consider these amendments, which had the support of most stakeholders?

[*English*]

Ms. Joan Crockatt: Mr. Speaker, I always love when we have an opportunity to hear from committee members who are committed to make our legislation better. We did listen to the amendments that were brought forward, very carefully. As I have suggested, we had witnesses who are being quoted on both sides of the House here today. I do welcome the NDP members and hope that they will support our energy industry going forward now that they know we have this amazing bill.

Last year, I was quite disappointed when we had the cross-Canada benefits of the oil and gas sector. The NDP members on that committee could not bring themselves to put forward one witness to speak on the cross-Canada benefits of the oil and gas sector.

I hope that their support for this bill might signal a change of heart.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, whether it is the leader of the Liberal Party or the Liberal Party as a whole, we have recognized the great value of our energy industry. There is always room for improvement, which is why we supported the bill in principle to go to second reading and so forth.

It would have been better had the government looked at ways in which we might have been able to incorporate some other amendments that would have made the industry a little more robust in its approach to the issue of safety. However, the idea of polluter

pays has been supported, I suspect, by most if not all members of the House.

The question I have for the member regards pipelines in general.

In terms of the development of industry and looking at our environment, there has been a very strong lack of national leadership in such an important area in terms of working with the different stakeholders, particularly our provinces, first nations and so forth. Had the government been more proactive in dealing with this, we would have a better industry today.

My question to the member is: How would she respond to the criticism regarding the current government's inability to get the job done when it comes to the potential expansion of this industry through pipelines?

•(1610)

Ms. Joan Crockatt: Mr. Speaker, I think the member opposite has made a good observation. The environment has changed with regard to the public's need to be assured and have confidence that the infrastructure being put in place is the right infrastructure and that the public is protected, which is exactly why this bill is going forward.

This is a confidence bill. This bill is a poster child to show that Canada has the gold standard, the best standards in the world for pipeline liability. Therefore, Canadians will have confidence moving forward.

I want to highlight the aboriginal component as well, because the natural resources sector is the largest single employer of aboriginals in our country. They were consulted on this bill. This plan has been developed closely with them, and we are really hoping that our aboriginal communities will be a great beneficiary of it. They have shown a lot of desire to be involved, especially on the environmental monitoring side of this.

I think that all Canadians need to have confidence that they have an industry here they can support and make sure that Canada can continue to grow.

Mr. Brad Trost (Saskatoon—Humboldt, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank all members of the House who have been participating in this debate.

Anyone who is watching on TV and has seen some of the back and forth between some of the members on the committee will understand that the committee actually functions fairly well. One of my colleagues across the floor made the point that none of the NDP amendments were accepted in committee. That does not mean that other amendments from any other party were not accepted at committee. In fact, if my memory serves me correctly, Conservative members and all members backed two amendments from the leader of the Green Party at committee.

The committee has been fairly collegial and has worked well. As a member who has sat on the committee in one version or another for almost nine years in the House of Commons, I must say to those who say that these things do not work to come and watch us some time. I am very pleased to be part of the committee.

Government Orders

Before I get into the main body of my speech, I want to re-emphasize for Canadians and people who are watching what we are really talking about here. People who do not live in the Prairies or Newfoundland sometimes do not grasp just how strategic and important Canada's oil and gas industry is. When we begin to look at it in a world perspective, depending on whose numbers we are looking at, we are the fifth or sixth largest petroleum producer in the world. Essentially, the U.S., the Saudis and the Russians are the big three, and then we are with a group of other nations that are sort of jockeying from fourth to sixth or seventh spot.

What is amazing and incredible about what we have done is not just that we are such a big producer, but that we do it in a difficult environment. Canada is a cold country, a difficult country, a big country. The oil sands are not the easiest place in the world to produce oil. It is not like the joke that reservoir engineers tell about Saudi Arabia, that they can just put a straw in the ground, twirl it around and oil will start popping up. To be a successful oil man in Canada requires a considerable amount of skills, technological, financial, et cetera. Yet, with all of this, when we look at whatever we have applied, be it our pipelines, drilling industry, or fracking which has been in the news, our world safety standards, if they are not undisputedly number one, they are up there neck and neck, equal with other countries. That is an amazing thing.

We have created one of the most prosperous oil and gas industries. It is one of the most successful and it is private. We got rid of the mess that was known as Petro-Canada and the national energy program some years ago. It is private sector run and brings prosperity from one end of the country to the other, sometimes in the form of equalization and payments to government revenues, most often in jobs in engineering and manufacturing, and direct natural resource energy jobs.

One of the key components of this industry is pipelines. Because of where the majority of our oil is geographically positioned, although our offshore production on the east coast is somewhat different, almost all of our production needs to go into a pipe somewhere and be shipped away. With difficulties, backlogs and some issues that involve politics in different parts of our country and other places, we have been forced to use rail more and more. However, as the tragic incident in Quebec two years ago pointed out, rail has its downside. Rail is more costly in the majority of instances, and it is not as safe.

That is a context that people should consider whenever they look at any of this natural resource legislation that the federal and provincial governments put forward to increase safety. We do not take for granted what we are doing. That is why the government has put this legislation forward. That is the broader context. I do not know whether I will get through all of my other speaking notes, but I will work on it.

As I was saying, we work very well in the committee. We have had some very good discussions on issues in committee, such as aboriginal treaty rights, environmental damage, the polluter pays principle, something which all parties appear to agree on, pipeline standards, government regulations, and land ownership rights, which is a big one, but it is more provincial than federal.

Members of the committee listened carefully to witnesses who provided expert testimony. We read written submissions with great interest. I am confident that we have a very good piece of legislation. We have got Bill C-46 right in terms of its clarity, its focus, the delineation of roles and responsibilities, and of course, in terms of its effectiveness.

•(1615)

This bill is good policy-making that would strengthen the role of the National Energy Board and would enhance environmental performance of Canada's pipeline industry.

The pipeline safety act also clarifies responsibilities of different levels of government. As has been mentioned before by other members, many of the pipelines in Canada that do not cross provincial boundaries are not the responsibility of the federal government. However, we need to know about the responsibilities of the different levels. It leaves no doubt that the industry, not taxpayers, would be held accountable for any pipeline spill or incident. This is what Canadians demand, and the government expects no less. The industry, as has been noted in other speeches today, is of the same opinion. This again is a significant achievement, one that will lead to even greater confidence in our world-class safety regime for pipelines that deliver much-needed oil and petroleum products every day.

To summarize in a few words what this bill is all about, the pipeline safety act is a commitment by the government to protect both Canada's economy and its environment at the same time. The two go hand in hand. We recognize that economic growth cannot come at any price. We do not support the robber baron style of capitalism. As the Minister of Natural Resources has said many times, no project will proceed under our plan for responsible resource development unless it has been proven safe for Canadians and for the environment. It is that simple.

That is why economic action plan 2015 includes substantive investments and initiatives to maintain public engagement. Let me give a few examples.

The budget provides over \$80 million more over five years for the National Energy Board. The funding begins in 2015-16 and is intended to support greater engagement with Canadians on enhanced safety and environmental protection. Also, there is a \$135 million expenditure to support effective project approvals through major project management initiatives. This is important. This is not just applied to the pipeline industry, but to other industries such as mining, et cetera, that use the major projects management office to try to navigate the regulatory system in a way that is efficient both for environmental reasons and because it makes very good business sense. There is \$30 million in funding for safety of marine transportation in the Arctic and to strengthen marine incident prevention, preparedness and response in the waters that are south of the 60th parallel.

Government Orders

These are concrete steps which the government is taking to ensure that Canadians have confidence in the system. Canadians need to be confident in the systems that are in place to protect Canadians and the environment. Indeed, the development of natural resources deserves both scrutiny and careful stewardship. The processes and systems need to be modern and nimble, reflecting the views and needs of industry and citizens alike.

I would also like to note that this does reflect and reinforce what the government said in the throne speech in 2013. It stated:

Our Government believes, and Canadians expect, that resource development must respect the environment. Our Government's plan for responsible resource development includes measures to protect against spills and other risks in the environment and local communities.

The pipeline safety act is one more example of a promise made, promise kept approach to governing.

There are a couple of other points I would like to take from the throne speech. The government said it will “enshrine the polluter-pay system into law”, something which has been mentioned today. It said it will “set higher safety standards for companies operating offshore as well as those operating pipelines”. We have done other legislation on that.

I would like to end with a quote from the member for Hamilton Mountain, which demonstrates again how well the committee works together and the positive way it approaches things. The member said, “I would be less than honest if I did not acknowledge that [the provisions] appear to be a step in the right direction”. We appreciate that support.

We look forward to working with all partners on this legislation, including industry, citizens whose lands are affected, and of course, members of Parliament across the House.

● (1620)

Ms. Chris Charlton (Hamilton Mountain, NDP): Mr. Speaker, one of the things that all of us must strive to do in this place is to act in a way that is sustainable for future generations and I made that point when the Minister of Finance tabled his budget here in the House. At the time, I expressed my shock when he said that his tax cuts may not be sustainable, but he would leave that problem to the Prime Minister's granddaughter to resolve.

I have a granddaughter and I am completely objective. She is the most adorable granddaughter in the country. I want to make sure that Stella is not confronted with the legacy costs of decisions that we make here today. I am a little afraid that we are doing it again with the bill that is before us today.

The bill purports to implement the polluter pay principle, but there is a ton of discretion still left in the bill, both with respect to discretion for the cabinet and with respect to discretion for the National Energy Board.

If a true polluter pays principle is being implemented, it would require that polluters pay—that polluters pay; that part is critical—rather than leaving a debt on the backs of the next generation. That would respect the true meaning of the term “sustainable development”.

As the member has articulated in his speech and as he knows well from committee, the bill does purport to implement the polluter pay principle, but I wonder whether he would agree with me that in fact we could and perhaps should have strengthened those provisions when we had the chance both at committee and at report stage on the bill.

Mr. Brad Trost: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the hon. member's remarks about how cute her granddaughter is, but I have a six-week-old little girl of my own and it is an undeniable fact that she is the cutest little girl in Canada.

Getting to the hon. member's point, one of the concerns that people have when they look at this and say that the bill does not actually deal with the polluter pay concept, is that there is a limit of \$1 billion on pollution. The point needs to be understood that that is if the company has not been negligent and caused the incident. This is a situation where someone from the outside causes it.

When a company through its own negligence causes a spill of oil, et cetera, whatever is going through its pipeline, the company itself is liable for over \$1 billion. The company could end up being stuck with a considerably higher bill.

The record in Canada is that we do not have anything anywhere like that, so when we look at that provision, the \$1 billion limit which is often referred to as something that gets away from the polluter pay principle, it actually only has an impact when it is someone else's fault that the pipeline is damaged and ends up spilling oil.

● (1625)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there are literally hundreds and hundreds of kilometres of pipelines throughout the country. From what I understand, not all the pipelines are under federal jurisdiction. It begs the question in regard to the importance of the federal government providing strong leadership to work with other jurisdictions dealing with the complete stock of pipelines, especially when pipelines become decommissioned, as some will.

Perhaps the member could provide some thoughts in regard to that issue in terms of pipelines that the federal government as of now might not necessarily be responsible for and what should be taking place in that area.

Mr. Brad Trost: Mr. Speaker, we would respect the jurisdiction of the provinces. I do not know of any single provincial government in this country which does not take the health and safety of its citizens seriously.

I was looking at my notes and I cannot find the exact number of spills annually in Canada with pipelines or any incidents, but it is incredibly small. The number is very low. It is just incredible how little is actually spilled, even with the incident off the west coast, which I know is not a pipeline, into the waters there. Within 36 hours, something like 85% to 90% of the oil was scooped up. That says to me it does not matter who is in charge, be it the federal or provincial government, Canadian governments are doing a good job at making sure this necessary product does not end up polluting the environment.

Government Orders

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Thunder Bay—Superior North, Health; and the hon. member for Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasing, Aboriginal Affairs.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Northwest Territories.

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Northwest Territories, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to Bill C-46, an act to amend the National Energy Board Act and the Canada Oil and Gas Operations Act, a much-needed and long-overdue first step toward a true polluter pays regime for pipelines in Canada. The NDP takes this very seriously. We view the phrase “polluter pays” as being one of the fundamental aspects of our approach to environmental legislation when we are government later on this year. I believe November would be when we would take over.

I am pleased to see there has been co-operation and some degree of collegiality on the natural resources committee on this subject. That is an encouraging sign in a Parliament that has not had much collegiality over the five years of the Conservative majority mandate. It is good to see.

Bill C-46 would open up a liability regime, which is sorely needed. There is none for existing pipelines and that is amazing when we think of the volume, number and lengths of pipelines throughout Canada, many of them crossing provincial boundaries, which would be regulated by the federal government. That is certainly the case for the pipelines that exit my riding, the Northwest Territories.

The bill includes absolute liability for all National Energy Board regulated pipelines, which are those that cross provincial boundaries. I assume that includes all connections to those pipelines. There are web-like networks of pipeline throughout any pipeline system. Oil is collected from different locations in order to fill up a pipeline that might have a capacity of many hundreds of thousands of barrels a day.

Companies would be liable for costs and damages irrespective of fault. This liability could go up to \$1 billion for major oil pipelines, pipelines that have the capacity to transport at least 250,000 barrels of oil per day, and up to an amount prescribed by regulation for smaller companies. That is an important proviso because many of the pipelines are not the size of 250,000 barrels a day. They come from smaller fields in isolated locations. I will speak to that in a bit.

Companies would continue to have unlimited liability when they were at fault or negligent. Accidental leakages, I guess, would mean that pipeline companies are not at fault or negligent, but what does “negligence” mean toward the maintenance and repair of existing pipelines? What does it mean with regard to engineering? If the engineering is inappropriate for the laying of a pipeline, is that considered fault or negligence upon the pipeline company? Some real decision will have to be made by government about what negligence or fault is part of the system, especially for smaller pipelines where perhaps there is less intensity in the environmental process when it comes to putting the pipelines in place.

Bill C-46 leaves considerable leeway for politically motivated decisions and backroom arrangements between operators and the National Energy Board. That is what we are talking about: how do we determine the responsibilities under this act? This also applies to many of the amendments to numerous environmental acts in recent budget implementation bills. We have changed the system considerably over the time of the Conservatives, mostly to weaken legislation that deals with environmental issues.

• (1630)

We have had several pipeline spills in recent history in my riding in the Northwest Territories. Those have come from an industry, mostly located in the Norman Wells area, that has been in place for a considerable length of time. That industry has been in the Northwest Territories since the early 1930s. We have seen that develop over time. We have a pipeline that has a capacity for 45,000 barrels a day that exits the Zama Lake in northern Alberta.

In early May of 2011, a hunter discovered oil leaking from the Enbridge Norman Wells pipeline near the Willowlake River about 50 kilometres south of the community of Wrigley. Enbridge estimated as much as 1,500 barrels of oil leaked from the pipeline. Of course the people in Wrigley were concerned about the impacts of that on the environment and on human health, as well as on the health of the animals and wildlife, which they sincerely use to a great extent for food. This was not a simple matter. It ended up resulting in many thousands of truckloads of material being hauled to the Swan Hills disposal site at a great cost. When we talk about pipelines and 1,500 barrels people wonder what that is. However, when we have to deal with the dirt, the conditions and perform a complete cleanup, it gets very expensive. A lot of money was put into the cleanup that 1,500 barrels.

That is not the only incidence of spills we have had. The community of Norman Wells, where Imperial Oil has a refinery, ranks as the community with the most reported incidents of federally regulated pipelines in the country. Between 2006 and 2012, the National Energy Board recorded more than 70 incidents, including anything from spills and leaks to worker injuries and fires.

We are talking about pipelines that are not new and perhaps not built to the changing conditions of the northern climate. In that area near Norman Wells, scientists have reported losses of up to 40% of the permafrost over the period of a decade. Therefore, we have serious issues with changing conditions. With respect to the pipelines that were built before, the engineering was based on different circumstances. Those types of things lead to problems.

In 2012, the National Energy Board ordered Imperial Oil to come up with a comprehensive plan to deal with 77 buried pipelines at risk of failing.

Therefore, we do have some issues with pipelines in northern conditions. I cannot speak to all of the pipeline issues across the country. There is no question that many aging pipelines are used for the product around Canada. How many of them are provincially controlled and how many are federally controlled I am sure is of concern to everyone.

Government Orders

These 77 buried pipelines, some of which stretch for several kilometres, were installed during a boom in the oilfield expansion in the 1980s. A particular defect in engineering and construction allowed water to get between the pipe insulation and the bare steel leading to corrosion. Therefore, we have pipelines that are suspect and will likely cause problems in the future. As the corrosion gets worse the pipelines, under stress from changing soil conditions, may actually rupture. Corrosion can also cause pinhole leaks that without proper monitoring equipment on these pipelines can release a lot of oil before anybody even realizes what is going on.

Imperial Oil first identified the problem in 2011, after discovering oil seeping to the surface on Bear Island from one of its well sites in the middle of the Mackenzie River. We had leakage in one of our major pristine rivers in the north. Of course there is concern about that. Over the next year and a half, the company found a total of six leaks. Cleanup involved the excavation of thousands of cubic metres of contaminated soil. That soil had to be moved a very long distance in order to deal with it.

• (1635)

In 2004, a curious black bear caused an oil spill near Fort Simpson. About 12,000 litres of oil leaked out after the animal accidentally opened a valve at an Enbridge pipeline site. Is there culpability in that type of leak? Is somebody responsible for ensuring that pipeline valves are protected from the ability of black bears to manipulate them? Of course. The pipeline company's responsibility is to build pipelines that are safe and can live up to any kind of expectation. If a black bear could release a valve, so could people. We had a problem with the type of thing.

These NWT leaks are small in comparison to the roughly 28,000 barrels of crude oil spilled from a plains midstream Canada pipeline near Little Buffalo, Alberta in May 2011, or the massive 9.5 million litre leak near Zama, Alberta in June 2013 from Apache Canada's pipeline. That leak contaminated 42 hectares of boreal forest in northern Alberta.

We need stronger legislation and a stronger approach to pipeline issues in Canada. We cannot simply say that we have the very best, because the very best might have been that way 30 or 40 years ago when the pipeline was first put in place, but these things do not last forever. We can see that in the oil industry throughout the world. Pipeline degradation leads to leaks.

Whether the amount of oil is big or small, the damage to the environment is considerable, and we have to recognize that. Costs will be encountered. This legislation has loopholes within it that do not define precisely what polluters must pay. That is where our concerns are. We are still happy that we are getting something in place, but it is not the full thing I think we would look for from important legislation like this because of the nature and age of the industry in Canada, the need to fully monitor pipelines in an effective fashion so when leaks occur, they are caught as soon as they possibly can be. We are all concerned about those things.

In February 2013, an Enbridge excavation crew encountered contaminated soil in the immediate vicinity of Enbridge Line 21, which is the main Norman Wells pipeline, in two locations. The location in the first dig was kilometre post 457 on a line approximately 60 kilometres west of Fort Simpson. The second

was at kilometre post 391. These two small leaks contaminated 100 cubic metres of soil.

As pipelines age, these sorts of issues start to become more and more, so it is very important that industry, dealing with aging equipment, provides the best possible care and attention to that equipment to ensure these leaks are found early and dealt with.

How does fault and negligence apply to existing operating systems for the pipelines that were approved many years ago by the National Energy Board? How do we ensure that the operating systems for these pipelines are brought up to a level that matches to the extent that the pipelines could have these problems?

While Bill C-46 makes some important improvements to Canada's pipeline liability regime, it does not unequivocally require polluters to pay. This undermines improvements and leaves uncertainty whether taxpayers will still be on the hook, in many cases for cleanup costs greater than the \$1 billion where negligence or fault cannot be proved.

• (1640)

Basically, what we are saying here is that the very small problems are going to be covered. Larger problems, with this whole question of fault and negligence, are going to be at the discretion, I would assume, of the National Energy Board to come up with decisions. Just imagine the pressure and the lobbying efforts that could be made by various senators and other people for pipeline companies in this regime. As well as the National Energy Board being involved in these decisions, I understand the cabinet is or can be involved as well.

Ensuring that those who are responsible for making a mess clean it up is an important principle. We just went through an exercise with the nuclear industry, where we have limited their liability even after we have seen the complete disaster that took place at Fukushima, which cost exponentially more than what our limits are for the nuclear industry in Canada.

Why do we do this? It is because these industries simply cannot make the types of insurance arrangements for the kind of liability that they might incur. That is one of the problems we have in this industrial age, understanding how we can ensure that companies can carry the proper liability insurance or have the proper bond in place so that when things do go bad, the government is not left on the hook.

One of the greater examples of this is the Yellowknife Giant Mine where 237,000 tons of arsenic is going to be stored underground by the government in perpetuity at costs well in excess of \$1 billion.

Things happen in many industries that we need to be very careful about, on prevention, ensuring that regulation and oversight is robust, and that the environmental assessment process leading to projects is also robust, so that we can be assured that when we are planning for the development of new pipelines, care and attention is put to every detail. I think of the Mackenzie gas pipeline and its environmental assessment process that everyone complained took so long, so many years. There were still no answers about what was going on with the pipeline, for the changing and the nature of the permafrost in northern Canada. It still did not get to that, and all the questions were not answered.

Government Orders

Environmental assessment is very important. Unfortunately, the record of the government is weakening environment protections. What this means is that by failing to do a rigorous environmental assessment before a project starts, there is a greater likelihood of problems later on. That is the result.

In the Northwest Territories, first nations are in court fighting against the Conservatives' gutting of the environmental regulatory system contrary to their constitutionally protected land claims and self-government agreements. The first nations are not happy that in the Sahtu region, where the pipelines are in the Northwest Territories, they are losing their regional boards, which could give them significant input into decisions that are made about pipelines to ensure that they understand the process is working best for them. Yukon first nations are preparing for a similar court fight if Bill S-6 ever becomes law.

Progressive companies, on the other hand, have found that high environmental standards actually work to their benefit, if they are selling product in the world. We heard the premier-elect of Alberta talking about that last night, talking about the need to raise the standards of Alberta so that its products can be better accepted around the world. That job is important, to ensure that what we are doing in Canada meets every rigorous requirement. Through that process, we can achieve better results.

• (1645)

Mrs. Kelly Block (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, through this legislation, our government is demonstrating its commitment to protecting the safety of Canadians and the environment. Contrary to what the member has said, Bill C-46 would introduce concrete measures to enhance pipeline safety under the pillars of prevention, preparedness and response, and liability and compensation. It would also build upon previously announced and implemented measures that would enhance pipeline safety and further establish Canada's system as world class.

My question for the member is, are the member and his party actually opposed to legislation that would build on a 99.999% safety record, or will they be supporting Bill C-46?

Mr. Dennis Bevington: Mr. Speaker, I think I made it clear at the beginning of my speech that we were supporting Bill C-46. It is a step in the right direction.

However, in terms of how I see the industry, in totality, acting, I think we do need more efforts put into the legislation that could provide the safeguards that we need. That is simple enough.

We will go ahead and support the legislation going forward.

I thank the parliamentary secretary for her question, but I certainly did refer to it in my speech.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to pick up on the member's comments when he said they would like to take a look at the broader picture, the totality of the industry.

There has been some concern expressed about the lack of support from the NDP toward pipelines in Canada, and I think it is worth getting some further comment from the New Democrats on the issue. It would appear, on the surface, that there is no current proposed

pipeline that the NDP would support in one way or another. If I am wrong, I would ask him to correct me and maybe give an indication as to which pipeline.

Also, I am very interested in knowing what his thoughts are, because when we talk about safety issues, Canada, especially compared with the world, has a pretty good record. There is always room for improvement, but there is a pretty good record.

Some New Democrats have made the suggestion that we should be looking at rail, that it does not just have to be pipelines. I wonder if he would also provide comment on that issue.

• (1650)

Mr. Dennis Bevington: Mr. Speaker, I think when it comes to the question of pipelines or rail, it is not simply either-or. Take the case of the shale oil developments that are very common now throughout western Canada and the United States, in particular, the Bakken field. These drilling sites may provide oil at a certain rate for 18 months or two years. They drop off very quickly. Many companies will not make the investment in a pipeline for a resource that may not last that long. They may have to move to other sites. In that case, there are companies that will want to use rail because that is the only way they can really justify the expense of doing the project.

We could argue and we could talk about what is the proper development but, in some cases, we have to look at what is going on in the industry.

In the case of pipelines, of course, we are committed to looking at pipelines, but through a rigorous environmental process that can give us answers. When we see what has happened in British Columbia, with the northern gateway pipeline, that one quite obviously has a high risk, perhaps not just with the pipeline itself but with where it delivers the oil and the process of the oil going across the ocean afterwards.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Dany Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, NDP): Mr. Speaker, although the NDP supports the bill, I do have some concerns. I would like to ask my colleague for some guidance.

There is uncertainty about far too many provisions, because their implementation is left up to the discretion of the National Energy Board or the Conservative cabinet. Canadians do not have faith in either of them.

Could my NDP colleague tell me what he thinks?

[*English*]

Mr. Dennis Bevington: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for the question, and I think that is where the New Democratic Party wanted to strengthen the bill.

Perhaps we did not get all the amendments we wanted in committee or at report stage. The fact that two amendments were struck, out of some 41 that were put forward by the parties, I do not think indicates a real appetite for making sure that the bill was brought up to the level that we think it should be.

Government Orders

The bill was pretty well kept to where the Conservative government has designed it to be, where an opportunity existed for letting somebody off the hook. Companies that have one type of influence or other over the proceedings of the National Energy Board or through cabinet have some opportunity to be let off the hook. This is part of the problem when we deal with legislation like this: we open up those loopholes. It is certainly not the policy of the NDP to do that. Of course, that is why we brought forward the motions that we did.

Ms. Chris Charlton (Hamilton Mountain, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened closely when the parliamentary secretary was questioning my colleague on the NDP side of the House. She was suggesting that the bill is so perfect, why would everybody not be supporting it?

Of course, we are supporting it. We are supporting it because it is a step in the right direction. However, it is far from a perfect bill when there are discretionary sections in the bill that would allow the cabinet, which is Conservative members for the moment, to decide whether and how much companies must assume liability. That should give Canadians some concern. The Conservative government's record on environmental issues is not exactly the best. I think about amendments to the Species at Risk Act, to the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, to the Fisheries Act, to the Navigable Waters Protection Act. We have seen consistent gutting of environmental protections from the government, and now the Conservatives want us to believe that they are the best stewards of the Canadian environment. I find that hard to believe. I suspect my colleague finds it hard to believe.

I wonder whether my colleague would want to elaborate on what we need to do to truly get back to robust environmental protection in this country.

• (1655)

Mr. Dennis Bevington: Mr. Speaker, that is a pretty broad question to deal with in one minute and 45 seconds, but I will give it a shot.

In terms of what has happened here with the bill, when we separate large pipelines, which are generally held by large corporations with fairly deep pockets, from smaller pipelines that may not have that same degree of protection in terms of fiscal ability to cover the cost of cleanups, then within that range of smaller pipelines, cabinet would have the discretion to set the stage as it sees fit. This means that these companies might well be given much more leniency when it comes to spills. However, a smaller pipeline, as I spoke about in my presentation, can cause a lot of problems as well. They can cause a lot of issues and expense in cleanup.

Therefore, I would think that we need a much stricter interpretation of some of these rules. We should not leave it entirely in the hands of either the appointed National Energy Board or the cabinet.

Mrs. Pat Perkins (Whitby—Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Yukon.

I appreciate this opportunity to speak to legislation that demonstrates our government's commitment to the things that matter most to Canadians: economic growth, energy security, and environmental protection. The pipeline safety act would deliver on all three. It would help to ensure Canada's continued prosperity

while demanding that our vital energy infrastructure is environmentally responsible.

Driving all of this is our determination to have Canadians continue to benefit from pipelines while taxpayers are protected from the potential cost of a pipeline incident. That is why we already have one of the most rigorous pipeline safety regimes in the world. We have measures in place to ensure that Canada's pipelines are safe and modern. We have a national regulator with the teeth to enforce compliance with today's high standards, and we have the results to prove that it is working.

As we have heard many times, between 2008 and 2013, 99.999% of petroleum products transported through federally regulated pipelines in Canada have arrived safely. Our government wants to build on that record of achievement. We are aiming for zero incidents. The pipeline safety act could help us get there.

As members know, the pipeline safety act is another key element in our government's comprehensive plan for responsible resource development. Through this plan, we are ensuring that Canada's abundant natural resources are developed in ways that promote jobs, growth, and long-term prosperity. We are doing this while strengthening environmental protection and ensuring that aboriginal Canadians are engaged in every aspect of resource development.

It is a balanced plan. It is a plan that reduces duplication and makes the regulatory review process more predictable and timely for major resource projects. This plan does so while ensuring that no project is permitted to proceed until it is proven safe for Canadians and safe for the environment.

I would like to pause on that point for just a moment. We have a world-class, and in some cases world-leading, regulatory system overseeing this sector. Our government has already introduced comprehensive measures for tankers and offshore safety to ensure world-class standards. We are also taking action on rail.

Our regulatory system would be further strengthened by this legislation. It would assure Canadians and our international customers that pipeline safety is paramount in Canada. Add such things as technological innovations in the energy sector, our commitment to the meaningful inclusion of aboriginal peoples, and our profound belief in environmental protection and we have all the elements we need to make Canada a global leader in responsible energy development.

The pipeline safety act is an important element in all of this. The act also recognizes that Canada's oil and gas sector is literally helping to fuel our country's economy. In 2013, for example, Canada produced approximately 3.5 million barrels of oil and approximately 13.7 billion cubic feet of natural gas each day. The overwhelming majority of it, some \$100 billion worth, was shipped by pipeline.

Government Orders

As well, in 2013 the oil and gas industry employed about 360,000 Canadians directly and indirectly. That is 360,000 well-paying jobs to support Canadians and their families in every part of our country.

• (1700)

Furthermore, Canada's sale of \$128 billion in energy products in 2013 represented more than a quarter of our country's merchandise exports. This impact is incredible. The oil and gas industry alone generated almost 8% of our gross domestic product. Over the last five years it generated an average of \$23.3 billion annually in government revenue to help pay for social programs such as health care, education, and infrastructure.

Despite recent declines in oil and gas prices, the sheer size of these numbers underscores why our government is doing everything it can to harness the opportunities and benefits of our energy sector for Canadians. Safe, secure, and modern pipelines are essential to these efforts. In fact, the pipeline industry itself is a major employer in Canada, supporting thousands of jobs throughout the country.

The Standing Committee on Natural Resources, which I have the pleasure to be a part of, heard from a representative of Canada's Building Trades Unions, who described the type of job creation at stake with the construction of new pipelines. He said:

If it is an oil pipeline, it means we will have thousands of people in a variety of trades, including plumbers, boilermakers, millwrights, iron workers, sheet metal-workers, insulators, labourers, scaffolders, carpenters, and the occasional elevator constructor.... About 60 trades are involved.

That is just the construction of the pipeline. It is just one element of the economic value derived from creating a modern, safe network of pipelines.

The pipeline safety act would strengthen this world-class effort. Specifically, Bill C-46 would offer additional measures and protections in three key areas. The first is incident prevention, the second is preparedness and response, and the third is liability and compensation.

Liability and compensation is particularly important, because it sends a clear signal of our government's intent to hold pipeline operators accountable for any harm, loss, or damage they might cause.

Canadians should make no mistake about our government's determination in this regard. As the Minister of Natural Resources has said on many occasions, the pipeline safety act would build on companies' unlimited liability when they are at fault or are negligent. This legislation would do so by implementing no-fault or absolute liability for all companies operating pipelines. For major oil pipelines, the absolute liability would be \$1 billion. This means that pipeline companies would be responsible for damages, regardless of what happens or who is at fault. It is a standard that would leave nothing to chance.

The pipeline safety act would specifically provide governments with the ability to pursue pipeline operators for the cost of environmental damages. In addition, the legislation would give the National Energy Board the authority to order the reimbursement of spill cleanup costs incurred by governments, aboriginal governing bodies, or individuals.

The bottom line is that taxpayers would not be left on the hook. The full cost of cleanup and compensation would be borne by the pipeline operators, as it should be. This would even extend to pipelines that have been abandoned. Operators would cover any costs and damages related to their pipelines when they were no longer in use. In other words, it is a liability that would continue in perpetuity, or at least until the pipeline was removed from the ground.

I could go on about the merits of Bill C-46, but let me close by simply inviting members to consider this legislation carefully. If they do, I am confident that they will support it as a way of ensuring the safety of our pipelines, the strength of our energy sector, and the prosperity of Canadians.

• (1705)

Mr. Jamie Nicholls (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there is a federally regulated pipeline in my riding that my constituents are very concerned about. In fact, the 23 municipalities of Vaudreuil—Soulanges have asked, through resolutions, for hydrostatic testing on this 40-year-old Enbridge pipeline. Whitby—Oshawa is also one of the regions this pipeline goes through.

It is true that pipeline standards for newly built pipelines are world-class, but what about grandfathered ones, such as this Enbridge line? Why has there been so much discretionary authority given to the NEB in cases such as this? To gain social licence in my region, there is a lot more work to do. How does the member intend to address these issues?

Mrs. Pat Perkins: Mr. Speaker, we addressed those matters at our committee. I am fortunate to be able to speak first hand to that, because we had the National Energy Board members there. We also had the pipeline folks there. We asked those questions.

Basically, they have some new technology. They will replace anything they need to replace. Although that is a 40-year-old pipeline, they have new technology, and they are testing throughout the pipeline to find out where there may be problems.

We have to remember, the liability lies with the carriers. They are not about to not fix something that is going to cost them a lot of money. They are going through that process now.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians have an expectation that the government will pass legislation that will protect our environment and hold companies accountable for polluting. Their responsibility for cleaning up that mess is a principle we have believed in for many years. It is good to see that we are moving forward on that issue. In that sense, the legislation is good. However, the member spent a great deal of time talking about the economics of the oil and gas industry. This is an issue I would like to ask her a question about.

Government Orders

One of the most significant projects is the Keystone pipeline. The Government of Canada has failed to demonstrate strong leadership on it. It is one of the reasons so many from within the industry are looking to Ottawa and asking what is happening and why Ottawa has not responded to the needs. It seems to me that the Government of Canada, in not doing that, has not only dropped the ball but has really hurt Canada's economy, and therefore the middle class and so forth.

I wonder if she would like to provide some comment on the importance of expanding the industry while protecting our environment. She seems to have forgotten about that issue.

• (1710)

Mrs. Pat Perkins: Mr. Speaker, certainly the Keystone issue is not a forgotten issue. As we know, there are many parties involved, and negotiations are required. Negotiations are under way and are ongoing, and I am sure we will be hearing an update on that matter.

Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon (Mississauga East—Cooksville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a specific question about regulating pipelines that transport less than 250,000 barrels per day. Could she tell the House how those pipelines would be regulated?

Mrs. Pat Perkins: Mr. Speaker, all the regulated pipelines would be impacted by the proposed liability regime in the bill. The absolute liability for the operators of a major oil pipeline would be set out explicitly at \$1 billion. The other classes are to be defined in the regulations, which would follow. We will not have the regulation-making authority to establish the other classes until the bill passes.

However, the government has begun its work to look at the regulatory aspect of how to establish the other classes. That is a normal process. It is anticipated that the classes would include oil pipelines transporting less than 250,000 barrels a day and those transporting natural gas and non-energy pipelines.

We are looking forward to seeing that come forward.

Mr. Ryan Leef (Yukon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to join the debate on Bill C-46. I would like to thank my hon. colleague, who spoke just before me, for being so generous in splitting her time with me today.

I am obviously pleased to be here because this speaks directly to our government's priorities: energy, security, economic growth and environmental protection. The pipeline safety act would deliver all three. It recognizes the importance of pipelines to transport the energy we need and use every single day in this vast country. Whether it is to fuel our cars, power our businesses or factories, or heat our homes, like the homes in Yukon, my home riding, pipelines play an essential role in moving our necessary energy around this country. It supports a significant role the oil and gas sectors play in our national economy.

We have heard the numbers many times in the House, but they are worth repeating. The energy sector, led by our abundant oil and gas resources, directly contributed almost 10% of Canada's economy in 2013. It also generated an average of \$25 billion a year in federal and provincial revenues between 2008 and 2012. When we think about those numbers and the programs and services that the federal and provincial governments are able to deliver to their respective jurisdictions, be they social support, education, health, environ-

mental initiatives or economic priorities, those numbers contribute greatly to allow each provincial and federal government to deliver for the priorities of Canadians.

Finally, the pipeline safety act reflects the importance we have placed on making pipelines safer. Under our government, energy security and economic growth will never come at the expense of environmental safety. That is why our comprehensive plan for responsible resource development makes clear that no resource development will be permitted unless projects are deemed to be safe, safe for Canadians and safe for the environment. Indeed, our government has proven that time and time again.

The pipeline safety act is a key component of this plan for responsibly developing our natural resources. As we know, Bill C-46 is based on three key pillars: incident prevention, preparedness and response, and liability and compensation.

There is widespread agreement that this legislation hits the mark on all three pieces. Indeed, a cross-section of witnesses offered expert testimony on the bill to the Standing Committee on Natural Resources, of which I am a member. There was general consensus that the legislation is needed and, indeed, a positive step.

After taking a closer look at some of the key provisions in the legislation, I hope Canadians will have a better understanding of how Bill C-46 would contribute to achieving all three priorities. We will continue to create and protect jobs and opportunities for Canadians from coast to coast to coast by encouraging our country's energy independence.

We will do so while maintaining and strengthening one of the most stringent and effective pipeline safety regimes in the world. In fact, each and every day Canadians drive, sleep and work over top of hundreds of thousands of kilometres of pipelines in our country.

As we heard in other debates and interventions from members in the House, Canada's pipeline safety record is tremendous, a 99.99% safety record. That is something we can certainly boast about. It is something that Canadians should have a great deal of pride in and it certainly warrants the measure of Canada having a world-class safety regime. What does that mean in respect of how other countries operate in the world, in terms of their safety and our legislative competence with this? Let me touch on a couple of those pieces.

The spill rate in Canada in comparison to other countries was 57% lower than in Europe and 60% lower than in the United States over an 11-year period. That is a pretty exceptional record. While the United States and the United Kingdom have similar legislation in place, the \$1 billion minimum financial capacity, an absolute limited liability, is unique to this Canadian legislation.

• (1715)

Canada will also be unique in having a cost recovered financial backstop model that provides complete coverage for cleanup and damages.

Government Orders

I think everyone in the House would agree that prevention of any kind of accident or any kind of spill is the most important piece of our environmental protection regime. If something were to occur, with the \$1 billion limited liability backstop and with penalties under the act, Canadians could be assured that breaches of any provision in this legislation would be taken seriously and that taxpayers would not be on the hook for the cleanup.

Exactly what kind of penalties would pipeline companies be subject to if they were to break the law? If we exceeded our ambition and our goals of prevention being the first and most important step and an accident were to occur, pipeline operators would be subject to the same laws that govern all industry activities in Canada, which means they would be liable without limit for incidents when they are at fault or negligent.

Second, under the National Energy Board, companies are subject to fines and imprisonment depending on the severity of the offence. Third, responsible resource development gave the NEB additional powers to implement administrative monetary penalties which enable the NEB to fine companies for contraventions of any regulations and orders. This is a new tool that would ensure smaller offences are punished.

The measures proposed today would enhance and further clarify all of these provisions. What are companies going to do to update any of the old pipelines? I know this question was posed to the previous speaker, but there are three principles that need to be recalled when this is taken under consideration.

We want to define our world-class safety systems. Prevention, of course, is integral to that piece of the plan. The legislation requires the use of best available technologies as well as the integration of aboriginal communities and businesses in pipeline safety, pipeline monitoring and operations.

All federally regulated pipelines would be impacted by these proposed measures regardless of whether they are operating, planned or under construction. Old, new or proposed plans would be subject to this new pipeline regime.

We have some questions that will mostly come around on what we are wanting to do to ensure why we are not requiring companies to create a pooled fund in advance of a spill. We are concerned about the worst case scenario. There is that old adage, hope for the best, prepare for the worst.

With our safety record in place of 99.99%, we still do have to be realistic in terms of what we can expect to see and reflect back on some past incidents to guide us in that direction. At the same time we must ensure that while we are balancing out the necessary protection for the environment and the communities in which these pipelines operate, we are realistic about allowing these companies to move ahead with moving Canada's much needed energy around this country.

From that point we can assure Canadians that any backstop, if it is assessed, will be fully recovered from industry to ensure that the taxpayers are protected. That is a fundamental piece. While Canadians expect, want and demand the strictest and safest pipeline regime, they also want to know that if there are any accidents, they as taxpayers are not responsible for cleaning it up.

We hold that firm and we have in many other pieces of legislation that we put forward. This is no exception. The polluter pay principle stands. The polluter pay principle is something Canadians want. The polluter pay principle is something Canadians expect and the polluter pay principle is something that this government is going to deliver as we move forward with our responsible resource development regime.

• (1720)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Dany Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, the NDP will support this bill. However, I have a comment and a question for my Conservative colleague.

Social licence, or public approval of the development of our natural resources, is just as important as authorization by a regulatory body. Why are the Conservatives refusing to do what it takes to obtain public support for pipeline projects in Canada? I think that this question will be asked across the country.

[*English*]

Mr. Ryan Leef: Mr. Speaker, I do not disagree that social licence is an important part of what we do in our responsible resource development regime.

It is important to understand that part of this legislation imbeds some of those very fundamental pieces. The polluter pays principle is very much based on what the public has told us they want, expect and demand, as I said in my intervention.

We have also imbedded in this legislation the requirements and the commitment to work with aboriginal and first nations communities, not only in proposed projects but also in terms of developing and utilizing best technologies as we move forward to ensure the continued integrity of a world-class safety regime.

That, of course, comes not just from subject-matter experts that deal with this but from community subject-matter experts who live, work and play in regions where pipelines operate safely every single day in this country.

• (1725)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when the government amended the Navigable Waters Protection Act, it weakened the legislation and it also transferred responsibility for environmental assessments of energy projects to the National Energy Board.

We learned last week that the board considers that it does not have the expertise required to assess the risks associated with a pipeline accident that could pollute water. At the time, we were assured that the National Energy Board had this expertise. However, we now realize that the board must conduct public consultations and request further information from companies about their plans in the event of an accident.

I would like the member to elaborate on the transfer of this responsibility to the board, which cannot fully discharge it.

Government Orders

[English]

Mr. Ryan Leef: Mr. Speaker, I guess I am bit perplexed about why the member opposite would assume that the Navigable Waters Protection Act did anything but deal with navigation on waters, and where anybody assessing that piece of legislation, or who is tasked with the inspection, enforcement and regulation of the Navigable Waters Protection Act, would be in a position to deal with pipelines.

There is no more suitable board in this country than the National Energy Board to deal with national energy issues. It seems to be the case, though, every time, that the opposition, when we make streamlined, efficient and effective decisions around people who are designed and should be governing particular things, looks to other pieces of legislation to find excuses as to where, how and why these changes should not be made.

I imagine the member opposite would probably propose that if we made changes to the stuffed animals and toys protection act that that somehow would jeopardize the environment.

This does not. It only strengthens the environmental regime. We will continue on that track and Canadians know that.

Mrs. Kelly Block (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for the work that he does on the natural resources committee. He is a very active member. I appreciate what he brings to the table coming from Yukon.

This legislation builds on a safety record of 99.999%. How does this legislation relate to ensuring public confidence in pipelines?

Mr. Ryan Leef: Mr. Speaker, as we maintain public confidence in this through the polluter pay principle, which is clearly important to all Canadian citizens, we are also introducing concrete measures to enhance pipeline safety under the pillars of prevention, preparedness and response, and liability and compensation.

Canadians can be assured that with those pillars in place in this legislation, our government will commit to doing everything we can to achieve those strong pillars in order to ensure we adhere to everything we have set out in responsible resource development.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

* * *

ANTI-TERRORISM ACT, 2015

The House resumed from May 5 consideration of the motion that Bill C-51, An Act to enact the Security of Canada Information Sharing Act and the Secure Air Travel Act, to amend the Criminal Code, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act and to make related and consequential amendments to other Acts, be read the third time and passed, and of the amendment

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Pursuant to an order made on Tuesday, May 5, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the amendment to the motion at third reading of Bill C-51.

Call in the members.

● (1800)

And the bells having rung:

The Speaker: The question is on the amendment. May I dispense?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

[Chair read text of amendment to House]

● (1810)

(The House divided on the amendment, which was negated on the following division:)

(Division No. 394)

YEAS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Angus
Ashton	Atamanenko
Aubin	Ayala
Bevington	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brahmi
Brousseau	Caron
Cash	Charlton
Chicoine	Chisholm
Choquette	Christopherson
Cleary	Comartin
Côté	Crowder
Cullen	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Davies (Vancouver East)	Day
Dewar	Dionne Labelle
Donnelly	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Dusseau	Freeman
Garrison	Genest
Genest-Jourdain	Giguère
Godin	Gravelle
Groguhé	Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Harris (St. John's East)	Hughes
Hyer	Julian
Kellway	Lapointe
Larose	Latendresse
Laverdière	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)
Leslie	Liu
Mai	Marston
Martin	Mathysen
May	Michaud
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)	Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)	Mulcair
Nantel	Nash
Nicholls	Nunez-Melo
Pacetti	Papillon
Patry	Pécelet
Pilon	Plamondon
Quach	Rafferty
Rankin	Ravignat
Raynault	Rousseau
Saganash	Sandhu
Scott	Sellah
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sitsabaiesan
Stewart	Stoffer
Sullivan	Toone
Tremblay—	

Government Orders

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy
Adler
Albas
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Ambler
Anders
Andrews
Aspin
Bélanger
Benoit
Bernier
Blaney
Boughen
Breitkreuz
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Butt
Calkins
Carmichael
Casey
Chong
Clement
Crockatt
Daniel
Dechert
Dion
Dubourg
Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Eglinski
Falk
Fast
Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Foote
Fry
Gallant
Gill
Goguen
Goodale
Gosal
Grewal
Hawn
Hiebert
Hoback
Hsu
Jones
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Kent
Komarnicki
Lake
Lauzon
LeBlanc (Beauséjour)
Leitch
Leung
Lobb
Lunney
MacKay (Central Nova)
Maguire
McCallum
McGuinty
McLeod
Miller
Moore (Fundy Royal)
Nicholson
Obhrai
O'Neill Gordon
O'Toole
Payne
Poilievre
Raitt
Regan
Rempel
Rickford
Scarpaleggia
Seeback
Shipley
Smith
Sorenson
Storseth
Sweet
Toet

Adams
Aglukkaq
Albrecht
Allison
Ambrose
Anderson
Armstrong
Barlow
Bennett
Bergen
Bezan
Block
Braid
Brison
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Calandra
Cannan
Carrie
Chisu
Clarke
Cotler
Cuzner
Davidson
Devolin
Dreeshen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)
Easter
Eyking
Fantino
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)
Fletcher
Freeland
Galipeau
Garneau
Glover
Goldring
Goodyear
Gourde
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hayes
Hillyer
Holder
James
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lamoureux
Lebel
Leef
Lemieux
Lizon
Lukiwski
MacAulay
MacKenzie
Mayes
McColeman
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
Menegakis
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Murray
Norlock
O'Connor
Opitz
Paradis
Perkins
Preston
Rajotte
Reid
Richards
Saxton
Schellenberger
Sgro
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind-
sor)
Sopuck
Stanton
Strahl
Tilson
Trost

Trottier
Truppe
Valcourt
Van Kesteren
Vaughan
Wallace
Warkentin
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)
Weston (Saint John)
Wilks
Wong
Yelich
Young (Vancouver South)
Zimmer — 183

Trudeau
Uppal
Valeriote
Van Loan
Vellacott
Warawa
Watson
Williamson
Woodworth
Young (Oakville)
Yurdiga

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the amendment defeated.

The next question is on the main motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

• (1820)

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

(Division No. 395)

YEAS

Members

Ablonczy
Adler
Albas
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Ambler
Anders
Andrews
Aspin
Bélanger
Benoit
Bernier
Blaney
Boughen
Breitkreuz
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Butt
Calkins
Carmichael
Casey
Chong
Clement
Crockatt
Daniel
Dechert
Dion
Dubourg
Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Eglinski
Falk

Adams
Aglukkaq
Albrecht
Allison
Ambrose
Anderson
Armstrong
Barlow
Bennett
Bergen
Bezan
Block
Braid
Brison
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Calandra
Cannan
Carrie
Chisu
Clarke
Cotler
Cuzner
Davidson
Devolin
Dreeshen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)
Easter
Eyking
Fantino

Private Members' Business

Fast	Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Davies (Vancouver East)	Day
Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Fletcher	Dewar	Dionne Labelle
Foote	Freeland	Donnelly	Doré Lefebvre
Fry	Galipeau	Dubé	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Gallant	Garneau	Dusseault	Freeman
Gill	Glover	Garrison	Genest
Goguen	Goldring	Genest-Jourdain	Giguère
Goodale	Goodyear	Godin	Gravelle
Gosal	Gourde	Grogulé	Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Grewal	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Harris (St. John's East)	Hughes
Hawn	Hayes	Hyer	Julian
Hiebert	Hillyer	Kellway	Lapointe
Hoback	Holder	Larose	Latendresse
Hsu	James	Laverdière	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)
Jones	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)	Leslie	Liu
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)	Mai	Marston
Kent	Kerr	Martin	Masse
Komarnicki	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Mathysen	May
Lake	Lamoureux	Michaud	Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Lauzon	Lebel	Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)	Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
LeBlanc (Beauséjour)	Leef	Mulcair	Nantel
Leitch	Lemieux	Nash	Nicholls
Leung	Lizon	Nunez-Melo	Pacetti
Lobb	Lukiwski	Papillon	Patry
Lunney	MacAulay	Péclet	Pilon
MacKay (Central Nova)	MacKenzie	Plamondon	Quach
Maguire	Mayes	Rafferty	Rankin
McCallum	McColeman	Ravignat	Raynault
McGuinty	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	Rousseau	Saganash
McLeod	Menegakis	Sandhu	Scott
Miller	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	Sellah	Sims (Newton—North Delta)
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Murray	Sitsabaiesan	Stewart
Nicholson	Norlock	Stoffer	Sullivan
Obhrai	O'Connor	Toone	Tremblay— 96
O'Neill Gordon	Opitz		
O'Toole	Paradis		
Payne	Perkins		
Poillievre	Preston		
Raitt	Rajotte		
Regan	Reid		
Rempel	Richards		
Rickford	Saxton		
Scarpaleggia	Schellenberger		
Seeback	Sgro		
Shipley	Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind- sor)		
Smith	Sopuck		
Sorenson	Stanton		
Storseth	Strahl		
Sweet	Tilson		
Toet	Trost		
Trottier	Trudeau		
Truppe	Uppal		
Valcourt	Valeriote		
Van Kesteren	Van Loan		
Vaughan	Vellacott		
Wallace	Warawa		
Warkentin	Watson		
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)	Williamson		
Weston (Saint John)	Woodworth		
Wilks	Young (Oakville)		
Wong	Yurdiga		
Yelich			
Young (Vancouver South)			
Zimmer— 183			

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.
(Bill read the third time and passed)

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

CRIMINAL CODE

The House resumed from May 1 consideration of the motion that Bill C-637, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (firearms storage and transportation), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Speaker: The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-637, under private members' business.

● (1825)

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

(Division No. 396)

NAYS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Angus
Ashton	Atamanenko
Aubin	Ayala
Bevington	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brahmi
Brousseau	Caron
Cash	Charlton
Chicoine	Chisholm
Choquette	Christopherson
Cleary	Comartin
Côté	Crowder
Cullen	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)

YEAS

Members

Ablonczy	Adler
Aglukkaq	Albas
Albrecht	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Allison	Amber
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Armstrong
Aspin	Barlow
Benoit	Bergen
Bernier	Bezan
Blaney	Block

Private Members' Business

Boughen	Braid	Caron	Casey
Breitkreuz	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Cash	Charlton
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Butt	Chicoine	Chisholm
Calandra	Calkins	Choquette	Christopherson
Cannan	Carmichael	Cleary	Comartin
Carrie	Chisu	Côté	Cotler
Chong	Clarke	Crowder	Cullen
Clement	Crockatt	Cuzner	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Daniel	Davidson	Davies (Vancouver East)	Day
Dechert	Devolin	Dewar	Dion
Dreeshen	Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dionne Labelle	Donnelly
Eglinks	Falk	Doré Lefebvre	Dubé
Fantino	Fast	Dubourg	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)	Dusseault
Fletcher	Galipeau	Easter	Eyking
Gallant	Gill	Foote	Freeland
Glover	Goguen	Freeman	Fry
Goldring	Goodyear	Gameau	Garrison
Gosal	Gourde	Genest	Genest-Jourdain
Grewal	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Giguère	Godin
Hawn	Hayes	Goodale	Gravelle
Hiebert	Hillyer	Groguhé	Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Hoback	Holder	Harris (St. John's East)	Hsu
Hyer	James	Hughes	Jones
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)	Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Julian	Kellway
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)	Kent	Lamoureux	Lapointe
Kerr	Komarnicki	Larose	Latendresse
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lake	Laverdière	LeBlanc (Beauséjour)
Lauzon	Lebel	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)	Leslie
Leef	Leitch	Liu	MacAulay
Lemieux	Leung	Mai	Marston
Lizon	Lobb	Martin	Masse
Lukiwski	Lunney	Mathysen	May
MacKay (Central Nova)	MacKenzie	McCallum	McGuinty
Maguire	Mayes	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	Michaud
McColeman	McLeod	Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)	Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
Menegakis	Miller	Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)	Mulcair
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)		Murray	Nantel
Moore (Fundy Royal)		Nash	Nicholls
Nicholson	Norlock	Nunez-Melo	Pacetti
Obhrai	O'Connor	Papillon	Patry
O'Neill Gordon	Opitz	Péclet	Pilon
O'Toole	Paradis	Plamondon	Quach
Payne	Perkins	Rafferty	Rankin
Poillievre	Preston	Ravignat	Raynault
Raitt	Rajotte	Regan	Rousseau
Reid	Rempel	Saganash	Sandhu
Richards	Rickford	Scarpaleggia	Scott
Saxton	Schellenberger	Sellah	Sgro
Seeback	Shipley	Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sitsabaiesan
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)		Stewart	Stoffer
Smith		Sullivan	Toone
Sopuck	Sorenson	Tremblay	Trudeau
Stanton	Storseth	Valeriotte	Vaughan— 128
Strahl	Sweet		
Tilson	Toet		
Trost	Trottier		
Truppe	Uppal		
Valcourt	Van Kesteren		
Van Loan	Vellacott		
Wallace	Warawa		
Warkentin	Watson		
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)			
Weston (Saint John)			
Wilks	Williamson		
Wong	Woodworth		
Yelich	Young (Oakville)		
Young (Vancouver South)	Yurdiga		
Zimmer— 151			

NAYS

Members

Adams	Allen (Welland)
Andrews	Angus
Ashton	Atamanenko
Aubin	Ayala
Bélangier	Bennett
Bevington	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brahmi
Brison	Brosseau

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security.

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

* * *

[Translation]

UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ACT

The House resumed from May 4 consideration of the motion that Bill C-641, An Act to ensure that the laws of Canada are in harmony with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Speaker: The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-641, under private members' business.

Private Members' Business

●(1835)

[English]

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

(Division No. 397)

YEAS

Members

Adams	Allen (Welland)
Andrews	Angus
Ashton	Atamanenko
Aubin	Ayala
Bélangier	Bennett
Bevington	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brahmi
Brisson	Brosseau
Caron	Casey
Cash	Charlton
Chicoine	Chisholm
Choquette	Christopherson
Cleary	Comartin
Côté	Cotler
Crowder	Cullen
Cuzner	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Davies (Vancouver East)	Day
Dewar	Dion
Dionne Labelle	Donnelly
Doré Lefebvre	Dubé
Dubourg	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)	Dusseault
Easter	Eyking
Foote	Freeland
Freeman	Fry
Garneau	Garrison
Genest	Genest-Jourdain
Giguère	Godin
Goodale	Gravelle
Grogohé	Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Harris (St. John's East)	Hsu
Hughes	Hyer
Jones	Julian
Kellway	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Larose
Latendresse	Laverdière
LeBlanc (Beauséjour)	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)
Leslie	Liu
MacAulay	Mai
Marston	Martin
Masse	Mathysen
May	McCallum
McGuinty	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
Michaud	Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)	Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)	Mulcair
Murray	Nantel
Nash	Nicholls
Nunez-Melo	Pacetti
Papillon	Patry
Péclet	Pilon
Plamondon	Quach
Rafferty	Rankin
Ravignat	Raynault
Regan	Rousseau
Saganash	Sandhu
Scarpaleggia	Scott
Sellah	Sgro
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)	Stewart
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sullivan
Sitsabaiesan	Tremblay
Stoffer	Valeriote
Toone	
Trudeau	
Vaughan— 131	

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy	Adler
Aglukkaq	Albas
Albrecht	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Allison	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Armstrong
Aspin	Barlow
Benoit	Bergen
Bernier	Bezan
Blaney	Block
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Butt
Calandra	Calkins
Cannan	Carmichael
Carrie	Chisu
Chong	Clarke
Clement	Crockatt
Daniel	Davidson
Dechert	Devolin
Dreeschen	Duncan (Vancouver Island North)
Egliniski	Falk
Fantino	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Galipeau
Gallant	Gill
Glover	Goguen
Goldring	Goodyear
Gosal	Gourde
Grewal	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hawn	Hayes
Hiebert	Hillyer
Hoback	Holder
James	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kent	Kerr
Komarnicki	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lake	Lauzon
Lebel	Leaf
Leitch	Lemieux
Leung	Lizon
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Maguire
Mayes	McColeman
McLeod	Menegakis
Miller	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Nicholson
Norlock	Obhrai
O'Connor	O'Neill Gordon
Opitz	O'Toole
Paradis	Payne
Perkins	Poilievre
Preston	Raitt
Rajotte	Reid
Rempel	Richards
Rickford	Saxton
Schellenberger	Seeback
Shipley	Smith
Sopuck	Sorenson
Stanton	Storseth
Strahl	Sweet
Tilson	Toet
Trost	Trottier
Truppe	Uppal
Valcourt	Van Kesteren
Van Loan	Vellacott
Wallace	Warawa
Warkentin	Watson
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)	
Weston (Saint John)	
Wilks	Williamson
Wong	Woodworth
Yelich	Young (Oakville)
Young (Vancouver South)	Yurdiga
Zimmer — 149	

PAIRED

Nil

Private Members' Business

The Speaker: I declare the motion defeated.

* * *

[*Translation*]

NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR DEMENTIA ACT

The House resumed from May 5 consideration of the motion that Bill C-356, An Act respecting a National Strategy for Dementia, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Speaker: The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-356, under private members' business.

• (1845)

[*English*]

Before the Clerk announced the results of the vote:

The Speaker: Perhaps the hon. member for Elgin—Middlesex—London would like to clarify which way he is intending to vote.

Mr. Joe Preston: Certainly, Mr. Speaker. I will be voting against this.

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

(*Division No. 398*)

YEAS

Members

Adams	Allen (Welland)
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Andrews
Angus	Ashton
Atamanenko	Aubin
Ayala	Bélangier
Bennett	Bevington
Blanchette	Blanchette-Lamothe
Boivin	Borg
Boulerice	Boutin-Sweet
Brahmi	Brisson
Brosseau	Caron
Casey	Cash
Charlton	Chicoine
Chisholm	Choquette
Christopherson	Cleary
Comartin	Côté
Cotler	Crowder
Cullen	Cuzner
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)	Davies (Vancouver East)
Day	Dewar
Dion	Dionne Labelle
Donnelly	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Dubourg
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Dusseault	Easter
Eyking	Footo
Freeland	Freeman
Fry	Garneau
Garrison	Genest
Genest-Jourdain	Giguère
Godin	Goldring
Goodale	Gravelle
Groghé	Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Harris (St. John's East)	Hsu
Hughes	Hyer
Julian	Kellway
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Larose	Latendresse
Laverdière	LeBlanc (Beauséjour)
LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)	Leslie
Liu	MacAulay
Mai	Marston

Martin	Masse
Mathysen	May
McCallum	McGuinty
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	Michaud
Miller	Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)	Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)	Mulcair
Murray	Nantel
Nash	Nicholls
Nunez-Melo	Pacetti
Papillon	Patry
Pécelet	Pilon
Plamondon	Quach
Rafferty	Rankin
Ravignat	Raynault
Regan	Rousseau
Saganash	Sandhu
Scarpaleggia	Scott
Sellah	Sgro
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)	Stewart
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sullivan
Sitsabaiesan	Toone
Stoffer	Troost
Tilson	Trudeau
Tremblay	Vaughan
Trudeau	Valeriot
Vaughan	Vellacott
Warawa	Weston (Saint John)
Woodworth — 139	

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy	Adler
Aglukkaq	Albas
Albrecht	Allison
Ambler	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson
Armstrong	Aspin
Barlow	Benoit
Bergen	Bernier
Bezan	Blaney
Block	Boughen
Braid	Breitkreuz
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Butt	Calandra
Calkins	Cannan
Carmichael	Carrie
Chisu	Chong
Clarke	Clement
Crockatt	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Devolin	Dreeschen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Eglinski
Falk	Fantino
Fast	Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)
Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Fletcher
Galipeau	Gallant
Gill	Glover
Goguen	Goodyear
Gosal	Gourde
Grewal	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hawn	Hayes
Hiebert	Hillyer
Hoback	Holder
James	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kent	Kerr
Komarnicki	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lake	Lauzon
Lebel	Leef
Leitch	Lemieux
Leung	Lizon
Lobb	Lukivski
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Maguire
Mayer	McColeman
McLeod	Menegakis
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Nicholson	Norlock
Obhrai	O'Connor
O'Neill Gordon	Opitz

O'Toole
Payne
Poilievre
Raitt
Reid
Richards
Saxton
Seeback
Smith
Sorenson
Storseth
Sweet
Trottier
Uppal
Van Kesteren
Wallace
Watson
Sky Country)
Wilks
Wong
Young (Oakville)
Yurdiga

Paradis
Perkins
Preston
Rajotte
Rempel
Rickford
Schellenberger
Shipley
Sopuck
Stanton
Strahl
Toet
Truppe
Valcourt
Van Loan
Warkentin
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to
Williamson
Yelich
Young (Vancouver South)
Zimmer— 140

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion defeated.

* * *

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thought now would be an appropriate time for me to designate Friday, May 8, as an allotted day.

The Speaker: It being 6:46 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]

CANADA SHIPPING ACT, 2001

The House resumed from February 26 consideration of the motion that Bill C-638, An Act to amend the Canada Shipping Act, 2001 (wreck), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by thanking my colleague from Nanaimo—Cowichan for bringing Bill C-638 to the House of Commons. It is an important bill. It addresses an important series of issues. I will take a few minutes to explain for Canadians who are following the proceedings around this debate.

It is our view in the Liberal Party of Canada that a federal government has to show leadership in an area that crosses jurisdictions that involve such a variety of important issues.

In my remarks I want to also acknowledge the incredibly good work that my colleague, the Liberal member for Cardigan, is doing as a long-time supporter of action in this area and as someone we look to in our own caucus for leadership when it comes to issues around ports and waterways and of course, ocean policy, as a long-time fisheries critic.

The bill deals with the challenge of derelict and abandoned vessels, which are a very serious concern for our shorelines, harbour

Private Members' Business

authorities, property owners, communities, and orders of government. They can create real problems in our waterways. They can cost all kinds of money in terms of having them repaired or removed. They create obstacles in our waterways. There are of course the implicit and explicit environmental issues that surround this question of abandoned derelict vessels.

This is also an expensive issue for Canada, and it is not one that is going away. There are 2.6 million pleasure craft licensed in Canada today. This is a problem that is not going away. The order of magnitude is simply growing.

There is a financial burden that is falling on community organizations, on municipal and provincial governments, and even on property owners.

One of the problems we see when we look at what the member for Nanaimo—Cowichan is trying to address in the bill, which we support, is the issue of who is in charge. It seems like everybody's job is nobody's job when it comes to this important issue, which is on both the west coast and the east coast and which I am sure is in play as well when it comes to our northernmost shorelines.

It is important to clarify which agency, order of government, or body is in charge of different situations. We need to make sure that we identify all possible measures that can be taken to identify and locate the owners of the wrecks, for example. Confusion reigns in this area.

Sometimes it is Transport Canada. The Minister of Transport can become involved if a vessel is causing obstruction or is blocking navigation, for example. Other times it is the Canadian Coast Guard, when it is called in to deal with threats around pollution, as we saw recently on the west coast of Canada in another episode. The Coast Guard was dispatched to play a role when there was a major leak. Of course, it is in a position to recover the cost of its expenses to deal with that pollution from the ship source oil pollution fund. The problem is that once the pollution has been dealt with and the sources of the pollution have been dealt with, the Coast Guard does not have the authority itself to then move and deal with the derelict vessel, the abandoned vessel, the problem vessel, and this is a real situation for so many of our harbours around the country.

Then again, if this abandoned or derelict vessel, this problem vessel, as I might describe it, is not a major environmental concern and is not posing a problem when it comes to navigation, most of the time there is no action taken by the government, and it can remain a real problem.

● (1850)

It is not just because they are eyesores and not just because they affect local residents in one way or another. It is because they could very well be hazardous. They are hazardous for the good folks who administer and run our harbours, the harbour authorities.

They also become very expensive. This is a very expensive proposition for harbours across the entire country. In fact, one of the most powerful voices I have heard in this area is the voice of the National Harbour Authority Advisory Committee. Ben Maberley, from the National Harbour Authority Advisory Committee, said:

Private Members' Business

The truth is that one sinking of a derelict vessel at your harbour can bankrupt the harbour authority. It's that simple. We need to find a solution for it. This is going to be an issue right across the country.

He is right. This is a very important issue.

I understand that there was a study done several years ago by the fisheries committee. It was a very important foundational study that examined very carefully this whole question. The report was entitled "Small Craft Harbours: An Essential Infrastructure Managed by and for Fishing Communities". It dealt with this very issue and specifically recommended that the Department of Fisheries and Oceans make changes, legislative changes in particular, so that the removal of abandoned and derelict vessels from harbours would be facilitated. As a result of that report, frankly nothing has happened. The government has done nothing.

We have just come through a budget cycle. We are still in the midst of it, in fact. There is nothing significant in the budget to deal with this issue as many of our harbour authorities struggle with these particularly expensive problems. It is hard to reconcile that with the fact that at DFO, since the current government has come to power, there has been \$1 billion of unspent resources. In our view, that could have been properly applied to provide assistance to these harbour authorities and other parties that are involved in trying to do right by their communities and citizens by taking action. Nothing in the budget was brought to bear to address the specific challenges for our harbours and wharfs when it comes to this issue.

There is still a lingering problem with the fact that harbours themselves do not have the authority, and more importantly, do not have the budget to deal with wrecks and abandoned and derelict vessels. We need legislative changes, because we need to help with the removal of such vessels.

Given the fact that there are 2.6 million pleasure craft licensed in Canada today, with numbers growing and fleets aging, we need a long-term plan. It is something that has been asked for by the committee's report, by harbour authorities, by communities, by municipalities, by stakeholders, by NGOs, and by civil-society actors. People are rightly concerned, and there is no long-term plan to deal with this, after almost a decade of Conservative government.

It requires leadership, and leadership means we have to pull together different orders of government to work together to come up with a plan that allows us to respond to this nationally, as a country.

This bill would go some distance in contributing to legislative improvements, and for that reason we support it. It would help by designating the Canadian Coast Guard the receiver of wrecks and by requiring the receiver of wrecks to take responsible steps to determine and locate the owners of wrecks. That is important. Who owns these things? They cannot simply walk away. They cannot abandon them. There is a responsibility.

The bill would give a new power to the Minister of Transport and the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans to bring in new regulations that would have to be followed by the owners of the wrecks. They would have to remove, dispose of, or destroy them.

The bill is a positive step. For example, it would require the Minister of Transport to file a report every five years before each

House of Parliament, so we would have a better idea with respect to part 7 of the act and the operations it governs.

We think this can be a very powerful next step. It could help to deal with these prohibitively high costs.

● (1855)

Funding will be key. If we are to see any kind of national leadership in this regard, coupled with some of the legislative changes that my colleague from the NDP has brought forward, we can make improvements. However, it does require national leadership, something which heretofore simply has not materialized under the Conservative government.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Hélène LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House today in support of Bill C-638, An Act to amend the Canada Shipping Act, 2001 (wreck), introduced by the hon. member for Nanaimo—Cowichan.

This bill addresses three wreck-related issues. Canada is known as the country with the longest coastline. This is therefore a important issue for Canada.

First, wrecks compromise navigation safety. Second, when they are abandoned, they can cause environmental damage. Finally, they represent an economic challenge. When these wrecks are located near major tourist hot spots, they can detract from the scenery. I will get into the economic aspect a little later and propose a way we might use these wrecks to benefit the economy.

A boating association estimates that there are 4.3 million boats in Canada. What is more, in November 2012 alone, 240 boats were abandoned. There does not seem to be an accurate count of these wrecks or any monitoring of them. There is a lack of coordination and leadership. The federal government could play this role, since some of these wrecks may be in interprovincial waters or along the coastline. This would be an appropriate role for the federal government.

As has been mentioned, municipal authorities sometimes do not have the necessary resources or technical means to deal with wrecks. The federal government is well positioned to play this coordination and leadership role.

That is a problem, but there are solutions. For example, Washington State changed its system so that the vessel registration fee, whether it be for pleasure craft or other vessels, helps cover salvage costs. The state also made the Department of Natural Resources responsible for administering the program, which allowed it to salvage 500 wrecks. That is an interesting way of dealing with this problem. The federal government could learn from what is being done in the state of Washington.

I would now like to go back in history a little. I am originally from the Bois-Francs region, which was the first area of Quebec to have a recycling program in the 1970s. That was quite some time ago, and I learned the three Rs—reduce, reuse and recycle—very early on.

● (1900)

At the time, there was a visionary named Normand Maurice who said that there was gold in our garbage cans.

Private Members' Business

Members may be wondering where I am going with this, so I will talk right away about a course I took in agriculture and the environment to become an agronomist. The name of the course was waste resource management, and in our case, we were often talking about manure. These courses were really interesting. What we consider waste, scrap and wrecks are actually resources that are not in the right place. I think everyone can agree that those resources can be used and repurposed.

This bill talks about wrecks. My riding runs along the St. Lawrence River and so the issue of wrecks is very important to me and my constituents in LaSalle—Émard.

How could we salvage these wrecks and repurpose them in a safe, economical and environmentally friendly way? It must not be done in just any old way. We need to do it in an environmentally friendly manner. There is value in those wrecks because they contain metal and other materials that could be salvaged and repurposed.

This is also about job creation, given that 4.3 million currently registered vessels could be salvaged and repurposed, and there are many others. This could create jobs, especially local jobs, and stimulate our economy. This could be a great opportunity to take a wreck, repurpose it, salvage it, and at the same time, do so in an environmentally friendly and economical way. Let me give a couple of examples of these kinds of wrecks.

In the Montreal region, a boat that was more or less abandoned, that did not run, was transformed into a spa. A private company purchased the boat, which is in Montreal's Old Port, and turned it into a spa. Now that is innovative: to take a wreck and turn it into something useful that will not cause environmental problems, something more attractive that will not spoil the tourist landscape, for example. This challenge presents a unique opportunity to make the most of wrecks and take care of them.

As a final point, I would like to talk about a very interesting project. It is a project of the future, a business opportunity with incredible possibilities, because while ships become wrecks, there are also many planes at the end of their life cycles. There is a company called Aerocycle that specializes in dismantling aircraft at the end of their life cycles and recycling the parts. For instance, that company dismantled two Air Transat planes in Mirabel as part of a research project with École Polytechnique in Montreal and the Consortium for Research and Innovation in Aerospace in Québec.

• (1905)

That is how a ship and an aircraft at the end of their life cycle were transformed. They were recycled in an environmentally friendly way, jobs and opportunities were created, and various parts were salvaged and repurposed. This is very worthwhile.

Let us move forward with something that could turn out to be extremely valuable by allowing for the salvage of wrecks and aircraft at the end of their life cycle.

• (1910)

[*English*]

Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon (Mississauga East—Cooksville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak to Bill C-638, which would amend the Canada Shipping Act.

I would like to provide the House with an overview of the current provisions under the Canada Shipping Act, 2001, pertaining to wrecks and their cleanup. I would like to speak to the history of the Canada Shipping Act, 2001, and how it has evolved over the years to further enhance the safety of navigation in the marine environment, and Transport Canada's plan for a proactive solution to the issue of abandoned vessels and wrecks.

As members are aware, Transport Canada's role under the Canada Shipping Act, 2001, is vast in nature. The Canada Shipping Act is Canada's principal legislation governing safety in marine transportation and recreational boating, as well as the protection of the marine environment. It applies to Canadian vessels operating in all waters and to all foreign vessels operating in Canadian waters, including recreational boats, cruise ships and large tankers. The act promotes the sustainable growth of the marine shipping industry without compromising safety and is responsive to the needs of Canadians in the global economy.

Transport Canada plays a large role in the administration of the provisions under this act, including the receiver of wreck functions under part 7. In addition, the Canada Shipping Act, 2001, represents a greatly updated and streamlined version of the old Canada Shipping Act, including enhanced safety provisions and better protection for the marine environment, with more focus on owner and operator responsibilities, ultimately strengthening the requirements for spill prevention and spill preparedness.

In this vein, Transport Canada continues to work closely with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans on the administration of the provision under part 8 of the Canada Shipping Act, 2001, pertaining to ship-source pollution, including prevention and response regimes, in Canadian waters.

As previously stated, the current federal government regime for the removal, disposal and destruction of wrecks in Canadian waterways is Transport Canada's responsibility under the receiver of wreck provisions of the Canada Shipping Act, 2001, part 7. The receiver of wreck functions are administered by Transport Canada navigation protection program, which is also responsible for the removal of obstructions to navigation, including wrecks in Canada's major waterways.

It is important to note that under the Canada Shipping Act, 2001, the receiver of wreck may deal with a wreck, generally speaking, when the owner is unknown and if the person who reported the wreck finds and takes possession of a wreck in Canada, or brings a wreck into Canada. In addition, the role for the receiver of wreck is to try to locate the owners of wrecks within a reasonable time period, which is 30 to 90 days, depending on the circumstances. If, within that period of time, the owner is not known, the receiver of wreck may authorize the removal, disposal or destruction of the wreck by a third party.

Private Members' Business

Currently, under part 7 of the Canada Shipping Act, 2001, the receiver of wreck assesses each wreck on a case by case basis to determine whether action is required. Due to technical considerations, such as location, depth, size, or condition of the wreck, the most appropriate response may be to leave the wreck in its current location and, if applicable, remove pollution threats.

A review of Bill C-638 raises concerns regarding some of the proposed provisions.

Bill C-638 would require the receiver of wreck to take action on every wreck, including the requirement to take reasonable measures to locate the owner of the wreck, regardless of its location and condition.

• (1915)

Our government understands the importance of the issues surrounding abandoned and wrecked vessels, but the proposed bill focuses solely on the remediation of wrecked vessels and does not include requirements for vessel owners to prevent a vessel from becoming a wreck.

Be assured that Transport Canada has made efforts to research existing programs that deal with derelict and wrecked vessels, including the Washington State derelict vessel removal program. Washington State program officials shared what they learned about their experience in the initial implementation of a remediation program. It was concluded that remediation without prevention can have unintended consequences, such as encouraging vessel owners to abandon their unwanted vessels, relying on the federal government for their disposal.

Today, the program's success is attributed to measures to increase the accountability on the part of the owners of vessels and robust enforcement and engagement with partners.

I would like to reiterate that the Government of Canada recognizes that vessels of concern, including abandoned vessels and/or wrecked vessels, can pose marine navigation hazards, public safety risks, environmental threats and economic costs. In response to this issue, Transport Canada, in partnership with other federal departments such as the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, is currently examining the gaps in the existing system to deal with these types of vessels.

Together, we will build an approach that will focus on prevention. It is important that owners take responsibility for the full life cycle of their vessels. This is why Transport Canada will develop and implement a public outreach strategy targeting vessel owners, advising them about responsible vessel ownership and life cycle management. As mentioned previously, prevention is key in achieving a positive end result.

In closing, the current Canada Shipping Act, 2001 regimes for receiver of wreck and pollution prevention and response continue to effectively deal with those abandoned vessels and wrecks that have an immediate safety and environmental impact. Bill C-638 is intended to address all vessels, including those that do not pose a risk to navigation safety or the environment. The bill would impose mandatory measures to deal with all wrecks at the cost of taxpayers, instead of placing the obligation where it belongs, with vessel owners. It is for these reasons that the government does not support Bill C-638.

We are confident that our government's proactive approach to educate vessel owners on the prevention of abandoned vessels and wrecks will assist in addressing the broader issue of vessels of concern and wrecks in Canadian waterways. Furthermore, we will continue to work with international partners in support of a global vessel life cycle management approach to dealing with wrecks.

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak in favour of Bill C-638, an act to amend the Canada Shipping Act. I want to express my thanks to the member for Nanaimo—Cowichan for her work on the problem of derelict vessels. This is a particular problem around Vancouver Island and in my riding, but also along all of our coasts and, increasingly, in the rivers and lakes across the country.

This is an important issue as more and more derelict vessels are being abandoned. While they may start out as something that people see simply as an eyesore, many go on to become hazards to safety or to the environment. The intention of Bill C-638 is to give the Coast Guard the regulatory power it needs to take action before derelict vessels become problems.

Municipalities, port authorities, regional and provincial governments all want to work with the federal government on an effective system that might include fines and the recovery of costs for removal, but, of course, that is beyond the scope of what a private member's bill can do. However, at the same time, Bill C-638 would preserve the principle that owners are responsible for the costs incurred in damages done by, or in cleanup and disposal of, abandoned vessels. It would not, as some Conservatives have argued, automatically transfer all those costs to the public. What the public does bear is the cost of inaction. Therefore, when these derelict vessels are neglected and ignored, they eventually end up costing all of us damage to our environment, possibly navigation and other safety hazards.

Ideally, Canada would create a derelict vessel removal regime similar to that of our neighbour in Washington state. In Washington state, there is a system that has a fee as part of the annual vessel registration, which helps pay, ultimately, for the costs of removal of derelict vessels. It also makes a single agency, the department of natural resources, responsible for administering the program.

Unfortunately, as I said just a moment ago, this is beyond what a private member's bill can do in the House, because that would require a royal recommendation. However, this bill is an important first step in providing a single agency, the Coast Guard, with the authority to deal with derelict vessels.

Private Members' Business

My predecessor, as the member of Parliament for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Keith Martin, introduced a similar concept in his Motion No. 554 in June of 2010. This is not a new problem in my riding and one that my predecessor did his best to get the House to recognize. His motion simply expressed the principle that the House support efforts to deter the abandonment of vessels by imposing fines and a regime to make sure that cleanup costs were recovered from the registered owners. It is very consistent with the principles in this private member's bill.

I would also to commend the work of Sheila Malcolmson as chair of the Islands Trust in bringing attention to this problem of derelict vessels. I will say as an aside that she is someone who I hope will be joining us in the House of Commons after the election this fall as she is the NDP candidate in Nanaimo—Ladysmith.

The Islands Trust is a federation of local governments in the Salish Sea off the inner coast of Vancouver Island. It is an area that covers 450 islands and thousands of kilometres of sensitive and scenic coast. Ms. Malcolmson's advocacy resulted in the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities adopting four resolutions in its annual meetings in 2010. These call for action like that suggested in Bill C-638 to fill the gap in our existing regulatory regime.

Here is the problem Bill C-638 is really trying to address. Now Transport Canada is responsible for derelict vessels if, and only if, the abandoned vessel presents a navigational hazard. If such a vessel presents an environmental hazard, then the Coast Guard is responsible, and this presents the obvious problem of overlap, since derelict vessels can present both challenges. However, if there is no immediate navigation or environmental hazard, then no one is responsible. Therefore, derelict vessels that present no immediate hazard for navigation or to the environment may do so in the future as they deteriorate or as storms blow them around the environment. Clearly, leaving these derelict vessels in place does nothing to enhance the very important tourism industry in my riding.

Derelict vessels are problems at both ends of my riding, I have to say.

In the Gorge Waterway, community groups have spent years trying to restore the water quality after decades of industrial use. It is just on the edge of my riding and in an area that I share with the member for Victoria, who has also done a lot of work to try to deal with this problem of derelict vessels. I am happy to say that the Gorge Waterway is now swimmable for the first time in over 70 years and the salmon run has returned. Small numbers in that run so far and very vulnerable, but the salmon are back. Do we want to let derelict vessels undo all the hard work that has been done in this community to restore the water quality, the environmental quality and the salmon run in the Gorge Waterway?

- (1920)

At the eastern end of my riding is Tod Inlet, a beautiful fjord-like body of water with a very interesting ecology due to its great depth combined with very shallow waters at its mouth. This creates a very special environment indeed.

In 2012, more than 20 abandoned vessels were identified in this environmentally sensitive area. This is home, among other species,

of B.C. spot prawns that are one of the very successful, sustainable, ocean-wide food sources in our region, again, threatened by derelict vessels.

Some of those have since been removed, but unfortunately, like the old hiker's adage where garbage attracts garbage, derelicts seem to attract derelicts. Somebody has dumped a boat and somebody else sees what a great spot to get away with the same thing.

This is especially true around Saanich Inlet when it is such a short distance from Vancouver, Victoria and Nanaimo, yet it is relatively secluded and so therefore easy for people to think they can get away with dumping a vessel there.

At the western end of my riding, the District of Sooke has been dealing with the issue of derelict vessels most recently at its January 12 council meeting. The council members, under the leadership of its new mayor, Maja Tait, agreed that they would write to the federal government to lodge a formal complaint about the lack of action in dealing with derelict vessels in the Sooke Basin.

Let me give an example of a challenge that just a single derelict vessel can present to local government. This example is the tugboat *Florence Filberg* that was built for the U.S. Army in 1944, a 38 metre long boat that served the U.S. Coast Guard for many years. The coast guard decided to sell the boat to Canadian owners and spent \$40,000 cleaning up the vessel before selling it.

Unfortunately those Canadian owners moored it in the Sooke Basin and then abandoned it. In 2007, it broke loose from its moorings and wedged itself on a sandbar. Who is responsible for its removal when owners have disappeared? Here is where the legal problem arises which Bill C-638 would fix.

Sooke's jurisdiction of the municipality extends only to the land between high and low watermarks, not the sandbars in the harbour. The B.C. government is only responsible for derelicts that have been tied up to provincial docks.

The federal Coast Guard checked and said since the boat had been cleaned up, there was no environmental hazard. Transport Canada said that since it is on a sandbar, then there is no additional navigation hazard. There it sat for more than four years, an unsightly wreck in the middle of a beautiful harbour, but it also presented additional challenges.

One man actually died exploring this wreck in 2008 and arsonists, some suspect those whose view it was sitting in, tried to remove the vessel in 2009 by setting it on fire, leaving a burnt-out vessel with additional environmental hazards created by the fire.

Private Members' Business

It was finally removed in 2011 at a cost of over \$100,000 in an ingenious deal that Sooke worked out as part of the construction of a new boat launch jointly funded by the federal and provincial governments. This was four years later, at a cost of \$100,000 and the death of a citizen for a single derelict vessel. This is one that had previously been cleaned up, \$40,000 spent by the coast guard cleaning up the environmental hazard.

I know I am going to run out of time very quickly, but I would say Bill C-638 takes the first step in solving the problem with derelict vessels in Canadian waters. It established that the Coast Guard is the responsible agency, responsible for move and cleanup, but also for finding those owners and making sure the previous owners are held responsible for the cost of abandoning their vessel.

In my riding this would help protect the environment. It would help protect marine safety. It would help protect fishing grounds and recreation. It would help protect the natural landscape and seascapes that are the basis of our very important sustainable tourism industry.

For that reason, I am a very strong supporter of Bill C-638. Once again, thank the member for Nanaimo—Cowichan for her very important work on this private member's bill.

• (1925)

Mr. Larry Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise in the House today to speak to Bill C-638, An Act to amend the Canada Shipping Act, brought forward by the member from Nanaimo—Cowichan.

Our government is committed to the safety of mariners and the protection of the marine environment. We have ensured that responders are able to take action when dealing with the unique condition each wrecked vessel presents. The management of wrecks is certainly an important item. However, the private member's bill we are discussing today is unfortunately flawed in its approach to the management of wrecks.

I will use my time today to highlight the fact that the proposed amendments to the act from this bill will not result in an improved approach to managing vessels of concern. In fact, due to the new mandatory actions and the lack of owner responsibility contained in this bill, these changes could instead hinder Canada's management of these kinds of vessels.

As the member's bill proposes changes that will also impact the Canadian Coast Guard, I will also take this opportunity to inform the House on how the current system addresses environmental concerns from ships.

The Canada Shipping Act authorizes the Minister of Transport to designate persons or classes of persons as receivers of wreck. Bill C-638 proposes to make significant changes to part 7 of this act.

Currently, employees of Transport Canada are designated as receivers of wreck under the act. This bill proposes to expand this power to also designate the Canadian Coast Guard as a receiver of wreck as well. The Canadian Coast Guard's objective is to keep our waterways safe and accessible across the country. The brave men and women of the Coast Guard save the lives of countless boaters and sailors through search and rescue missions. Our fleet provides icebreaking services to keep commercial traffic and ferries moving

across Canada. In the north, the Coast Guard delivers vital supplies to isolated communities.

The Coast Guard is currently the lead federal agency for all marine pollution from ships or mystery sources in Canadian waters.

When it comes to environmental response from the Canadian Coast Guard, our government has taken real action to protect Canadians and the environment. We have ensured that the Canadian Coast Guard has the capacity to respond quickly to marine pollution incidents across Canada. For example, the Coast Guard has official environmental response managers located across the country, in addition to approximately 80 equipment depots nationwide.

The Coast Guard is involved in all aspects of a response, actively engaging with its partners and stakeholders. Through this program, the Coast Guard's environmental response regime is world-class and ensures safe and accessible waterways for Canadians. When a ship is determined to be an environmental threat, the Coast Guard is there to protect our rivers and oceans. Responders consider the best course of action to address the threat, keeping sure our waterways are safe and healthy.

This brings me to my first point regarding this bill, which is the proposal to designate the Canadian Coast Guard as a receiver of wreck. The fact is that the Canadian Coast Guard cannot be designated a permanent receiver of wreck. Under federal legislation the Coast Guard is not a separate legal entity in and of itself. It is considered part of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Therefore, the Canadian Coast Guard, as an organization, cannot be a receiver of wreck or make regulations regarding their management.

My second concern regarding this bill is that it negatively impacts the ability of responders to determine the best course of action for a vessel. The current legislation allows receivers of wreck to assess each wreck on a case-by-case basis. This gives them the ability to determine the right course of action, depending on the realities on the ground. This is important to safeguard the ability of the responders to do a thorough risk assessment in order to understand the condition of the vessel, and to determine the best action to take. Each wreck is a different case, each with its own unique considerations. The reality is that these situations demand a tailor-made response. As this bill lacks a mechanism for responding to the most serious situations, it may cause responders to divert their attention and resources from more pressing vessels.

• (1930)

These amendments call for a sweeping change that would not address the real issue that many of these vessels are abandoned or uncared for in the first place.

That brings me to my next point. The bill does not require any additional responsibility to be borne by the vessel owners. The bill only focuses on the removal, disposal, or destruction of wrecked vessels. It does not include any requirements for vessel owners to prevent a ship from becoming a wreck or falling into disrepair.

It is important for there to be a balance between mandated government action and personal responsibility, the absence of which would cause the Canadian taxpayer to become the collector of wrecks. This bill does not contain much-needed additional requirements.

Without consideration of the obligation of vessels owners to mind their ships, this change could attract those who no longer want their vessels.

In conclusion, I cannot support this bill. It is flawed in its drafting regarding designating the Coast Guard organization. It mandates new obligations while not considering the unique conditions of these vessels. Finally, it does not offer any new requirements on owners for keeping their boats in good order to begin with.

The management of wrecks is an important discussion to have; however, this bill would not achieve results for Canadians. These sweeping changes would not result in better services for Canadians or improve protection of the environment.

For the reasons I have discussed this evening, I ask that members of this House join with me in opposing the bill.

• (1935)

The Deputy Speaker: Resuming debate, the hon. member for Vaudreuil—Soulanges.

I have to advise the member that he will only have eight minutes for his speech, in order to be able to give the member for Nanaimo—Cowichan her five minutes of reply.

[Translation]

Mr. Jamie Nicholls (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to support this bill at second reading. This is an important issue for the people of Vaudreuil—Soulanges who live along the shores of Lac Saint-Louis and Lac Saint-François, where a wreck, the *Kathryn Spirit*, recently sat.

Lac Saint-Louis is located at the confluence of the St. Lawrence River and the Ottawa River. In the past 40 years, a number of developments have posed a threat to the health of our lakes. These threats to our rivers and lakes include very worn pipelines and urban sprawl. Wrecks are another threat to our lakes and rivers. A wreck is very likely to pose a threat to safety and the environment sooner or later.

I have already mentioned the wreck of the *Kathryn Spirit*, which is a real-life example of why this bill is needed. This ship was built in 1967. In 2011 it was decided that the ship would be scrapped and that it would be dismantled in the Beauharnois region. The mayor of Beauharnois opposed the idea of dismantling the ship in Beauharnois, and the city managed to block the work. However, the wreck remained where it was from 2012 to the end of 2014. It was discovered that the ship had leaked oil into the waterway, and the mayor of Beauharnois, Mr. Haineault, wanted the federal government to intervene. He was the mayor of a municipality and this issue did not fall under his jurisdiction since the ship was in federal waters. The federal government did not take action.

We are choosing to take action this evening by way of this bill.

Private Members' Business

This bill would give the Canadian Coast Guard the regulatory power it needs to take action before a derelict vessel becomes a problem. If this bill had been around in 2012, the people of Vaudreuil—Soulanges and Beauharnois—Salaberry would not have been frustrated by the federal government's inaction. This bill would have given them some tools.

This is what the mayor of Beauharnois had to say:

Quebec's most precious resource is the beauty of the St. Lawrence. We have to protect that. Allowing this type of activity makes no sense.

We will not create a better future by working in isolation; we have to work together. The time to act is now. Municipalities, port authorities, regional authorities and provincial governments want to help the federal government develop a more robust regime that includes fines and removal costs. A regime like that cannot come from a private member's bill.

[English]

It is time that the government acted in the interest of citizens living in coastal regions. What the Conservatives have done and have in place right now simply is not working.

The *Kathryn Spirit* in Beauharnois is proof of the system not working. Years and years have passed while the *Kathryn Spirit* has menaced the environment. The wreck has been floating for more than three years in the waters of Lake Saint-Louis and its deterioration poses a threat to the environment, biodiversity of the watershed and the health of local residents. The boat's owner delayed work to get the ship back afloat and continued to delay the process. Meanwhile, the federal government did nothing. The Conservatives abdicated their responsibilities.

The member from the government side referenced the Canada Shipping Act. Well, in this case, the federal government did not use that authority to have the owner remove the boat that was clearly posing a risk to the environment and the health of the people of Vaudreuil—Soulanges, Beauharnois—Salaberry, Lac-Saint-Louis and all of the communities downstream along the St. Lawrence River.

The Conservatives need to take action. It is disappointing to see that they do not intend to support this bill from the member for Nanaimo—Cowichan.

I am proud to have lived in the member's riding for a short time, in 1989 and 1990. I also worked in the riding of the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca at the repair and disposal facility at the naval base in 1992 when I was a summer student. I know the people of their ridings are looking for solutions to deal with derelict vessels.

The *Kathryn Spirit* is one example of a wreck in my riding where the federal government did not act to have it removed, and it was posing a threat. There are many other examples of derelict vessels across the country.

In the riding of the member for Nanaimo—Cowichan, there was the sinking of the SS *Beaver* in Cowichan Bay. As reported in an article, pollution from the ship leaked into the bay and the Coast Guard was called to the scene. The article mentions support for Bill C-231, which is now Bill C-638, to eliminate the jurisdictional confusion related to the responsibility for derelict vessels.

Private Members' Business

There needs to be a bit of clarity here in the regime that we have in place, obviously. Just in listening to the members across the way explain in their speeches that the regime is clear and efficient, I was confused about it. I could not really make sense of it. If it is difficult for a member who is very familiar with legal terms and jurisdictions to try to figure out the regime that is in place, think of what it would be like for a mayor of a small or medium-sized town to try to navigate the labyrinth that is the current regime which is in place.

The member for Nanaimo—Cowichan has developed an excellent, clear proposal, which I think would give the tools to municipalities and regional governing bodies to deal with wrecks. We would like to see a derelict vessel regime similar to that of Washington State, which I think has been mentioned a few times in the debate tonight, to deal with this growing problem of abandoned boats in our waterways.

Our waterways are a legacy that we pass down to our children. We have to keep them clean. We have to keep them healthy. We would like to see the biodiversity in them continue. This private member's bill is just the first step of a new regime that is needed.

I am sure that in October we will flesh this out once we become government after the next election. We will have a regime in place that will provide a clear authority for who should deal with derelict vessels.

Even though I have heard members across the way say that they oppose the bill, we hope that they will listen to the voices from the coastal areas in Canada. These are people who are asking for action on the problem of aging fleets, the lack of recycling facilities for fibreglass, and a desire to protect waterways from potential environmental or safety concerns so that we can pass on this legacy to our children.

● (1940)

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by acknowledging many of my colleagues and also members from the Liberal Party who are speaking up in support of this important piece of legislation. I have to admit to feeling some frustration after listening to the Conservatives outline a program that is clearly not working. If it were working, I would not have to stand here in this House and propose a piece of legislation to deal with the problem.

Throughout Canada there are hundreds of derelict vessels, both on coastal waterways and on inland waterways, and this is a problem for many members in this House from coast to coast to coast. I am baffled as to why the Conservatives will not support this first step, and I acknowledge it is a first step. In my brief period of time I want to tackle a couple of concerns that they raise.

First, there seems to be four main areas where the Conservatives say they cannot support the bill. The first one, they say, is that this would force the Coast Guard to deal with every derelict vessel, which would adversely affect their operational capacity. If they had read the bill, they would understand that I included a provision that would allow the minister to set out in regulations the circumstances where the receiver of wreck was not obligated to take measures to deal with a derelict vessel. By doing so under the regulatory process, that would allow the public to have a say in when they think vessels should be dealt with by the government.

Clearly, the intention of the bill is not to have the receiver of wreck, the Coast Guard, deal with absolutely every derelict vessel, but we already know the problems that provincial governments and municipalities are having, which has been ably outlined by members like the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, how difficult and complex it is for other levels of government to deal with this and that we do need some clear definitions about when a derelict vessel needs to be apprehended.

Second, the Conservatives say that the Coast Guard is not a stand-alone department. It is part of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, so it cannot be made a permanent receiver of wreck.

Actually, under the act and the regulations as they currently stand, the minister can designate any entity or individual as a receiver of wreck. The status as a stand-alone entity does not matter because the power to designate still resides with the minister. The bill does not change the ability to have the minister designate a receiver of wreck.

Third, the Conservatives are claiming that the cost of dealing with derelict vessels will now be borne by the government and ultimately by the taxpayer. That is nonsense. We have already seen that the government is already having to pick up expenses. Again, the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca pointed out the \$40,000 that was spent in cleaning up a vessel, and then an additional \$100,000 had to be spent in dealing with the derelict vessel when it had been torched and otherwise dismembered.

● (1945)

Nothing in the bill removes the obligation on the owner of a vessel to pay for its disposal. That is why the receiver of wreck must take all reasonable steps to contact owners before taking action, because those owners are responsible for paying the cost. As currently happens, every effort is made to track down the owners and have them pay for those costs, but we also know there are many cases where it is simply not possible to identify the owner. They are deceased, out of the country or whatever.

It still is incumbent upon the owners to be responsible. If we wait for all derelict vessels to become navigational or environmental hazards, the cost of dealing with them goes up. Again, we have seen that in cases. The longer a vessel remains derelict, the more costly it becomes to remove it. By giving a receiver of wreck the ability to contact the owner upon observing a wreck, this legislation may help prevent vessels deteriorating to such a point that the removal or disposal becomes a costly burden.

Finally, the government is proposing a public relations exercise that will tell owners about their responsibilities. I have to say, many owners already recognize that there is a life cycle issue with vessels, but part of the problem is, there is nowhere to recycle these older vessels. Again, my colleagues have pointed out, there is actually a business opportunity in recycling these vessels.

I am hoping that some members of the government will recognize that these derelict vessels are serious problems in their own riding and that they will actually have the courage to stand up and support Bill C-638 so that we could take the very important first step in dealing with a problem that the government has ignored for the 11 years that I have been elected.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

• (1950)

[English]

HEALTH

Mr. Bruce Hyer (Thunder Bay—Superior North, GP): Mr. Speaker, we Canadians are getting older. The percentage of Canada's population over 65 has nearly doubled since the early 1970s. As our population ages, the strains on our health care system continue to grow.

Dealing with this situation will not be easy. In response to my question, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health spoke about innovation. Innovation is exactly what Canada's health care system needs, but it is not what we are getting from the Conservatives.

The Conservative approach to dealing with Canada's health problems has been to evade and download the issue onto the provinces and pray that the costs will somehow get better. The Conservatives refuse to plan ahead.

In Thunder Bay—Superior North, our seniors are being stacked up in temporary cots in hospital hallways due to a lack of beds. Our system is overburdened by inadequate federal funding and a total lack of long-term planning. Canada is the only country in the G20 with no national health care strategy. As Canada's population gets older, our health care woes will only get worse if we do not start making some serious plans and start taking action. We must invest in long-term solutions for our health care system.

Continuing care is now, incredibly, excluded from the Canada Health Act, if members can imagine. In contrast, Nordic and European countries have long-standing public, comprehensive, universal and tax financed continuing care programs.

Chronic disease management programs require a multidisciplinary approach designed to encourage adherence to medications and lifestyle changes, and promote prevention and patient self-management. Such programs can reduce complications, avoid costly readmissions to the hospital, and improve survival and quality of life.

The federal government needs to stop forcing those who need long-term care onto emergency facilities that are not designed and are not equipped to deal with their needs. Up to 90% of seniors deal with at least one chronic disease. Treating those diseases amounts to 67%, or two thirds, of all health care costs. On any given day, patients approved for hospital discharge who cannot access

Adjournment Proceedings

appropriate post-hospital care occupy about 7,500 beds across Canada.

The government needs to develop a national health care strategy with a focus on dealing with chronic diseases through investment in preventative, long-term and home care. There is a huge shortage of long-term care facilities in Canada and, as we get older, demand is only going to go up. Many provincial governments have recognized the need for these facilities and have begun investing in them. The Conservative federal government needs to step up and join them.

Investing in home-based care is a very practical strategy. An astonishing 13 million Canadians already provide some kind of home-based care to their own family members or friends with long-term illnesses. Some 96% of Canadians support public policy changes that would allow seniors to age in their homes, while receiving effective home-based care from professionals. The Canadian Nurses Association, as well as numerous health care experts from across Canada, have advocated heavily for long-term and home-based care.

Every time someone cannot find a room in a long-term care facility and is forced to go into a hospital, they are costing taxpayers. A hospital bed costs the taxpayer 6 times what a long-term care bed costs, and about 20 times what home care costs.

When will the government listen to the experts and invest in long-term care strategies that work and dramatically lower costs in the long run?

• (1955)

Mr. Mark Strahl (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to address the hon. member's comments regarding the performance of Canada's health care system in the face of an aging population and changing health care needs

Our government is committed to a publicly funded, universally accessible health care system. While provinces and territories have primary responsibility for delivering health care, federally, we will continue to provide significant support through fiscal transfers as well as targeted initiatives to foster improvement in critical areas.

Since taking office, our government has increased the Canada health transfer by almost 70%. Federal health transfers to provinces and territories are at an all-time high, on track to increase from \$34 billion in 2015-16 to more than \$40 billion annually by the end of the decade. This represents a record investment that provides the provinces and territories with the financial predictability and flexibility to respond to priorities and pressures in their respective jurisdictions. For example, this funding enables them to further develop their own home care and long-term care programs and services to respond to the unique needs of their senior populations.

Adjournment Proceedings

Our government is committed to the health, well-being and quality of life of Canada's seniors and recognizes the importance of home care and long-term care as an effective means of delivering the type of care required, while reducing unnecessary pressure on hospitals. We recognize that many older adults would prefer to remain in their own homes for as long as possible. That is why budget 2013 announced expanded tax relief for home care, including services such as bathing, feeding and other personal care.

However, we also know that money alone is not going to enable our health care system to address the complex challenges posed by an aging population, increasing rates of chronic disease and slower economic growth. We know it is also important to explore innovation so Canada's health care system can adapt to this new reality, continuing to provide the quality care that Canadians expect over the long term.

The Government of Canada is the single largest investor in health care innovation, with more than \$1 billion invested annually to support health research, knowledge development and positive change. For example, through budget 2015, we will enhance our ongoing support of Canada's strategy for patient-oriented research, or SPOR, increasing our investment by \$13 million for the Canadian Institutes of Health Research to expand this initiative. SPOR aims to align research, innovation and health systems to ensure that patients receive the right treatment at the right time.

Looking forward, we are committed to working with provinces, territories and stakeholders to strengthen Canada's health care system for all generations through research and innovation.

Mr. Bruce Hyer: Mr. Speaker, our hospitals are not intended or well equipped to deal with preventing and treating chronic diseases. The government's lack of planning is forcing us to ship our seniors off to overcrowded and expensive emergency care facilities instead of providing them with appropriate long-term care. We must invest in long-term care and home-based care for seniors in Thunder Bay—Superior North and across Canada, partly in order to free up acute care beds in the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre.

Investing now will save the taxpayers billions of dollars in the long run. If the government truly believes in innovative policy, then when will it start investing in it? The feds and the provinces used to each pay 50% for health care costs. Today, the federal share is less than one half of that. When will we see some adequate funding? When will we see some real, evidence-based health care policies for Canada?

Mr. Mark Strahl: Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to expand on our government's commitment to innovation in long-term care and preventative health care.

One example is economic action plan 2012. It provided \$6.5 million over three years for a research project at McMaster University to explore how the use of technology in primary health care could improve continuity and cost effectiveness of care, particularly for at-risk seniors. In budget 2013, we also announced \$3 million in funding to the Pallium Foundation of Canada to support training in palliative care to front-line health care providers.

To summarize, our government is committed to Canada's system of publicly funded health care and improving care to seniors. We

have placed health transfers on a sustainable and predictable growth path, and we will continue our investments in research and innovation in partnership with the provinces, territories and stakeholders.

● (2000)

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Mrs. Carol Hughes (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusksing, NDP): Mr. Speaker, one of the sad and seemingly inevitable events we witness every winter is an inordinate number of house fires on first nations that take people's lives. Often the lives lost are those of people who have been sacrificed due to the absence of a regulatory regime for fire services and inspections in first nations, which means there are no minimum requirements to be met.

The problems with fire services are only compounded by the persistent, and one could argue permanent, lack of suitable housing available on first nations. For too many of these communities the lack of adequate housing means that overcrowding only complicates the matter. In addition to the many health-related problems that arise from overcrowding, there are also risks related to fire safety. Crowded houses that are not built to be fire safe in the first place are then heated with rudimentary wood stoves, which result in the same sad headlines every winter.

It is said that the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different response. That is exactly what the government is doing. Either it is satisfied with runaway statistics that make house fires on first nations that much more deadly, or it is fooling itself that the federal response to the problem is adequate. The fact is that fire deaths are ten times more likely to happen on first nations than they are in other communities, which indicates there is a real problem with the government's approach.

When the Conservatives were elected, they liked to say that they would do things differently than the Liberals did, but apparently that does not extend to the 2% funding cap for first nations, which is at the heart of so many challenges on reserves across the country. It is responsible for getting nowhere on chronic problems, like those related to education, housing, and what we are discussing tonight, firefighting services.

The refusal to remove the 2% cap only handcuffs communities. Those that are lucky enough to have a fire crew are forced to respond with equipment that is old and outdated. That is because the money the government does allocate for fighting fires on first nations is a drop in the bucket when one considers how far \$26.3 million goes once it is divided among more than 600 communities.

Adjournment Proceedings

For the sake of an example, consider the situation on the Makwa Sahgaiehan First Nation in Saskatchewan, where a fire this winter took the lives of two children. While that community does have a working fire truck, what it does not have is proper equipment or a crew with the training to use it. It had an agreement for fire services with the nearby community of Loon Lake, but that agreement had been cut by Loon Lake over non-payment of bills by the first nation, so when the call went out for the emergency on the reserve, the police responded to the 911 call and the fire crew did not. As one can imagine, this created friction between the communities that was totally avoidable, and the government could have avoided the problem altogether if it had chosen to fund first nation firefighting services to the level of need.

It is a matter of making the lives of people on first nations a priority instead of an afterthought. Therefore, I ask, will the government recognize this crisis and work with these communities so they get the protection they need and deserve, or will the government continue to turn a blind eye and continue to put people at risk?

Mr. Mark Strahl (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, of course the health and safety of first nation communities is a priority for our government. Our government is committed to supporting first nations and to providing community services on reserves that are comparable to the level of services available to non-first nation communities. This principle certainly applies to fire protection as well.

To ensure that first nations receive the same level of support for fire protection as non-aboriginal communities, our government will continue to provide funding to first nations for fire prevention and will work with willing partners to raise awareness of simple and cost-effective prevention and mitigation strategies. To that end, our government provides an average of approximately \$26 million annually for fire protection. These funds are managed by first nations and are used to finance equipment and infrastructure, operation and maintenance of fire protection equipment, and firefighter training. This funding is provided directly to the first nations, which are given the authority to decide how to best use these resources to protect their communities. Funding is provided to first nations on an annual basis to prioritize their spending to meet the needs of their communities, including fire protection services.

Everyone has an important role to play in fire prevention. We all play a role in ensuring that all homes and families are prepared in the event of a fire and to ensuring that first nations have the tools they need to keep their communities safe.

Raising awareness about the importance of fire safety and prevention throughout the year is an important part of our government's efforts to prevent fires and fire-related injuries in first nation communities. Our government and the Aboriginal Firefighters Association of Canada have teamed up for the national year-round "BeFireSafe" awareness campaign. The "BeFireSafe" campaign features a series of seasonal fire prevention and safety tips that are promoted through radio features, various social media, and websites.

The focus is to highlight the importance of fire prevention throughout the year, both inside and outside the home, with the aim of reducing fire-related deaths, injuries, and damages.

Raising the level of awareness about the need for fire safety in first nation communities is something this government takes seriously. Our government believes that all Canadians deserve to feel safe and secure in their homes, no matter where they live. That is why we are actively working with willing partners to ensure that first nations on reserve across the country meet this rigorous standard.

•(2005)

Mrs. Carol Hughes: Mr. Speaker, first nation communities are willing partners; the government is not.

I include a quote from AFN Ontario Regional Chief Stan Beardy. He asked, "If there's no fire equipment on First Nations, if there's no reporting requirements for fire protection, if there's no fire inspections, how do you ensure you're meeting some standard to make sure there's safety?"

The answer is that one cannot ensure anything, and at best, one merely hopes all goes well, but statistics prove that things are not going well at all. There is a reason for that, and that is the current level of funding, which is handcuffing first nations who would like to beef up their firefighting capabilities but find that they simply do not have the money to do that. The problem is so bad that no first nation in Ontario has been able to purchase any equipment in three years. If that were happening in other communities across the country, people would be up in arms. The fact that so many of the communities we are discussing are remote only makes the problem more pressing.

First nation lives matter. Will the government do something about the crisis in firefighting capabilities on first nations so that we can put a dent in the number of preventable deaths that are the result of horrible house fires in those communities every winter?

Mr. Mark Strahl: Mr. Speaker, as I have said, our government takes the health and safety of first nation communities very seriously. Our government is supporting first nations to ensure that they have the tools and the education they need to keep their communities safe. That is why we are teaming up with the Aboriginal Firefighters Association of Canada to raise awareness of potential fire hazards throughout the year.

Our government understands that we all have a role to play in preventing fires on reserve. We know that fire prevention programs in aboriginal communities can make a positive difference in reducing the number and severity of fires on reserve and can certainly save lives.

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 8:08 p.m.)

CONTENTS

Wednesday, May 6, 2015

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Claude Dagenais		Mr. Calandra	13531
Mr. Larose	13527	Mr. Mulcair	13531
Sri Lanka		Mr. Calandra	13531
Mr. Brown (Barrie)	13527	Taxation	
Multiple Sclerosis		Mr. Trudeau	13532
Mr. Stewart	13527	Mr. Poilievre	13532
Volunteer Firefighters		Mr. Trudeau	13532
Mr. Armstrong	13528	Mr. Poilievre	13532
National Police Week		Mr. Trudeau	13532
Mr. Easter	13528	Mr. Poilievre	13532
Donald Savoie		Ms. Nash	13532
Mr. Goguen	13528	Mr. Poilievre	13532
Tribute		Mr. Caron	13532
Mrs. Hughes	13528	Mr. Poilievre	13533
Multiple Sclerosis		Alberta Election	
Mr. Hawn	13528	Mr. Caron	13533
Member for Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock		Mr. Poilievre	13533
Mr. Devolin	13529	Natural Resources	
Portneuf Women's Centre		Mr. Cullen	13533
Ms. Michaud	13529	Mr. Rickford	13533
Taxation		Aboriginal Affairs	
Mr. Hayes	13529	Ms. Ashton	13533
Alberta Election		Mr. Valcourt	13533
Ms. Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)	13529	Ms. Ashton	13533
Taxation		Mr. Valcourt	13534
Mrs. Truppe	13529	Public Safety	
Multiple Sclerosis		Ms. Doré Lefebvre	13534
Ms. Fry	13530	Mr. Blaney	13534
Taxation		Ms. Doré Lefebvre	13534
Mr. Gill	13530	Mr. Blaney	13534
Alberta Election		Mr. Garrison	13534
Mr. Julian	13530	Mr. Blaney	13534
Taxation		Taxation	
Mr. Sopuck	13530	Mr. Dubourg	13534
ORAL QUESTIONS		Mr. Poilievre	13535
National Defence		Mr. Goodale	13535
Mr. Mulcair	13530	Mr. Poilievre	13535
Mr. Kenney	13531	Mr. Goodale	13535
Mr. Mulcair	13531	Mr. Poilievre	13535
Mr. Kenney	13531	Mr. Goodale	13535
Ethics		Mr. Poilievre	13535
Mr. Mulcair	13531	Mr. Poilievre	13535
Mr. Calandra	13531	National Defence	
Mr. Mulcair	13531	Ms. Michaud	13535
		Mr. Kenney	13535
		Mr. Harris (St. John's East)	13535
		Mr. Kenney	13535
		Mr. Harris (St. John's East)	13535
		Mr. Kenney	13536
		Ms. Freeman	13536
		Mr. Kenney	13536
		Public Safety	
		Mrs. Smith	13536

Mr. Blaney	13536
Employment Insurance	
Mr. Chisholm	13536
Mr. Poilievre	13536
Mr. Aubin	13537
Mr. Poilievre	13537
Quebec Bridge	
Mr. Blanchette	13537
Mr. Lebel	13537
Mr. Mulcair	13537
Mr. Lebel	13537
National Defence	
Ms. Murray	13537
Mr. Kenney	13537
International Trade	
Ms. Freeland	13538
Mr. Fast	13538
Seniors	
Ms. Mathysen	13538
Mrs. Wong	13538
Ms. Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)	13538
Mrs. Wong	13538
Taxation	
Mr. Allison	13538
Mr. Poilievre	13538
Infrastructure	
Mr. Vaughan	13539
Mr. Lebel	13539
Marine Safety	
Mr. Cleary	13539
Mr. Kamp	13539
Telecommunications	
Mr. Carmichael	13539
Mr. Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	13539
Foreign Affairs	
Ms. Ayala	13539
Mrs. Yelich	13539
Sports	
Mr. Larose	13540
Mr. Gosal	13540

POINTS OF ORDER

Decorum	
Mr. Angus	13540

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Interparliamentary Delegations	
The Speaker	13540
Government Response to Petitions	
Mr. Lukiwski	13540
Canadian Security Intelligence Service	
Mr. Blaney	13540

Interparliamentary Delegations	
Ms. Mathysen	13540
Mr. Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	13540

Committees of the House

Public Accounts

Mr. Christopherson	13540
Mr. Allen (Welland)	13540

Public Safety and National Security

Mr. Kramp	13541
-----------------	-------

Natural Resources

Mr. Benoit	13541
------------------	-------

Navigation Protection Act (Montmorency River and other rivers and lakes)

Mr. Tremblay	13541
Bill C-673. Introduction and first reading	13541
(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed.)	13541

Petitions

Impaired Driving

Mr. Breitzkreuz	13541
-----------------------	-------

International Aid

Ms. Boivin	13541
------------------	-------

Canada Post

Ms. Mathysen	13542
--------------------	-------

Genetically Modified Organisms

Mr. Valeriote	13542
---------------------	-------

Latin-American Heritage Day

Ms. Ayala	13542
-----------------	-------

Consumer Protection

Ms. Ayala	13542
-----------------	-------

Veterans

Mr. Kellway	13542
-------------------	-------

Violence Against Women

Ms. Duncan (Etobicoke North)	13542
------------------------------------	-------

Employment Insurance

Mr. Genest	13542
------------------	-------

Agriculture

Mr. Dusseault	13542
---------------------	-------

Palliative Care

Mr. Garneau	13542
-------------------	-------

Public Safety

Ms. Nash	13542
----------------	-------

Centres of Innovation

Mr. Lunney	13543
------------------	-------

Canada Post

Mr. Chicoine	13543
--------------------	-------

The Environment

Mr. Scott	13543
-----------------	-------

Electoral Representation

Mr. Garrison	13543
--------------------	-------

Southern Resident Killer Whales

Mr. Garrison	13543
--------------------	-------

Komagata Maru

Mr. Lamoureux	13543
---------------------	-------

Questions Passed as Orders for Returns

Mr. Lukiwski	13543
--------------------	-------

Motions for Papers

Mr. Lukiwski 13544

GOVERNMENT ORDERS**Pipeline Safety Act**

Bill C-46. Third reading 13544

Mr. Regan 13544

Ms. Crockatt 13546

Ms. Charlton 13546

Mr. Hsu 13546

Mr. Lamoureux 13547

Ms. Crockatt 13547

Mr. Choquette 13549

Mr. Lamoureux 13549

Mr. Trost 13549

Ms. Charlton 13551

Mr. Lamoureux 13551

Mr. Bevington 13552

Mrs. Block 13554

Mr. Lamoureux 13554

Mr. Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord) 13554

Ms. Charlton 13555

Mrs. Perkins 13555

Mr. Nicholls 13556

Mr. Lamoureux 13556

Mr. Lizon 13557

Mr. Leef 13557

Mr. Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord) 13558

Mr. Scarpaleggia 13558

Mrs. Block 13559

(Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed) .. 13559

Anti-terrorism Act, 2015

Bill C-51. Third reading 13559

Amendment negatived 13560

Motion agreed to 13561

(Bill read the third time and passed) 13561

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**Criminal Code**

Bill C-637. Second reading 13561

Motion agreed to 13562

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee) . 13562

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act

Bill C-641. Second reading 13562

Motion negatived 13564

National Strategy for Dementia Act

Bill C-356. Second reading 13564

Motion negatived 13565

Business of Supply

Mr. Van Loan 13565

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**Canada Shipping Act, 2001**

Bill C-638. Second reading 13565

Mr. McGuinty 13565

Ms. LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard) 13566

Mr. Lizon 13567

Mr. Garrison 13568

Mr. Miller 13570

Mr. Nicholls 13571

Ms. Crowder 13572

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS**Health**

Mr. Hyer 13573

Mr. Strahl 13573

Aboriginal Affairs

Mrs. Hughes 13574

Mr. Strahl 13575

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