



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

House of Commons Debates

VOLUME 148 • NUMBER 058 • 1st SESSION • 42nd PARLIAMENT

OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Wednesday, May 18, 2016

—

Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan

CONTENTS

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

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, May 18, 2016

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayer

● (1405)

[*English*]

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

[*Members sang the national anthem*]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*Translation*]

TRANSFER OF FAMILY BUSINESSES

Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, for the past few months, we have been trying to convince the government to end a form of tax unfairness. There is a capital gains exemption of \$800,000 on the sale of shares, which is a difference of \$200,000 after taxes. However, people cannot take advantage of that if they sell their business to a family member. That is a major obstacle to transferring family-owned businesses.

We started from scratch on this. We sent a letter to the Minister of Finance. We asked questions in the House, but the government remained silent, so we got in touch with the media and asked the Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec to speak out. Yesterday, the second opposition party followed our lead by placing its own bill on the same subject as ours on the Order Paper.

I am delighted about that. I hope that we can break down partisan barriers and work together.

* * *

[*English*]

TECHNOLOGY SECTOR

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos (London North Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege today to recognize an evolving industry in my community of London North Centre. The tech sector has emerged over the past several years as a significant contributor to the local economy.

Currently, over 300 tech firms operate in London. World-class companies, such as Diply, Big Blue Bubble, Race Roster, Ellipsis Digital and Big Viking Games, are doing innovative and creative work in the Forest City, and are global leaders in their fields.

There is also Voices.com, the world's number one voice-over marketplace. Every day, Voices.com connects companies with voice-over talent from around the world. Recently, I had the pleasure of meeting the chief brand officer, Stephanie Ciccarelli, and her enthusiastic team. The company has recently surpassed the 100 employee mark and this number will rise to 200 in just a few short months.

Innovation and technology are thriving in London. I am excited for this continued growth which will result in well-paying jobs in a creative and dynamic industry.

* * *

BLADDER CANCER

Mr. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the vast majority of Canadians have in some way been affected by cancer and that is why I rise today to highlight that May is bladder cancer awareness month.

Bladder cancer is the fifth most common cancer in Canada. There are roughly 8,300 Canadians who are diagnosed with this potentially deadly disease each year. Due to the extremely high recurrence rate on a per-patient basis, bladder cancer is noted as the most expensive cancer to treat.

It is essential to know that there are treatments to slow and perhaps even stop the spread of this kind of cancer. However, like most forms of cancer, early detection is key. For those suffering, Bladder Cancer Canada is there. It provides various patient educational services, support groups, and allows patients to connect with others who are in a similar situation.

I encourage all Canadians to become aware of the symptoms and risks of bladder cancer and to consult a medical expert should they exhibit such symptoms.

* * *

TELEVISION AND FILM INDUSTRY

Mr. James Maloney (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians have heard time and again that Toronto, Canada is the Hollywood of the north. I would like to bring a bit more focus to this discussion.

Statements by Members

Etobicoke—Lakeshore is a major hub of the Canadian television and film industry. We are home to the TV series *May Day* by well-known film director, Tim Wolochatiuk. Mr. Wolochatiuk is also the director of the Canadian film *Storming Juno* and recently, the highly acclaimed *We Were Children*, which chronicles the residential school crisis. It is a movie all Canadians should watch.

It is also home to William F. White International Inc., the leading provider of professional production equipment in Canada.

Lakeshore's Cinespace Film Studios is the largest film studio campus in Canada. Recently, Etobicoke—Lakeshore hosted Lakeshorts, an internationally acclaimed short-film festival celebrating its sixth year.

The Hollywood north designation may be changing. I heard a rumour that the Hollywood sign in Los Angeles is coming down and there is one going up saying Etobicoke Lakeshore South.

* * *

KOMAGATA MARU

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the *Komagata Maru* tragedy is a reflection of the discriminatory exclusion laws that existed in Canada. Nearly 400 passengers were refused entry into Canada. They were sent back to India and 20 were killed.

The NDP has long advocated that a respectful apology be made in the House of Commons for this dark chapter of our history. On February 3, I carried on the hard work of former MPs Jasbir Sandhu and Jinny Sims and tabled my motion to call for action.

Let us all acknowledge the hard work of the Professor Mohan Singh Memorial Foundation for initiating the call for justice in 2012, and for not losing sight of the current Prime Minister's commitment that he would make the apology within the first 90 days of his mandate.

While today is not exactly within 90 days of the Liberal government's mandate, better late than never. After all, we have already waited 102 years.

I thank everyone for their unwavering hard work and dedication. I thank the government for honouring this significant commitment.

* * *

●(1410)

[*Translation*]

FOOD BANKS

Mr. Marc Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Soeurs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a number of my colleagues and I are fasting today. We are doing so to show solidarity with the millions of Canadians who do not have enough to eat every day.

In fact, 13% of Canadians suffer from food insecurity. To fill the gap left by our society, nearly one million Canadians, one-third of whom are children, turn to food banks every month, a 23% increase since 2008.

[*English*]

The people who visit food banks come from all backgrounds. They are families with children, the working poor, and Canadians living on fixed incomes, such as seniors and the disabled.

In my riding alone, more than two dozen food banks serve Montreal's needy, including Share the Warmth, Mission du Grand Berger, Accueil Bonneau, Saint Columba House, and Gurdwara Sahib, where every hungry person is welcome, regardless of faith.

I am hungry, but unlike far too many Canadians, I have the luxury of knowing that my hunger is only temporary.

* * *

CHARITIES

Mr. Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Mr. Speaker, many residents will eventually return to Fort McMurray, only to find that they have lost everything to the ravages of the devastating wildfire.

We can only imagine what they must be going through as their lives have been turned completely upside down, but through all the devastation, the Canadian Red Cross, the Salvation Army, the local churches, and many other charitable groups have been there to help. I often wonder where we would be without organizations like these.

In Parliament recently, I introduced the fairness in charitable gifts act, Bill C-239, which seeks to strengthen the charitable sector by increasing incentives for charitable giving. With this bill, donors to registered charities would receive the same generous federal tax credits that donors to political parties receive.

Bill C-239 would make it more affordable for Canadians to donate to charitable causes and, in turn, charities across Canada would benefit greatly as more dollars would be freed up for donations.

Let us continue to support the charities as they continue to support those in need.

* * *

FERTILIZER INDUSTRY

Mr. Francis Drouin (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, hard-working farmers could not grow and provide quality agriculture products without the right tools. Fertilizer Canada and its member companies do an excellent job of providing them with the right expertise and fertilizer.

MacEwen Agricentre and the Embrun co-op help many farmers in my riding. MacEwen Agricentre is a national leader in the implementation of the 4R nutrient stewardship strategy, which increases yields and profitability for farmers, while reducing emissions of greenhouse gases and decreasing nutrient loss into waterways.

The Canadian fertilizer industry contributes \$12 billion to the Canadian economy and employs 12,000 people. Last year, 46% of the world's potash came from Canada. Over the next 30 years, the world will need to increase food production by 70%.

I look forward to working with farmers and Fertilizer Canada to ensure Canada seizes this exporting opportunity.

*Statements by Members***FOOD BANKS**

Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Toronto—Danforth, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today my team and I are fasting for Hunger on the Hill. This initiative, led by Food Banks Canada, asks people to go without food for a day. We are fasting for one day to draw awareness to the fact that countless Canadians and their children go hungry every day. Tonight, I know I will eat dinner, but for many people who live in our communities, that is not an option.

[*Translation*]

Over 800,000 Canadians count on food banks every month to put food on the table. One-third of them are children and young people. There are over 500 food banks in Canada. We can and we must do better. We must guarantee the food security of all Canadians.

With measures like the Canada child benefit and the increase to the guaranteed income supplement, we can do something about food insecurity and help people get the healthy, nutritious food they need.

* * *

• (1415)

[*English*]

AFGHANI SIKHS

Mr. Bob Saroya (Markham—Unionville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I stand today to raise awareness of the plight of Afghani Sikhs in light of the Prime Minister's apology for the *Komagata Maru*. It was only a few decades ago that over 200,000 Sikhs lived in Afghanistan. Tragically, that number has dwindled to less than 2,000. Why? It is because they continually encounter social discrimination and physical intimidation.

Fleeing Sikhs now remain stuck in surrounding countries. An additional secretary from the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee visited me to plead for Canada's assistance.

This Liberal government has expressed an attitude of indifference toward the plight of Afghani Sikhs, but I will always stand up for Afghani Sikhs and those persecuted around the world.

* * *

SRI LANKA

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree (Scarborough—Rouge Park, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, 7 years ago today, the 26-year war in Sri Lanka ended with over 100,000 innocent lives lost, and 300,000 people internally displaced.

There are grave allegations of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide against the Tamil people. These victims demand justice.

The path to peace in Sri Lanka cannot be achieved without accountability, and accountability cannot be achieved without victims having confidence in an impartial, independent, and internationally supported system, devoid of political influence and entrenched in the rule of law. The Sri Lankan state has demonstrated its unwillingness to live up to its commitments to the international community.

Canada must therefore submit the matter to the United Nations Security Council for referral to the International Criminal Court. For

generations, Canadians have stood up for human rights on the world stage. This is a clear opportunity for Canada to lead the way.

* * *

ONTARIO SPECIAL OLYMPICS

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Guelph has the great honour and privilege to host the Ontario Special Olympics.

Next weekend, athletes and spectators from across the province will gather in Guelph in the spirit of sportsmanship, inclusion, and friendship. I wish to personally extend my congratulations and sincere admiration to all the athletes participating. Their dedication and perseverance is unmatched.

We must all remember that no matter who wins, we all share common goals: to promote physical fitness, demonstrate courage and fairness, experience joy, and build friendships with other Special Olympic athletes, their friends and family, and the community.

I welcome all the athletes, their families and friends to Guelph. Athletes should do their best, and know we are all cheering for them.

* * *

FORT MCMURRAY FIRE

Mr. Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be an Albertan and a Canadian.

In my riding, I have seen children setting up lemonade stands at the end of their driveways, young Canadians organizing car washes, and organizations putting on barbeques, all in support of Fort McMurray.

In addition, just today, the city of Edmonton fire service sent its fifth deployment of men and women to fight the fires that are still raging on. The Edmonton evacuation centre at Northlands has become a resource where those from Fort McMurray can find refuge during one of the worst natural disasters in Alberta's history.

My city, Edmonton, has opened its doors to these families, and Edmonton's generous spirit is giving Fort McMurray an Alberta hope. Rebuilding Fort McMurray is going to take leadership, hard work, and patience, but I know Edmontonians will continue to be a part of this process.

Let us stand together in the House and commit to ensuring that Fort McMurray will not be forgotten.

* * *

GENDER-BASED ANALYSIS

Ms. Pam Damoff (Oakville North—Burlington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this week, the Government of Canada is marking gender-based analysis awareness week, with a theme of "embracing diversity and delivering results".

Oral Questions

By encouraging implementation of gender-based analysis, or GBA, across federal departments and agencies, government decisions on policies, programs, and legislation will better reflect the needs of all Canadians. For example, GBA was recently applied to the government's social infrastructure strategy, and identified the particular needs of women and children, resulting in greater investments in shelters and transition housing.

GBA+ Awareness Week also provides an opportunity for each of us as parliamentarians to advance gender equality by applying GBA to all of our work every day. My staff and I have completed GBA training so we can better understand the needs of our constituents in Oakville North—Burlington and all Canadians. I challenge all MPs and their staff to do the same.

* * *

• (1420)

[Translation]

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry—Suroît, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the initial results of the investigation into sexuality, safety, and interactions on university campuses were released at the most recent Acfas conference.

Researchers announced that one in three students is sexually assaulted during their time at university. Typically we are talking about a young female undergrad who is assaulted by a male student and does not report the incident to the appropriate authorities out of fear or shame.

It is deeply shocking that in 2016 we are still at this point. Campaigns have been held in recent years. For example, in Quebec, we have the campaign launched last March by the Université de Montréal and its students. The slogan is “If it's not yes, it's no”.

In Canada, the Canadian Federation of Students runs an awareness campaign called “No means no”. We have to do more.

Last year in Parliament, we adopted a motion to implement a national plan of action against violence against women. It is time to take action and lead by example in the House of Commons to better fight against sexism and harassment in our society.

* * *

[English]

CRIMEA

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the legendary leader of the Crimean Tatars and Ukrainian MP, Mustafa Dzhemilev, is in Ottawa today to commemorate the 76th anniversary of the forced deportation of indigenous Tatars from the Crimean Peninsula by Soviet leader Joseph Stalin. More than 230,000 people were deported in 1944, and 100,000 died.

Now history is repeating itself. Since the illegal occupation and annexation of Crimea by Russia, President Putin's thugs are targeting Tatars again. These corrupt Russian officials are abusing the rights of Tatars in Crimea. First, they attacked their freedom of religion and closed their mosques. Then they attacked their freedom of the press by shutting down their media outlets. Next, the Kremlin closed the

Tatars' legislature, the Majlis, taking away their freedom of assembly.

The Tatars are now labelled enemies of the state. Mr. Dzhemilev has again been forced into exile and his son imprisoned.

Whether it takes five months or 50 years, Canada will always recognize Crimea as Ukrainian territory. Russia must get out of Ukraine.

* * *

[Translation]

REPUBLIC OF HAITI'S FLAG

Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, *sak pasé*.

Today is the 213th anniversary of the creation of the flag of the Republic of Haiti, the country where I was born.

There are almost 150,000 Canadians of Haitian origin. I am proud to recognize their considerable and diverse contributions in the areas of health, education, community, justice, transportation and sport, and, increasingly, in politics. There is a new generation of energetic young people with new ideas who will continue to represent Haitians in Canada.

I salute His Excellency, the Ambassador of Haiti to Canada, Frantz Liautaud.

[Member spoke in Haitian Creole as follows:]

Map di tout Ayisyen mèsè ampil pou kontribusion yo. Awev Map Maché.

[Translation]

Happy flag day.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, now we know what the Prime Minister really thinks about democracy. During the election he said, “We will not resort to legislative tricks to avoid scrutiny.” Now, without any justification, he has changed the rules to eliminate accountability and take power away from the opposition parties.

Instead of a government and an opposition, he just wants a government and an audience. How can the Prime Minister justify such a lack of respect for Parliament?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, we have tremendous respect for Parliament. That is why we are proposing to extend sitting hours to allow members of Parliament to contribute thoughtful, responsible interjections on a broad range of topics.

Oral Questions

We made the commitment to Canadians that we would make this government work for them, that we would put forward the kinds of issues that mattered to them and that they voted for in the election. That is exactly what we are doing. We are putting forward an agenda on which they have asked us to deliver. We are inviting all members in the House to speak at length and share their perspectives on all the legislation.

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we knew that the Prime Minister admired basic Chinese dictatorship, but we did not think he would actually emulate it.

• (1425)

[*Translation*]

This week, we are discovering the Prime Minister's true nature. Parliamentary democracy is just a joke to him. Instead of having a government and an opposition, the Liberals have created a government and an audience.

How can the Prime Minister justify this lack of respect for Parliament?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we were elected because of our ambitious platform for Canadians and to introduce change and honour the serious commitments we made to them.

We are actually offering opposition members much more time to share their opinions and perspectives. We truly believe in the robust participation that must happen here, but we also believe that Canadians expect this government to keep the promises that brought it to power.

* * *

[*English*]

DEMOCRATIC REFORM

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, speaking of a lack of respect, the Prime Minister is also intent on changing the rules of democracy without giving every Canadian a say.

This House belongs to Canadians. When we change the rules of democracy, every Canadian should have a say. It is obvious to Canadians that the only way this process will be transparent and open is if we have a referendum. Why is it not obvious to the Prime Minister?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Again, Mr. Speaker, I am always bemused to hear the members opposite talk about how important it is to engage and consult Canadians when they brought in the unfair elections act, ramming it through to try to help them get re-elected.

The fact is that we committed to making this past election the last one in our country under first past the post. We committed to consult broadly with Canadians and pay particular attention to minority groups and under-represented groups, which would be allowed to weigh in on how to make our electoral system and indeed our governance better. That is exactly what we will do.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Denis Lebel (Lac-Saint-Jean, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister mentioned the Liberal platform. What did he say? He said, "We will not resort to legislative tricks..."

The Prime Minister has failed, because he is already breaking his campaign promises. He does not like answering to a strong opposition. We are going to continue asking questions. He said he wanted to give parliamentarians more power and muscle, but instead he is muzzling them.

Can the Prime Minister tell Canadians and Quebeckers why he is doing the opposite of what he said he would do during the election campaign?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, I believe that the Canadians who are watching at home are confused because they know that we are giving opposition members more opportunities to share their opinions and give speeches so that parliamentarians from all parties have a chance to express their views in the House.

Canadians expect us to keep the ambitious promises that we made. That is exactly what they expect us to do.

Hon. Denis Lebel (Lac-Saint-Jean, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the agreement was that the most recent election would be the last one that was conducted in that way.

The Liberals say they want to consult Canadians, but they are already making decisions. Consulting Canadians means listening to what they have to say and taking their opinions into account. The decisions that the Prime Minister is currently making show a lack of respect for members of the House.

Will he at least show some respect for Canadians and give them the right to vote in a referendum about their future?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, 60% of Canadians voted in favour of parties that promised to change the current voting system. Canadians clearly indicated that they wanted the most recent election to be the last one conducted under the existing system. We promised to consult Canadians, listen to them, and talk about what type of democracy and process they want in order to give them a better government. That is exactly what we are going to do.

* * *

[*English*]

PHYSICIAN-ASSISTED DYING

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, even the Conservatives on their worst days never tried to stifle democracy the way the Liberals are doing it today.

On the very important issue of physician-assisted dying, after Liberals shut down debate, the Alberta Court of Appeal has now declared that the government is contradicting the Supreme Court's ruling. This is exactly as most experts had predicted.

With this new court ruling, will the Prime Minister either refer the bill to the Supreme Court or make the necessary changes to make it constitutional?

Oral Questions

•(1430)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first, it amazes me that the member opposite could think that offering more opportunities for the members opposite to weigh in and give speeches in the House would somehow count as limiting democracy.

Second, on the issue of medical assistance in dying, we understand that this is a big step for Canada. We are creating a responsible regime that will allow us to move forward in a thoughtful way that defends Canadians' rights and freedoms while protecting the most vulnerable. That is what Canadians expect us to do. That is exactly what we are doing.

[Translation]

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, what arrogance. They are breaking their promise. They are attacking the very foundation of democracy in Canada.

After promising a real discussion on medical assistance in dying, this government is shutting down debate at every stage. The Alberta Court of Appeal just warned us that the government's proposal is unconstitutional.

How will the Prime Minister explain that he has broken his promise to the people who need this law?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, the ruling by the Alberta Court of Appeal indicated that we need a legislative framework to ensure that Canadians who are seeking medical assistance in dying can do so, knowing that the physician will not face legal repercussions as a result.

We need a legislative framework. This bill represents a big step forward for our society, and we must be responsible about it. That is exactly what we are doing.

* * *

CANADA POST

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is becoming increasingly clear that he does not have a clue about that issue.

We have lost track of how many promises the people on the other side of the House have broken. Together with Mr. Jackhammer himself, Denis Coderre, the Prime Minister promised to restore home mail delivery. Now that he is in power, he is setting up a committee.

Quebeckers and Canadians said what they wanted during the election campaign. They want home mail delivery back, as the Liberals promised.

Why is the Prime Minister breaking this promise too?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for the sake of transparency, our complete election platform is still available at www.liberal.ca. If he checks the website, he will see that we promised to make sure Canadians are getting the services they need at a reasonable price. That is why we pledged to do what the former government did not: consult Canadians, talk to mayors, and work on figuring out how to provide Canadians with the quality postal service they expect.

[English]

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the video of him promising to restore door-to-door mail delivery, September 3, is online as well.

After campaigning on a black and white promise to end the Conservative court case against veterans, the Liberals are now taking veterans back to court with the same lawyers and the same arguments to try to block them from getting the benefits they deserve and the Liberals promised. It is disgusting.

The reaction from veterans is "It's a betrayal" and "They have turned the Liberal election campaign into a lie". Will the Prime Minister show a shred of decency and stop taking our veterans to court?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, veterans who have served this country extraordinarily well deserve more than people trying to play politics on their backs.

Veterans across this country know that, in budget 2016, we put forward historic measures that would fix the 10 years of neglect—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. There are going to be strong statements on both sides, and most members are able to listen to those strong statements without reacting. Let us all please do so.

The hon. Prime Minister has a few seconds left.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, the 10 years of neglect by the government opposite left us an awful lot to do to make things right for veterans. This is why I am so proud of our Minister of Veterans Affairs who has been working with them, listening, and putting forward concrete measures to reopen closed offices and offer them more support.

We, of course, are looking forward to continuing to work with veterans and advocacy groups across this country, to deliver.

* * *

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Mr. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): On that issue, Mr. Speaker, it is not about delivering something more. It is about not doing something: not taking veterans to court.

The Prime Minister was a little embarrassed on Monday, because 25% of his caucus was caught taking the day off.

He promised to make Parliament more independent by empowering individual MPs and opposition parties. Now his pride has got the best of him, and he is planning on suppressing every rule that he does not like. Everything the Prime Minister ever said about respecting Parliament was obviously a sham. This is simply a vindictive act of spiteful retribution.

Oral Questions

By suppressing the rules of our House of Commons, is the Prime Minister not showing a clear disdain for Parliament and contradicting everything he said during the campaign?

• (1435)

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my friend across the aisle knows very well that what we are seeking to do, in fact, is to allow more members of Parliament to speak to ensure that important government legislation can have a full and complete debate in this House. That is why we were disappointed when, yesterday, I proposed exactly the same wording that my friend in front had proposed to extend the hours of debate on government legislation. What a surprise when it was turned down.

Mr. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, during the campaign, the Prime Minister said he wanted Parliament to hold the government to account. Well, we did, and his response is nothing short of tyrannical. Now that the opposition has become an inconvenience to the Prime Minister, he has lost his temper. This is not about giving members of Parliament more time to debate. This is about taking away the tools that exist for the opposition to hold the government to account.

If this is how the Prime Minister reacts when the House of Commons holds him to account, how can we trust him to manage the changes to the democratic electoral system this summer?

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again, it is a bit ironic that a Conservative member would talk about government being accountable to Parliament.

One of the tools that my friend may be upset that we will temporarily suspend would be his ability to get up in the middle of the day and try to adjourn the House of Commons.

We are here to work, and in no other workplace—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. It is no surprise that members are having trouble hearing the answer.

We have to hear the answers, whether we like them or not, and we have to hear the questions, whether we like them or not.

The hon. government House leader has a few more seconds.

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc: Mr. Speaker, in no other workplace is it acceptable to arrive at work, pull the fire alarm, and make all of one's colleagues cancel their meetings in committees.

Today alone, more than 20 witnesses will be disrupted at committees.

* * *

[Translation]

DEMOCRATIC REFORM

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister responsible for electoral reform keeps repeating that six months will be enough to study the various models for reform thanks to the new methods of communication we have in the 21st century.

Apart from a reference to Twitter, she has not provided any other information on the methods that will be used.

The minister is accusing us of focusing too much on a referendum, so I want to give her a chance to explain how she plans to consult Canadians, and above all, how the methods she is proposing would be better than a referendum.

[English]

Hon. Maryam Monsef (Minister of Democratic Institutions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by acknowledging what a great honour it is to be in this House, today especially.

I recognize that electoral reform, democratic reform overall, will not be easy. It has never been easy. It requires the collective will of every single member of this House to come to the table and work together to ensure that the voices of those in their communities, who are often unheard and ignored, are included in this conversation.

My challenge to the member opposite is to come to the table with constructive and effective conversations that can allow us to meet our mutual goal.

[Translation]

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, once again, the minister did not answer my question.

The minister says that a referendum is not the right way to consult Canadians. She repeated that yet again. Let us do a little math together.

Let us take the number of registered voters in Canada, which is 26 million. Let us assume that only 50% of those individuals would vote in the referendum in question. That is still 13 million.

Can the minister explain how she thinks a parliamentary committee would be able to consult over 13 million Canadians in less than six months?

[English]

Hon. Maryam Monsef (Minister of Democratic Institutions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have mentioned on numerous occasions over the past week in this House, it is not just up to the committee to do this work. It is up to all of us in this House to do this work.

My parliamentary secretary and I will be announcing further methods of outreach in the days and weeks to come. However, if there is no collective will by all members of this House, we will not do this process the justice it deserves. Let us work together to serve the best interests of Canadians and not our political parties.

• (1440)

Ms. Rachael Harder (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has set up a special committee without consulting the opposition; he is using his artificial majority of seats that he, himself, says is illegitimate in order to ram through a system that only benefits Liberals; and he refuses to consult Canadians in a referendum. Canadians should have the final say on this matter.

Will the Prime Minister do the right thing and agree to hold a referendum?

Oral Questions

Hon. Maryam Monsef (Minister of Democratic Institutions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, democracy is more than just about voting. It is about working together to ensure that every voice and every perspective is engaged and included in governance.

In the past, the Progressive Conservative Party extended the right to vote to women and indigenous persons. The party did not hold a referendum. It came to Parliament and collectively worked together to do the right thing.

Let us do the right thing. Let us work together and modernize our electoral system.

Ms. Rachael Harder (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, two-thirds of Canadians would like us to have a referendum with regard to this issue. The minister of democratic reform does not understand that the voice of millions of Canadians in a referendum is far better than the hundreds that a committee might be able to hear.

She has claimed countless times that she would like to “put the interests of Canadians ahead of party interests”. I would encourage her, then, to live up to her words of commitment and to put Canadians first.

Why will the Liberals not let Canadians have the final say by holding a national referendum?

Hon. Maryam Monsef (Minister of Democratic Institutions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, democratic reform requires leadership, leadership to engage and to consult Canadians, but also leadership to act and do the right thing.

When this right was extended to women and to indigenous persons, without restrictions, this House did so by demonstrating true leadership.

Let us do that again. Let us work together to ensure that the voices of those who do not traditionally get an opportunity to be included in this process are included this time.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is rare to have the opportunity to have a real discussion on our electoral system. We have an historic opportunity to put an end to an archaic system that creates false majorities, like the one the Liberal Party got in the last election.

With the parliamentary straitjacket the Liberals presented yesterday, I find it hard to believe that they are not going to use their false majority to impose their views.

Can the Liberals assure the House today that they will do the only honourable thing to improve our democratic life and get the support of at least one opposition party?

[*English*]

Hon. Maryam Monsef (Minister of Democratic Institutions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have been seeking the support of the opposition since I began my mandate. We need to do this work together.

However, if the members opposite have already made up their minds and are not coming to the table with progressive and constructive options, then they cannot criticize us for not doing the work that we promised we would do to the Canadians who elected.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we have a historic opportunity to finally get rid of first past the post, but Canadians are growing increasingly worried and disappointed with the government.

The minister claims that she wants to work together with opposition, then Liberals shoot down exactly every idea we give them. She claims she wants to be non-partisan, then Liberals stack the deck on the committee choosing the new system.

Let us have a clear answer to a clear question. Will the minister respect the millions of Canadians represented by the opposition and agree not to pass any changes to our electoral act without the support of one of those parties, yes or no?

Hon. Maryam Monsef (Minister of Democratic Institutions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if working with other parties was not important to us, we would not have demonstrated the leadership that we did when we ensured that the two unrecognized parties in the House, the Bloc Québécois and the Green Party, would be included in this important conversation.

I am looking forward to my meetings with all my critics, and I hope that this is an issue on which we can work together and ensure that Canada displays and continues to display the leadership it needs to on this agenda of democratic reform.

• (1445)

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the bizarre spectacle yesterday of the minister arguing that referendums are non-inclusive shows that she has no idea how they work.

A referendum will not and does not replace the minister's ultra-inclusive, super-de-duper consultation process, which has been received with such accolades in the media over the last few days. Rather, a referendum is a final step. It is the one in which Canadians get to say yes or no to what came before, including finding out whether or not the government will pay any attention at all to what took place in their consultation process.

Why, therefore, would she not hold a referendum?

Hon. Maryam Monsef (Minister of Democratic Institutions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while I would appreciate a different tone from the member opposite, I do not expect it.

That said, the people of this country, those in the pockets, who do not normally get engaged in this conversation, those who face barriers above and beyond what members opposite can even comprehend, they deserve to be included in this conversation.

I urge the member opposite to come to the table with constructive feedback on how we can work together to ensure that those voices are heard.

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us talk about inclusiveness.

We have a parliamentary committee that meets with, say, 1,000 people over the next six months, which would be quite an accomplishment: inclusive. Then as the minister said, it goes off to the cabinet for a final decision: not inclusive. Then, if she takes the advice we are giving here, it goes to 35 million Canadians for ratification or rejection. That is inclusive.

Oral Questions

Why is the minister opposed to inclusiveness? Why does she think that only her cabinet colleagues get to decide whether or not we get—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Democratic Institutions.

Hon. Maryam Monsef (Minister of Democratic Institutions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, allow me to take this opportunity to remind all members of the House that the final decision on what reforms we bring forward will be the decision of all 338 members of the House, and to believe otherwise is undemocratic.

Hon. Jason Kenney (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister just said that the electoral reform stacked process she is recommending is designed to serve the best interests of Canadians and not political parties.

Let us be clear. The government wants the Liberal majority controlling the committee to opt for the preferred Liberal system to be approved by the Liberal cabinet, to be adopted by the Liberal majority in the House, notwithstanding any dissent, including from 35 million Canadians.

Nothing could be clearer. The Liberals are trying to rig the system by and for the Liberal Party. Why not allow Canadians to protect the legitimacy of our elections through a referendum?

Hon. Maryam Monsef (Minister of Democratic Institutions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while taking advantage of their majority may have been the norm within the former government, that is not the culture within our government.

Hon. Jason Kenney (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, so it is not the Liberal culture to respect the majority of Canadians on the precise question of how they elect their representatives to their Parliament. This place does not belong to the Liberal Party, and the very question of legitimacy is at stake here.

It is absolutely clear if the Liberals thought they could get a majority of Canadians to endorse their rigged system, they would hold a referendum. Is it not true? The only reason they refuse to do so is because Canadians would veto the Liberal rigged electoral system.

Hon. Maryam Monsef (Minister of Democratic Institutions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this time last week, we took the first step. We delivered on a promise that we made to Canadians to bring together an all-party committee to review various options to study electoral reform and consider the possibility of online voting and mandatory voting.

That was a first step. That step and every other step from here on requires the collective will and leadership of every member of the House. We need to display that leadership, because the people who put us here are counting on it.

* * *

• (1450)

[Translation]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it has come to our attention that RCMP officers spied on journalists without authorization. There needs to be an investigation into this.

In the meantime, the Liberals still have not made good on their promise to revisit Bill C-51, which they voted for.

Bill C-51 is an affront to liberty and gives unprecedented powers to our intelligence services without any accountability.

When will the minister keep his promise and take action to respect our civil liberties?

[English]

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, freedom of the press is a fundamental Canadian value that is enshrined in the charter.

The unauthorized surveillance was entirely unacceptable. It was contrary to a ministerial directive. It was contrary to RCMP policy. It was stopped when RCMP headquarters became aware of it, and the investigators have been reprimanded.

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, after voting in favour of Bill C-51, the Conservatives' dangerous and ineffective spy bill, the Liberals changed their tune during the election, when they promised to repeal problematic elements of the draconian bill "without delay".

Seven months later, the minister has accomplished nothing. Meanwhile, we have reports of unauthorized spying on journalists by the RCMP, and Canadians are increasingly worried about their civil liberties.

Why are the Liberals breaking their promise on Bill C-51 and leaving Canadians' civil liberties at risk?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the plan with respect to Bill C-51 was laid out very clearly in our election platform.

Step one, in respect of that, will be taken, hopefully, before this Parliament rises for the summer. That is the presentation of legislation having to do with a new overview mechanism, involving a committee of parliamentarians. Step two was in the budget. That was the creation of a new office on counter-radicalization. We will be conducting major national consultations with Canadians to determine what further they want to see to happen.

* * *

LABOUR

Mr. Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, during the campaign, many of our commitments were focused to better help Canadian families. Measures such as the Canada child benefit and added flexibility for parental leave will help improve the situation of many Canadian families.

However, another popular commitment was in regard to flexible work. Can the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour update the House on the government's commitment to flexible work?

Oral Questions

Hon. MaryAnn Mihychuk (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, flex work is good for families, workers, and businesses. We know, from other countries that have implemented a modern flextime system, like the U.K., that it results in greater employee loyalty, innovation, satisfaction, and higher sales.

At the same time, it also improves the work-life balance for working Canadians. I encourage everyone to participate in sharing their views on a modern flextime work system for—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Parry Sound—Muskoka.

* * *

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Hon. Tony Clement (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC): Mr. Speaker, now the cat is out of the bag. The Minister of Foreign Affairs caved in to the Putin regime in exchange for a seat at the International Syria Support Group table this week.

It is clear that the minister broke a Liberal campaign promise to implement the Magnitsky Act in order to secure an invite from his new friend, Putin. However, members of the Liberal caucus support the Magnitsky Act. Our allies support the act.

Why is the minister turning his back on his colleagues and allies, and instead embracing Putin and his thugs?

Ms. Pam Goldsmith-Jones (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for the opportunity to profile the promise we made to restore Canada's place on the international stage.

Canadians are proud that Canada is participating in Syrian peace talks. After 10 years, we are being asked for our advice and our involvement. Engagement is giving Canada a place and a voice at the table. Our participation means that we are better placed to help restore peace and provide crucial humanitarian aid. As well, we call on all parties to return to UN-led intra-Syrian peace talks.

Hon. Tony Clement (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what is the point of being sought for our advice when we are turning away from Canada's values and Canada's interests?

Instead of implementing the Magnitsky Act as promised, the Minister of Foreign Affairs is now musing vaguely about making changes to Canada's Special Economic Measures Act, another Liberal weak-kneed response, another broken promise. What this amounts to is the Minister of Foreign Affairs tiptoeing around Vladimir Putin.

Why is the minister shying away from the Magnitsky Act when our allies around the world have already signed on? When will he stand up to Putin and enact this legislation?

•(1455)

Ms. Pam Goldsmith-Jones (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is quite clear that the former Conservative government did nothing to address, concretely, the Magnitsky case. There are two aspects here and it is important to understand Canadian legislation.

First, we already have the ability to ban individuals involved in the Magnitsky murder from entering Canada under our Immigration

and Refugee Protection Act. Second, with regard to sanctions, the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development has been tasked with reviewing the Special Economic Measures Act. That is where our sanctions take place and we all look forward to its report.

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the fact that the Minister of Foreign Affairs is willing to trade appeasement with Russia for a membership in the International Syria Support Group and turn a blind eye to human rights abusers is appalling, to say the least. Innocent victims like Sergei Magnitsky are routinely subject to unjustified arrest, torture, and murder at the hands of corrupt officials.

Will the Prime Minister follow through on the Liberal campaign promise and support the Magnitsky bill?

Ms. Pam Goldsmith-Jones (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the attention that is being paid to the Magnitsky case. It is a horrendous situation and we obviously condemn Russia's human rights record. But I would like to say that our policy of engagement is allowing us to speak more clearly and more broadly to the world about our role and our constructive contribution to holding Russia and its deplorable human rights record to account.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, finally the government has announced a replacement to the office of religious freedom, but its proposal sounds more like something out of the British comedy, *Yes Minister*. It is quite simply an office of everything. In spite of lofty ideas, it is not clear at all what the functions of the office would be on a day-to-day basis.

The government could take some concrete action on international human rights by restoring funding to projects on the ground that the previous office was already successfully operating. Why create an office of everything that will accomplish nothing?

Ms. Pam Goldsmith-Jones (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are proud to announce the office of human rights, freedoms, and inclusion, which reflects our ongoing commitment to advancing human rights at home and abroad. It is a comprehensive vision that includes all human rights, of course including religion. I would like to assure the House that the expanded office builds on the work of the previous office. For example, the external advisory committee on religious freedom will stay. To support our enhanced approach, we are significantly increasing the budget. The office of human rights, freedoms, and inclusion reflects the fact that human rights are universal, indivisible, and interdependent.

*Oral Questions***VETERANS AFFAIRS**

Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, another day, another broken Liberal promise. Liberals are dragging wounded veterans back into court to deny them fair benefits. After Conservatives spent \$700,000 fighting our veterans, Liberals are taking another cruel hit at them.

Veterans have earned our respect. They deserve the benefits they are owed. This is a disgrace. It is shameful. The Liberals must recognize Canada's moral, social, legal, and financial covenant with veterans. Why are they breaking their promises and turning their backs on our veterans?

Hon. Kent Hehr (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we acknowledge the significant contributions veterans and Canadian Armed Forces members have made and continue to make in protecting peace and security for all Canadians. I was given a mandate to re-establish lifelong pensions as an option for veterans and remain committed to this, as to all items in my mandate letter. Veteran stakeholders have asked us to get this right, not rushed. As this matter is currently before the courts, it would be inappropriate for me to comment further.

* * *

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Mr. Fin Donnelly (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is shameful. The Liberals are betraying our country and betraying our veterans.

During the campaign election, the Liberals promised to restore environmental protections to the Fisheries Act. It is even in the minister's mandate letter. Over 35 environmental organizations have called on the government to immediately reinstate previous habitat protections in the Fisheries Act. It is time for the minister to act.

When will the minister make good on this commitment and restore the fish habitat protections?

● (1500)

Hon. Hunter Tootoo (Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the member knows and we agree, the Fisheries Act is an essential tool to support conservation and protection of fish and fish habitat and the sustainability of fisheries. I take very seriously my mandate to restore the lost protections of the Fisheries Act and look forward to consulting with scientists, environmentalists, and indigenous people in finding the best path forward to safeguard our oceans and waterways. We are currently looking at options to move forward. I want to assure the member and everyone that we will do it and we will do it right.

* * *

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the justice minister has allowed a truce in the Equitas veterans lawsuit to fall apart and her lawyers are back attacking veterans in court. The Prime Minister promised to uphold the sacred obligation our country owes to our veterans, yet his justice minister has turned her lawyers on veterans.

Will the justice minister denounce these tactics and treat our veterans with care, compassion, and respect?

Hon. Kent Hehr (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as stated earlier, we remain committed to treating veterans with care, compassion, and respect by implementing the mandate letter as given to me by our Prime Minister.

Budget 2016 delivered on a lot of those items, including financial security for many of our most disabled veterans. We will continue to work through our mandate items and deliver for veterans and their families going forward. This will be a new day for veterans, and our government is following through for them.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alupa Clarke (Beauport—Limoilou, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the press is reporting that the Equitas lawsuit between a group of veterans and the Canadian government is back in full swing.

The Conservative government managed to secure an agreement in this case. After countless broken election promises, such as reinstating the lifetime disability pension, the minister is getting his government involved in a case that seeks to reduce our veterans' rights.

How does the minister explain this affront?

[*English*]

Hon. Kent Hehr (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let us be clear. The last 10 years under the Conservative government were nothing but a sham in terms of treating veterans with care, compassion, and respect.

We have delivered on this extensively in budget 2016. We are moving on financial security for our most disabled veterans. We are expanding the career impact allowance and the disability award. We remain committed to our mandate letter. We will be returning to the table to ensure that veterans and their families are treated with care, compassion, and respect, and in a better fashion than they were under the former government.

Mr. Alupa Clarke (Beauport—Limoilou, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Veterans Affairs appears to be two-faced with respect to the Veterans Affairs files. The minister is now siding with the Department of Justice, which has chosen to prevent veterans from obtaining benefits that the minister and his party had promised during the last election. Does the Minister of Veterans Affairs no longer believe that the government has a sacred obligation to veterans?

Oral Questions

Hon. Kent Hehr (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am uncertain if my critic has been paying attention to what this government has done, so I will remind him.

In budget 2016, we delivered significantly for our veterans and their families. We delivered on extending the earnings loss benefit from 75% to 90% of pre-release salary. We expanded the career impact allowance. We retroactively paid the disability award. We are opening the nine offices that his government closed, and restoring staff to the front lines.

We are doing things better. The member should applaud us for what we are doing.

* * *

CANADIAN SPACE AGENCY

Mr. Raj Grewal (Brampton East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, everyone loves space, and space exploration is a source of inspiration, but also a rich source for research and innovation. The investments we make to deepen our research work in space increases our innovation capabilities. It also captures the minds of young people and promotes their interest in science and technology.

Could the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development please give this House an update on the progress of the Canadian Space Agency and the next steps of human space travel?

Hon. Navdeep Bains (Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Brampton East for his tireless commitment to helping our Canadian youth.

We are proud of the \$379-million commitment in budget 2016 to support the Canadian Space Agency. That is why I was honoured to announce that David Saint-Jacques will be the next Canadian astronaut to go aboard the international space station. This is a proud moment for all Canadians. This is an exciting new chapter for space and of course for the next generation of Canadians.

* * *

• (1505)

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Bob Saroya (Markham—Unionville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a few decades ago, over 200,000 Sikhs lived in Afghanistan. That number has dwindled to less than 2,000 today. Afghani Sikhs continually encounter social discrimination and physical intimidation and now remain stuck in the surrounding countries. Why have the Liberals expressed an attitude of indifference toward the plight of Afghani Sikhs and failed to resettle them to Canada under section 13?

Hon. John McCallum (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in response to the hon. member's question, I certainly do not think he is suggesting we have displayed an indifference toward refugees in general. That has been one of our major commitments.

We are also highly aware of the situation of refugees in other countries, including the Sikhs in Afghanistan. I can assure the hon.

member this is one of the areas we are looking into with great interest and attention.

* * *

[*Translation*]

CBC/RADIO-CANADA

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the NDP had to back CBC/Radio-Canada's board of directors into a corner for it to finally show any sign of life. It was like a papal conclave. I almost saw a little plume of white smoke rising.

What did it announce? It has chosen six secret options for the sale of Maison de Radio-Canada in Montreal. However, we will not know what they are, because it is a secret.

Yesterday, the minister acknowledged that a partisan, Conservative board of directors that meets in secret to make secret decisions is problematic. She promised that all the board's documents would be made public.

Will the minister promise to make all the options for Maison de Radio-Canada public, yes or no?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to say that our public broadcaster is finally looking to the future.

CBC/Radio-Canada has presented two good proposals for its current site that respect the federal government's historic and social responsibility towards the neighbourhood.

I now expect CBC/Radio-Canada to take the next steps in the process in a transparent manner and hold ongoing discussions with the unions, employees, and other local stakeholders.

I would remind members that CBC/Radio-Canada operates at arm's length from the government and it must also prove the quality of the selected proposals to all stakeholders.

* * *

HEALTH

Mr. Ramez Ayoub (Thérèse-De Blainville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when the world's population is affected by epidemics such as Zika, Canada does what it takes to protect its citizens and support the work being done abroad.

Although the risk that Zika poses in Canada is very small, we still need to be vigilant and prepared.

Can the Minister of Health inform the House of what Canada is doing to combat the Zika virus both here and abroad?

Hon. Jane Philpott (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Thérèse-De Blainville for his question. We are doing everything we can to protect Canada from this infectious disease.

Last week, the Minister of International Development and I were pleased to announce that Canada will be contributing close to \$5 million to the global fight against Zika.

This money will be used to conduct more research, develop improved diagnostic tests, better prevent the transmission of the disease through more effective mosquito control measures, and contribute to humanitarian aid.

* * *

[English]

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians have shown strong support to resettle thousands of refugees from Syria to Canada. Unfortunately, it seems that the number of Syrian refugees is more important than the care they receive. Organizations and churches that raised up to \$70,000 to privately sponsor a refugee family were told they would arrive in February. Here we are, three months later, and nothing. There has been nothing in three months.

When will the minister make good on these promises and unite these refugees with their sponsors?

Hon. John McCallum (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am proud, as a Canadian, of the overwhelmingly positive welcome Canadians have afforded to the Syrian refugees. The downside is, to be frank, the welcome has been so enormous that my department has not been able to keep up with the number of refugees generous Canadians have been demanding. We have taken measures to guarantee that for all those who applied by the end of March of this year, the refugees will be here by the end of this year or early next year.

Canadians have been overwhelmingly—

• (1510)

The Speaker: The hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands.

* * *

PHYSICIAN-ASSISTED DYING

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister, and I want to start by quoting this from yesterday's unanimous decision by the Alberta Court of Appeal:

...the declaration of invalidity on Carter does not require that the applicant be terminally ill.... The decision itself is clear. No words in it suggest otherwise.... The interpretation urged on us by [the Government of] Canada is not sustainable.

In light of this, would the government be willing to entertain the amendments now before this place at report stage to ensure that Bill C-14 is compliant with the charter?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one of the things that came out of that Alberta decision was, indeed, the need for a proper framework whereby requests for medical assistance in dying can be evaluated. That is why in the bill we put forward there is a strong framework for consultation of physicians and participation in that.

With regard to amendments, they have already been studied at committee and we have made our determinations around those.

Routine Proceedings

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I would like to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of His Excellency Martin Schulz, President of the European Parliament.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: I would also like to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of the Hon. Christy Clark, Premier of British Columbia.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

KOMAGATA MARU

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by acknowledging the hard work done by many of my colleagues that has brought us to this historic moment here today.

From my own caucus, I thank the members for Surrey—Newton and Winnipeg North for their tireless advocacy. They have petitioned the Canadian government for years to make the apology that we will make today. I thank them for their commitment to this cause.

From the opposition benches, special mention must be made of the members for Calgary Heritage, Calgary Midnapore, and the former member for Surrey North. Each deserves recognition for the work they have done to seek resolution for victims and their families, as do the many organizations that have sought the same, in particular the Professor Mohan Singh Memorial Foundation.

Today I rise in the House to offer an apology on behalf of the Government of Canada for our role in the *Komagata Maru* incident.

More than a century ago a great injustice took place. On May 23, 1914, a steamship sailed into Burrard Inlet in Vancouver. On board were 376 passengers of Sikh, Muslim, and Hindu origin. Those passengers, like millions of immigrants to Canada before and since, came seeking better lives for their families, greater opportunities, and a chance to contribute to their new home. Those passengers chose Canada. When they arrived here, they were rejected.

• (1515)

[Translation]

They were rejected because, at the time, the Government of Canada had passed the Continuous Passage Act. In accordance with this act, only passengers arriving on a continuous journey were authorized to disembark in Canada. This measure would have prevented immigrants coming from far-off lands, such as India, to enter Canada, because at the time it was impossible to travel such a distance without making a stop along the way. When the *Komagata Maru* arrived in Canada, just a few passengers were authorized to disembark.

Under this act, the ship and those on board were forced to turn around. Members of the local Sikh community tried to convince the authorities to reconsider their decision, but they stood firm.

Routine Proceedings

On July 23, 1914, two months after their arrival, the *Komagata Maru* and its passengers were escorted out of the port by the Canadian Army. They were forced to return to India. Nineteen passengers were killed, and many others were imprisoned.

[English]

Canada does not bear alone the responsibility for every tragic mistake that occurred with the *Komagata Maru* and its passengers, but Canada's government was, without question, responsible for the laws that prevented these passengers from immigrating peacefully and securely.

[Translation]

For that, and for every regrettable consequence that followed, we are truly sorry.

[English]

We apologize, first and foremost, to the victims of the incident. No words can erase the pain and suffering they experienced. Regrettably, the passage of time means that none are alive to hear our apology today. Still, we offer it, fully and sincerely, for our indifference to your plight, for our failure to recognize all that you had to offer, for the laws that discriminated against you so senselessly, and for not apologizing sooner. For all these things, we are truly sorry.

I also wish to apologize to the descendants of the passengers of the *Komagata Maru*, including those who are here with us today. We can never know what your lives would have been like had your relatives been welcomed to Canada, the way in which your lives would have been different, and the ways in which Canada would have been enriched. Those possibilities are lost to history, and for that, and to you, we apologize.

Just as we apologize for past wrongs, so too must we commit ourselves to positive action, to learning from the mistakes of the past, and to making sure that we never repeat them. That is the unique promise and potential of Canada.

[Translation]

We believe that everyone deserves a real chance to succeed, regardless of who they are or where they are from. Canada's South Asian community is a daily example of this success and of our success.

We believe and we know that diversity is a strength, that we are strong, not in spite of our differences, but because of them. We believe in the values enshrined in our Charter of Rights and Freedoms, including multiculturalism.

• (1520)

[English]

Before I finish, I would like to acknowledge one more member who has helped to bring the *Komagata Maru* incident to our national attention, our Minister of National Defence.

On an interesting historical note, before entering political life, the minister was the commanding officer of the British Columbia Regiment, Duke of Connaught's Own, the very same regiment that once forced out the *Komagata Maru*. A century ago, the minister's family might well have been turned away from Canada.

Today, the minister is an essential member of this government and sits here in this House. He sits in a House that includes immigrants, that includes the daughters and sons, and granddaughters and grandsons of immigrants.

The very makeup of the House should remind us all that when we have the choice between opening our arms to those in need or closing our hearts to them, we must always choose the more compassionate path. When we see injustice, we must speak up and attempt to make things right. When we make mistakes, we must apologize and recommit ourselves to doing better.

Canada is a country unlike any other. We are all blessed to call it home. Let us always endeavour to do better and to be better. Let us do that in honour of the victims of the *Komagata Maru* incident, and in honour of every courageous person who leaves behind family and familiar things to bring to Canada the very best of who they are.

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to join with the Prime Minister and all members of the House in gathering to reflect on a tragic chapter in our country's history.

[Translation]

As Canadians, we have always taken pride in our country's commitment to our shared values of justice, freedom, tolerance, and respect for human rights.

[English]

We are rightly proud of our country's openness to newcomers from all over the world. Canada has been enriched by the generations of hard-working men and women who have come to our country to seek a better life. Ours is a society that offers opportunity for all, regardless of one's background. It is a life free from the violence, persecution, and insecurity that so many have been forced to flee.

[Translation]

However, there have been times when Canada has not fulfilled these aspirations. We must recognize and try to set right those periods in our past when we have not lived up to our values.

[English]

We have to reflect on and learn from times in which Canada acted unjustly.

The tragic events that we are gathered here today to remember was one of those lapses.

When the vessel *Komagata Maru* arrived in Vancouver, on May 23, 1914, most of the nearly 400 passengers on board were immigrants from Punjab. They were Sikhs, Hindus, and Muslims, and all British subjects, just like Canadians at the time. They were simply seeking a better life in Canada. Twenty-four were allowed in and the rest were not. The ship and its passengers were detained in a harbour for two months, until they were escorted out on July 23 and sent back to India. When they arrived in Calcutta, a disturbance broke out in which 19 passengers were shot and killed and dozens more were arrested.

Routine Proceedings

This journey resulted from Canada's refusal to welcome them. It ended in terrible tragedy and great hardship for those aboard the *Komagata Maru*.

It is for that refusal that the Canadian government, and all of us here, stand today to recognize the terrible events that occurred when Canada failed to accept those seeking shelter in a new home.

• (1525)

[Translation]

This side of the House welcomes today's apology. We wish to join with the government in offering a deep and sincere commitment to honour the memories of those who suffered and to learn the lessons of this tragedy.

[English]

Today's apology is the culmination of a process of recognition that began with steps taken by our previous Conservative government about a decade ago. This process began with the previous prime minister and member for Calgary Heritage's public recognition of the injustice committed against the passengers of the *Komagata Maru* in 2006. It was followed by his apology to the community in Vancouver in 2008.

That marked the first time the Government of Canada gave official recognition of this tragedy, and the recognition was backed up by a deep and meaningful commitment to never let the memory of this event fade. Our Conservative government created the community historical recognition program, which offered support to Indo-Canadian groups seeking to acknowledge, commemorate, and educate Canadians about the *Komagata Maru*. This program supported the development of books, documentaries, websites, and other resources so that future generations could learn from this tragic event.

Our government was also very proud to support the first public museum dedicated to the *Komagata Maru*, opened at the Khalsa Diwan Society in Vancouver, in 2012, and the first public monument in Vancouver's Harbour Green Park.

In 2014, we were all proud in the House when Canada Post commemorated the 100th anniversary of the *Komagata Maru* with a special stamp.

[Translation]

It is through actions like these that we sought to recognize this historic injustice and ensure that future generations understood the mistake that was made. We take these actions because we want to live up to our own values.

[English]

We cannot change the past, but we can demonstrate that Canada has changed. No nation can grow without re-examining our past and seeking to move beyond our ancient prejudices. We can show those communities, who have been wronged, that their tragedies are understood and their experiences are valued.

Today, Canada's South Asian population is over one million strong. Since the *Komagata Maru*, we have welcomed successive generations of Indo-Canadians to our country. These hard-working

men and women are devoted to their families and their communities, and their presence makes our country stronger.

They are an integral part of the Canadian family. Their entrepreneurial spirit means more prosperity for their families and for all Canadians. They are public officeholders at every level of government, having sought and won the support of their fellow Canadians as leaders.

Their values are interwoven with ours, creating a nation that has been more vibrant and welcoming in recent years than at any other time in our history.

We only need to look at the recent tragedy in Fort McMurray to see how the generosity of every Canadian community can lift us all. One of the first to open their doors to the evacuees in Edmonton was the Guru Nanak Sikh Society. I must mention that the members of the Singh Khalsa Sewa Club in Brampton loaded their trucks with supplies and drove for days to reach northern Alberta to help.

• (1530)

[Translation]

These examples of dedication, selflessness and community spirit are evidence of the values that we all share as Canadians.

The apology today is an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to those values.

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour for my colleagues and me to participate in today's official apology for the historic tragedy of the *Komagata Maru*, an apology that has been much too long in coming.

The leader of the official opposition was absolutely right when she said that the previous government, led by the prime minister of the day, who is now the member for Calgary Heritage, did indeed apologize to the community, which was greatly appreciated.

Today in the House, that act, which I would describe as an act of contrition on behalf of all Canadians for that historic tragedy, is being made official.

Let us call a spade a spade. We all know that racist, exclusionary policies resulted in the Canadian tragedy of the *Komagata Maru*.

[English]

It is, indeed, important to apologize and it is also important to remember why we apologize. Members may recall, as I do, just a few short years ago when another ship arrived in B.C., the MV *Sun Sea*, and the reception that it got with haz-mats and protective gear for all the people going onto that ship. That was eventually struck down by the Supreme Court, but it reminds us that it is not just in history that these events take place. Those same attitudes can exist today. That is why we all have to be mindful of our obligation to be fair to people who are in distress coming from other countries, as was the case with those Tamils coming in just a couple of years ago.

Routine Proceedings

New Democrats have been proud to stand with thousands in the South Asian community who have fought tirelessly for this official apology for the *Komagata Maru* tragedy. My former colleague, Jasbir Sandhu, referenced by the Prime Minister, led the fight for an official apology in Parliament and moved an opposition day motion to that effect. My friend and former colleague, Jinny Sims, who is here with us today, spoke eloquently in the House in favour of an official apology and fought for a more welcoming Canada more broadly.

As has been pointed out, it has been just over 100 years since the *Komagata Maru* came to shore at the Port of Vancouver. It was a boat full of people, full of families, seeking safety and a better life. They were prevented from disembarking and the ship remained in Burrard Inlet for a full two months. We can imagine the conditions. They were denied basic necessities, like water and food, and those conditions actually worsened, of course.

In the end, all but 20 of those 376 passengers were sent back home to face grave danger. When the *Komagata Maru* arrived in Calcutta, police fired on passengers and 19 were killed. Many others were imprisoned and, let us be clear once again, it was racism, pure and simple, that put our fellow human beings at such risk.

The continuous journey regulation was a racially motivated one, just like the Chinese head tax, which the previous government, almost immediately after its election, apologized for in this place, and it also did immeasurable harm by keeping South Asians out of Canada. Mothers, fathers, brothers, and sisters were jailed, and worse, because they were not welcome here in Canada. It was a horrific chapter in the history of a country that has come to recognize diversity and tolerance as great strengths.

• (1535)

[Translation]

The story of the *Komagata Maru* is a Canadian tragedy. People left their homeland in search of a better life with the hope of achieving their dreams here in Canada. They were wrong. Three hundred and sixty-five passengers were sent back to where they came from simply because of their origins. They lived through imprisonment and exploitation, and worse still, 19 of them were shot dead by the authorities on their arrival in India. It was pure racism.

[English]

Today, we finally apologize, but we also stand in solidarity with those who continue to fight for freedom and dignity in India and Canada. We owe it to those who were turned away more than 100 years ago to continue the struggle for justice.

To ensure that this kind of tragedy is never again repeated, we owe it to them to continue building a more welcoming Canada, where diversity is celebrated, where families can reunite with their loved ones, and where the most vulnerable are given refuge, not turned away in their hour of need.

The victims of the *Komagata Maru* deserve nothing less. Canadians deserve nothing less.

[Translation]

In memory of the victims of the *Komagata Maru*, it is our duty to prevent such a tragedy from ever happening again. Together we must

build a more welcoming Canada where diversity is valued and where no one is left behind in situations of distress.

[Member spoke in Punjabi as follows:]

Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh.

The Speaker: I believe the hon. member for Rivière-du-Nord is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to add his voice. Does he have unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Speaker: The hon. member for Rivière-du-Nord.

Mr. Rhéal Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, if there is one thing that Canada and Quebec have in common, it is that they are both welcoming nations populated by warm, curious, and very friendly people. Our respective identities have been shaped by immigration and continue to evolve through the contribution of newcomers.

That is why it is so important that we revisit this dark episode in Canada's history here today.

Three hundred and seventy-six people were turned away when they arrived in British Columbia in 1914 on board the *Komagata Maru* from Hong Kong. The vast majority of the passengers were Sikh. Those 376 individuals were held captive on the ship and then sent back across the Pacific Ocean to face their fate, which everyone knew would be grim.

Those 376 people were made to suffer solely because of our ignorance and racism. Their removal was justified by the regulations of the day, which had one simple objective: to turn away any newcomers who came from Asia. As we all know, immigrants from Europe were welcomed with open arms.

History has shown that Canada has not always been known for its openness. The Government of Canada's apology to the Sikh community involves a duty to remember. Each and every one of us has a duty to remember all those who have made Quebec and Canada what they are today.

May this reminder impel us to make room for everyone who will join us in building the future of this country.

• (1540)

[English]

The Speaker: Would the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands also have the unanimous consent of the House to speak?

Some hon members: Agreed.

The Speaker: The hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands.

[Translation]

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all my colleagues for giving me this opportunity to add a few words.

[English]

This has been a profoundly moving moment in the House, particularly because we are so honoured to have so many people here in the galleries whose families and lives have been directly touched. Although this was 102 years ago, it was a shameful episode in Canadian history.

To all of them present here, and to all of their families, and to anyone they can reach out to whose lives have been scarred by the knowledge that a country like Canada could turn away hundreds of people on the *Komagata Maru*, we are not just sorry but we reach out and ask for their personal forgiveness. We ask that they communicate that to everyone in their community.

This will never happen again. We know that because Canada is a changed country, although in 1939 we turned away the *MS St. Louis* from Halifax harbour. We know that racism, anti-Semitism, indifference, and intolerance have no place in this country.

Many good words have been said. I thank my Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, the leader of the New Democratic Party, and my colleague from the Bloc. They all had strong words, not one of which I would disagree.

However, I want to add thanks as the only leader who happens to be a British Columbian. I want to recognize the contribution of someone who was the first person in political life recently who raised the issue of the scandal. That was the first Indo-Canadian elected as an MLA, Moe Sihota, an NDP member from British Columbia, who raised this issue and fought for it. He was also minister of environment, which is how I knew him.

I want to add my thanks to him for reminding us that it is never ever too late. We are Canadian, after all, we are good at it. It is never too late to say, "I'm sorry", and we are deeply sorry.

* * *

INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): 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 NATO Parliamentary Association respecting its participation at the Parliamentary Transatlantic Forum, Washington, DC, United States of America, December 7-8, 2015.

* * *

[Translation]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Anthony Housefather (Mount Royal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the third report of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights in relation to its study of the main estimates 2016-17.

Vote 1 under Administrative Tribunals Support Service of Canada, Vote 1 under Canadian Human Rights Commission, Vote 1 under Courts Administration Service, Votes 1 and 5 under Justice, Votes 1 and 5 under Office of the Commissioner for Federal Judicial

Routine Proceedings

Affairs, Vote 1 under Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions and Vote 1 under Supreme Court of Canada.

• (1545)

[English]

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AND ESTIMATES

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the second report of the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates, entitled "Main Estimates 2016-17: Vote 1 under Canada Post Corporation, Vote 1 under Canada School of Public Service, Vote 1 under Canadian Inter-governmental Conference Secretariat, Vote 1 under Canadian Transportation Accident Investigation and Safety Board, Vote 1 under Governor General, Vote 1 under Office of the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner, Vote 1 under Privy Council, Vote 1 under Public Service Commission, Votes 1 and 5 under Public Works and Government Services, Votes 1 and 5 under Shared Services Canada, Vote 1 under The Senate, Votes 1, 5, 10, 20, 25, 30 and 33 under Treasury Board Secretariat".

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 10th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs in relation to the main estimates.

While I am on my feet, I move:

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

Mr. Andrew Scheer: Mr. Speaker, during question period, the government House leader said:

...in no other workplace is it acceptable to arrive at work, pull the fire alarm, and make all of one's colleagues cancel their meetings in committees.

Today alone, over 20 witnesses will be disrupted at committees.

It is the Liberals' own motion that is doing that.

The Speaker: The hon. member for Regina—Qu'Appelle knows that is a point of debate and not a point of order.

I am hoping the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby has an actual point of order in which he can refer to some precedent or standing order.

Mr. Peter Julian: I certainly do, Mr. Speaker. The precedent in this place, of course, is to respect the right of vote, and the precedent as well is not to throw the House of Commons into chaos, which is what we have seen all this week from the government side. I think it is fair to say that I would agree with the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

Routine Proceedings

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Speaker: Call in the members.

• (1625)

[*Translation*]

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

(Division No. 62)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Alleslev	Amos
Anandasangaree	Arseneault
Arya	Ayoub
Badawey	Bagnell
Bains	Baylis
Beech	Bennett
Bittle	Blair
Boissonnault	Bossio
Bratina	Breton
Brison	Caesar-Chavannes
Carr	Casey (Charlottetown)
Chagger	Champagne
Chan	Chen
Cormier	Cuzner
Dabrusin	Damoff
DeCoursey	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Di Iorio
Dion	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Dzerowicz
Easter	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Ellis
Erskine-Smith	Eyking
Eyolfson	Fergus
Fillmore	Finnigan
Fisher	Fonseca
Footé	Fragiskatos
Fraser (West Nova)	Fraser (Central Nova)
Freeland	Fry
Fuhr	Gerretsen
Goldsmith-Jones	Goodale
Gould	Graham
Grewal	Hajdu
Hardie	Harvey
Hehr	Housefather
Hussen	Hutchings
Iacono	Joly
Jones	Jordan
Jowhari	Kang
Khalid	Khera
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Lefebvre	Lemieux
Leslie	Levitt
Lightbound	Lockhart
Long	Longfield
Ludwig	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)	
May (Cambridge)	
McCallum	McCrimmon
McDonald	McGuinty
McKay	McKenna
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendicino	Mihychuk
Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Sœurs)	
Monsef	

Morrissey
Nassif
O'Connell
Oliver
Paradis
Peterson
Philpott
Poissant
Ratansi
Robillard
Romanado
Rudd
Rusnak
Saini
Samson
Sarai
Schieffe
Serré
Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Simms
Sorbara
Tabbara
Tassi
Trudeau
Vandenbeld
Virani
Wilkinson
Wrzesnewszky
Zahid — 173

Murray
Nault
Oliphant
O'Regan
Peschisolido
Petipas Taylor
Picard
Qualtrough
Rioux
Rodriguez
Rota
Ruimy
Sahota
Sajjan
Sangha
Scarpaleggia
Schulte
Shanahan
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
Sikand
Sohi
Spengemann
Tan
Tootoo
Vandal
Vaughan
Whalen
Wilson-Raybould
Young

NAYS

Members

Aboultaif	Albas
Albrecht	Allison
Ambrose	Anderson
Angus	Arnold
Ashton	Aubin
Barlow	Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu	Benson
Bergen	Berthold
Bezan	Blaikie
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)	Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)
Block	Boucher
Boudrias	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brassard
Brosseau	Brown
Calkins	Cannings
Caron	Carrie
Chong	Choquette
Christopherson	Clarke
Clement	Cooper
Davies	Deltell
Diotte	Doherty
Donnelly	Dreeschen
Dubé	Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Dusseault	Duvall
Egliniski	Falk
Fast	Fortin
Gallant	Garrison
Généreux	Genius
Gill	Gladu
Godin	Gourde
Harcastle	Harder
Harper	Hoback
Hughes	Jeneroux
Johns	Julian
Kelly	Kenney
Kent	Kitchen
Kniec	Kwan
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Laverdière
Lebel	Liepert
Lobb	Lukiwski
MacGregor	MacKenzie
Maguire	Malcolmson
Masse (Windsor West)	Mathysen
May (Saanch—Gulf Islands)	McCauley (Edmonton West)
McColeman	McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)	Mulcair
Nantel	Nater
Nicholson	Obhrai
O'Toole	Paul-Hus

Pauzé
Poilievre
Ramsey
Rayes
Richards
Saganash
Saroya
Schmale
Shipley
Sorenson
Ste-Marie
Stewart
Stubbs
Thériault
Trost
Van Kesteren
Vecchio
Wagantall
Warkentin
Wauh
Weir
Zimmer— 141

Plamondon
Quach
Rankin
Reid
Ritz
Sansoucy
Scheer
Shields
Sopuck
Stanton
Stetski
Strahl
Sweet
Tilson
Trudel
Van Loan
Viersen
Warawa
Watts
Webber
Wong

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

[*English*]

I wish to inform the House that, because of the ministerial statements, government orders will be extended by 30 minutes.

Before the hon. government House leader rises, I have notice of a question of privilege from the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS MOTION NO. 6

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as you know from the letter I deposited with your office this morning, I am rising on a question of privilege relating to Motion No. 6, which is on today's Notice Paper in the name of the government House leader.

Through my brief remarks today, and in more detail at a later date, I will ask you to eventually rule that there exists a prima facie case that the privileges of members of Parliament have been breached by this draconian motion.

I think you will find others who will want to intervene in coming days as well. I include in that the parliamentary House leaders of the Conservative Party and Bloc Québécois and the leader of the Green Party. I think they will all want to speak to this question of privilege.

I preface my remarks by saying that this is a sad day for our democracy. Today, the Liberal cabinet, through its leader in the House, introduced a motion that rewrites our Standing Orders in more than 17 different ways so that the executive has unilateral control over all of the procedural tools in the House.

[*Translation*]

This motion moved by the Liberal cabinet uses parliamentary procedure to put all the other members in a straitjacket and limit their rights and privileges. That includes independent members, members of the Bloc Québécois, members of the Green Party, members of the recognized opposition parties, namely the NDP and the Conservative Party, and even the Liberal backbenchers.

Privilege

That, Mr. Speaker, cannot and must not be allowed, and you may be the only person who can stop this unilateral and autocratic rewriting of the regulations governing our democratic institutions.

[*English*]

In this straitjacket of Parliament, cabinet, according to the motion, would not need to consult other MPs on the timing of debate, on when we return to our ridings for the summer or at all, or even when MPs can go to bed. So much for a family friendly Parliament. Liberals should be hanging their heads in shame to move this motion.

Further, it would deny MPs the right to spark debates on the crucial work done at committee. It would force MPs to debate their bills in the middle of the night, ensuring absolutely no votes will interrupt the Prime Minister's beauty sleep while opposition MPs have to be available, wait for it, 24 hours a day in the possibility that a bill for which they are responsible is brought forward. The list goes on and on in 17 different areas through the course of more than a dozen clauses and subclauses to tilt the playing field in the favour of the government.

● (1630)

[*Translation*]

I am wondering how the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons was able to justify this type of undemocratic motion to his caucus this morning or whether he told his party's backbenchers about it at all.

From what we heard in question period today, it seems that even the Prime Minister does not really understand what this motion does.

[*English*]

Motion No. 6 does not merely, as the Prime Minister claims, allow for more debate. It gives cabinet ministers unilateral control over when the House adjourns. If he or she is not happy with how a debate is unfolding, the minister can simply stand up at 8 p.m., at 9 p.m., at 10 p.m., at midnight, at 3 a.m., whenever, and adjourn the House or keep it going until the next morning. It invests the power of a dictatorship in the heart of our democracy.

Erskine May's Treatise on the Law, Privileges, Proceedings and Usage of Parliament defines privilege in the following way on page 75:

Parliamentary privilege is the sum of the peculiar rights enjoyed by each House collectively...and by Members of each House individually, without which they could not discharge their functions....

It is clear the executive is attempting to set aside those rights and privileges for all MPs, other than for cabinet ministers, and when we have had more time to digest this draconian legislation that affects 17 important areas in our Standing Orders, I intend to return to the House with a much more fulsome intervention.

I will continue another day, but I will say this. No government in history has introduced a motion that has had, or will have, such a draconian impact on Parliament. Liberals should be ashamed of themselves.

Privilege

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be very brief. I have listened to my colleague's intervention across the way. I would like to ask the Chair to reserve my right to reflect on what he said and come back to the House and provide a more fulsome comment.

Mr. Andrew Scheer (Regina—Qu'Appelle, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to add some of my comments here as well and perhaps provide a little bit more for the government House leader to consider as he goes and prepares his remarks.

I will keep my remarks very short, because I think what most members of the House would like to do is debate Bill C-14, which is a bill that could have been called on Monday, on Tuesday morning, or earlier today before the dilatory motions. As the government House leader said during question period, in essence, the Liberals just pulled the fire alarm.

Simply put, Motion No. 6 is a disgrace and not worthy of a democracy such as ours. It is an affront to the dignity of the House and its members.

Motion No. 6 is a complete quashing of the opposition's ability to hold the government to account. It is the total disempowerment of certain members of Parliament, who were sent here by 60.5% of Canadian voters. Motion No. 6 is indirectly disenfranchising every one of those voters through the draconian measures set out.

Beauchesne's, sixth edition, outlines some elements of the Constitution Act and our system of government, which I believe is relevant to this very point. It states:

Canada thus was ensured a responsible Cabinet system with the assumption that there will always be a recognizable government with a legislative programme. If the electorate so wishes, the system also presupposes an Opposition ready and willing to attack the Government in an attempt to have its legislation altered or rejected.... More tentative are such traditional features, as respect for the rights of the minority, which precludes a Government from using to excess the extensive powers that it has to limit debate or to proceed in what the public and the Opposition might interpret as unorthodox ways.

On May 2, 2000, during a discussion of the rule of time allocation at the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, the former clerk of the House of Commons, Robert Marleau, responded to a question regarding the Speaker's authority to protect the minority in the manner described earlier. The former clerk said, "it exists...intrinsicly in the role of the speakership", and continued, "all the time, where there can be tyranny on either side. It could be the tyranny of the majority or the tyranny of the minority."

My interpretation of what the clerk said is that there exists a limit to what a majority government can do.

In an earlier point of order, I described how Speaker Fraser ruled on the government tactic of skipping over Routine Proceedings in order to get to a point where time allocation could be moved. On one occasion in 1986, he disallowed it, whereas on other occasions he allowed it.

If there was ever a point when a Speaker should intervene to protect the minority from the tyranny of the majority, Motion No. 6 is it.

Parliament is fundamentally about debate. It is also about the right to dissent in a civilized manner. Genuine political opposition is

a necessary attribute of democracy, tolerance, and trust, and the ability of citizens to resolve differences by a peaceful means. The existence and tolerance of an opposing view is essential to the functioning of government.

I have more to say on this, but I would like to reserve the right to come back at a later time when the House is not up against the clock on such an important bill as Bill C-14.

However, Mr. Speaker, I do ask you to consider that Motion No. 6 is a completely unprovoked response to a situation that simply did not exist. I would invite the government to show me one example of a dilatory motion being moved by either opposition party when it came to the legislative agenda that the government is currently putting forward.

The Liberals are unilaterally withdrawing every single tool that the opposition has to propose alternate subjects of debate, they are ignoring the good work of committees, they are preventing members of Parliament from debating such things as motions to instruct a committee, and they are completely changing the rules around the clock and the calendar.

Therefore, I would like to come back to the House at a later time, but being cognizant of what little time left the House has to debate Bill C-14, because of the tactics of the government, I will yield the floor at this time.

• (1635)

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to reserve the right to talk more about this later. I want to participate in the debate.

Briefly, it would be good if we could debate this today. I wanted to say that the motion is excessive and that it is the ultimate gag order. The motion blatantly disregards parliamentary democracy. In some ways, it may be a retaliation against the opposition, which almost got the better of the government on Monday.

My party thinks that it is unacceptable to impose closure like this. The government is preparing to do whatever it wants with the official opposition whenever it wants, and that is unacceptable.

The Speaker: I would like to thank the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby, the hon. Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, the hon. member for Regina—Qu'Appelle, and the hon. member for Montcalm for their remarks.

[English]

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I just want to build on what the opposition House leader submitted, and say that I, too, have great concerns about the motion on the paper, in particular with one aspect of it.

The fundamental responsibility mechanism in the House is the confidence convention. The 20 or so members of Parliament who are part of the ministry who are the government sit there because they have the confidence of the majority of members of this chamber. It is that confidence convention that is undermined by the motion that the government has put on the paper.

Government Orders

By giving members of the ministry the unilateral right, at any time, to adjourn the House undermines that confidence convention. It undermines the ability of all members of the House to hold the government accountable.

For that reason, I hope a prima facie case of privilege is found.

• (1640)

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member for Wellington—Halton Hills for his intervention, as well. I will take those under advisement.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

CRIMINAL CODE

BILL C-14—TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I move:

That in relation to Bill C-14, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and to make related amendments to other Acts (medical assistance in dying), not more than one further sitting day shall be allotted to the consideration of the report stage and one sitting day shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the said bill; and

That fifteen minutes before the expiry of the time provided for Government Orders on the day allotted to the consideration of the report stage and on the day allotted to the third reading stage of the said bill—

Some hon. members: Shame.

The Speaker: Order, please.

Colleagues, we just heard arguments about the tyranny of the majority and the tyranny of the minority. I do not think we want to have either one of those tyrannies in this House. There is a tyranny created by that kind of noise.

I am going to allow the hon. government House leader to continue, and I expect members to allow that to occur, if they want to stay in this chamber.

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc: Mr. Speaker, I will pick up from where I think you rose.

—any proceedings before the House shall be interrupted, if required for the purpose of this Order, and in turn every question necessary for the disposal of the stage of the bill then under consideration shall be put forthwith and successively without further debate or amendment.

The Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 67.1, there will now be a 30-minute question period.

[Translation]

I invite hon. members who wish to ask questions to rise in their place so the Chair has some idea of the number of members who wish to participate in this question period.

The hon. member for Calgary Midnapore.

Hon. Jason Kenney (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, since our Parliament was founded in 1867, based on the Westminster system, there has traditionally been a free vote and debate on matters of moral conscience, especially with respect to end of life.

Today, for the first time in the history of parliamentary tradition, this government is threatening to not only take away the free vote on

its side, but also to curtail free and open debate on such matters of conscience.

• (1645)

[English]

This is the first time in the history of this Parliament that the ancient convention of free and open debate on matters of moral conscience, as they relate to end of life ethical matters, is being curtailed. In 1968, the omnibus legislation that dealt with abortion and other end of life matters was open and unlimited. In 1976, the government bill on capital punishment was open and unlimited. In 1988 and 1989, the various bills dealing with abortion were open and unlimited.

That has been the ancient practice of this place and the motion just put by the government House leader is an unprecedented violation on the right, the prerogative, the responsibility of members to speak their conscience, to reflect the sentiment of their constituents on such fundamental matters of moral conscience.

What gives the government the sense that it has the right, for the first time in the history of this place, to violate that ancient convention?

Hon. Jane Philpott (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I agree with my colleague that this is, in fact, a matter of the utmost importance.

We are debating a bill on medical assistance in dying. It is something on which every member of the House has a responsibility to provide leadership. We have been given the opportunity to represent the people of Canada in the House and we are expected to provide legislation.

I want to remind my colleague opposite of the unique nature of the circumstances in which we find ourselves on this day. The bill has been introduced because of a specific requirement of the government to respond to a decision of the Supreme Court.

I believe members of the House are familiar with the circumstances that have led us to this situation. We are now facing an important deadline. It is a deadline that our constituents expect us to reach with success and with appropriate legislation in place.

I want to remind members that the Supreme Court has provided Parliament with a deadline of June 6, and before that date, we are expected, all of us, to work together to put in place a complex regulatory framework around medical assistance in dying. We have a responsibility to do that well. We have a responsibility to do that in a thoughtful way.

There is a tremendous amount that is at risk for Canadians if we are unable to successfully reach that deadline and for that reason, we believe it is very important that we take the appropriate steps to reach the deadline.

Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am deeply disappointed that I must rise to debate time allocation on medical assistance in dying, Bill C-14. I voted for this bill at second reading and I believe the record will show I worked collaboratively with colleagues on the Conservative and Liberal sides of the House to improve the bill.

Government Orders

The elephant in the room is that the central feature of this bill, who is eligible for medical assistance in dying, is patently unconstitutional. It limits who is eligible to a narrower class of suffering people than the class that won a unanimous decision in the Supreme Court of Canada in Carter.

Yesterday, the Alberta Court of Appeal unanimously said that the Supreme Court decision cannot be limited to terminally ill people or people who are at the end of life. Virtually all credible constitutional experts agree this is unconstitutional.

For the Liberal Party, that claims it is the party of the charter, I find this so perplexing. It does not comply with the Carter case and it does not comply with the charter. The government is threatening us with untrue stories of legislative chaos if we do not pass its version of the bill.

In the name of all patients who are suffering with enduring pain but are not at end of life, who are watching the government take away their victory in the Supreme Court, how can the government justify ramming through a bill on such a sensitive issue? Why can the government not let us work together to get it right for all Canadians?

Hon. Jane Philpott: Mr. Speaker, I agree with my colleague. It is very important that we get legislation in place, that we ensure, for the sake of people who seek medical assistance in dying, the bill is passed before the deadline.

My hon. colleague knows the circumstances in which we find ourselves. The Supreme Court has made it very clear to this House that there is no question that Canadians must have access to medical assistance in dying. We respect that decision of the court. We have put a tremendous amount of thought, effort, and consultation in place in order to reach this legislative bill which we have before us now.

I want my colleague to understand the very serious implications that patients in Canada will face if the bill is not in place.

My colleague opposite may be aware that I am a physician myself. I have a number of colleagues who are physicians. I have worked closely with health care providers.

I can tell all the members opposite with certainty that if there is not a legislative framework in place that provides protection to health care providers when that June 6 deadline is passed, there will be people in this country, who would otherwise be eligible to have medical assistance in dying, to give them the opportunity for a dignified and peaceful death, who will not be allowed because the health care practitioners will not have the support.

• (1650)

[*Translation*]

The Speaker: It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, Employment Insurance; the hon. member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, National Defence; and the hon. member for Vancouver Kingsway, Health.

We will have to add one minute to the comments.

[*English*]

The hon. member for Elgin—Middlesex—London.

Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I stand here today as a member of Parliament who takes this job and this decision for Bill C-14 extremely seriously.

I ask both the Minister of Health and the Minister of Justice, recognizing that we have had time allocations, because this is such an important bill to so many Canadians, why could they not voice their opinions when we were debating Bill C-6 and Bill C-11, so that members on this side of the House, including members from their own side, could debate something that is so sensitive?

I, myself, hosted town halls, took letters out to constituents, and spoke to a variety of different physicians and stakeholders throughout this country. Our voices, I feel, are not being heard, regardless of whether we are for or against the bill.

Similar to our member down the aisle, I, too, voted for this to go to committee. I am proud of that because I believe we need to have this open discussion. However, the opportunity for this open discussion has been closed in our faces and I find that extremely frustrating, especially when I am trying to honour my constituents' wants and needs.

Why have the members on the other side not stepped forward to the fact that Bill C-14 is important to Canadians? They should have fought for Canadians when discussing the bill.

Hon. Jane Philpott: Mr. Speaker, I agree with my colleague opposite that this is indeed a very important matter. I want to congratulate her for hosting town halls. I want to congratulate all the members in this House for the amount of consultation that has taken place.

I want to remind members of this House about how much debate has already taken place. Despite our serious time constraints, we have undertaken 23.5 hours of debate in this House on this bill. Some 93 members of Parliament have spoken on this bill. A number of members of Parliament have spoken twice: the member for Montcalm, the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, and the member for Kitchener—Conestoga. Both non-recognized parties have participated in the debate. I have had conversations with members of all sides of this House with respect to the debate. I have been available, as has my colleague, the Minister of Justice, to address members' questions.

Now, what is before us and what Canadians expect of us is for us to move forward with the bill, to ensure that medical assistance in dying is available to Canadians who require it and, at the same time, to ensure that adequate safeguards are in place to protect vulnerable people.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the minister made reference to comments made at second reading stage. She also spoke about the importance of listening to physicians.

Government Orders

Quebec has been leading the way on this issue, so I think that the government should give great credence to the Collège des médecins du Québec. With respect to the legal void that the minister is invoking today as a reason to rush the debate, Dr. Yves Robert, the secretary of the Collège des médecins du Québec, said:

This is an artificial deadline. It is not true to say that there would be a legal void. The conditions imposed by the Supreme Court would serve as a legal framework if there was no federal law. [The Supreme Court] struck down the sections of the Criminal Code prohibiting a physician from assisting a grievously ill patient in dying.

This will still be true on June 7. Why is the government in such a rush to prevent parliamentarians from speaking to such an important issue?

● (1655)

[*English*]

Hon. Jane Philpott: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague opposite for her comments and questions. She is right that we had taken great inspiration from the province of Quebec. It spent a number of years, as she is well aware, debating the details of what legislation would look like in order to put legislation in place for medical assistance in dying. It is a luxury that we have not had as we put this legislation in place.

She also references the opinions of doctors, and I recognize myself that the opinions of doctors are varied. However, I want to point out to her that there is an organization in the country that advocates on behalf of excellent medical care and works with doctors.

The Canadian Medical Association represents 83,000 doctors across the country. It worked hard on this issue. It did two national surveys of thousands of physicians across the country and invested a tremendous amount of time and money. It made it very clear that evidence showed that even though 29% of physicians had expressed a willingness to participate in medical assistance in dying in cases of terminal illness, they believed if there was not a piece of legislation in place on June 6, physicians would be very unlikely to participate, and it would be a serious problem around access.

That is something for which members of the House have to take responsibility. If indeed the member opposite believes that she wants this to be available across the country then she, like all of us, has a responsibility to take the steps necessary to pass the bill.

I would point out to the member opposite that the bill includes within it a commitment to ensure that we continue to study the pieces of detail that require further reflection and research. We are committed to doing that. I give her my word.

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as a new member of the House I am extremely disappointed with respect to the government's actions. Like all new members in the House, the expectation among my residents in supporting me to come to this great place was that I was going to be able to extend my voice in the debates. As we have seen by the actions of the government, what amounts to effectively a basic dictatorship, debates have been stifled in the House.

I want to remind Canadians and I want to remind the government exactly what it said, what it handed to the Governor General in the

throne speech. It is proving not to be worth the paper it was written on now. The throne speech said:

Canada succeeds in large part because here, diverse perspectives and different opinions are celebrated, not silenced. Parliament shall be no exception. In this Parliament, all members will be honoured, respected and heard, wherever they sit. For here, in these chambers, the voices of all Canadians matter.

Further on in the throne speech, it says:

And to give Canadians a stronger voice in the House of Commons, the Government will promote more open debate and free votes, and reform and strengthen committees.

Four times now, with Bills C-6, C-10, C-15 and now C-14, we are seeing debate thwarted. Why the hypocrisy on the part of the government? All Canadians deserve to know.

Hon. Jane Philpott: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite has raised the fact that with a topic as sensitive and personal as this, there is a great diversity of opinion. I do not think my colleague, the Minister of Justice, nor I need to be convinced of the wide range of opinions on this issue.

We have respectfully and patiently listened to all of those opinions. We have worked with all of the members of the House to achieve legislation that we believe appropriately recognizes the fact that people need to be able to exercise personal autonomy, while at the same time respecting the fact that we need to protect vulnerable people in our country.

The member may not be aware of the fact that the previous government, the party he now sits with, in fact had the opportunity to address the Supreme Court decision a long time ago. In fact, it was February 6, 2015, that the previous government could have begun to take action on this issue. The Conservatives could have brought this issue to Parliament at that time to be discussed and debated. However, it was never brought before Parliament to be discussed, except in a Liberal motion in an attempt to bring it forward.

It was clear from the delay with which the former government approached this issue that it was not serious about developing a comprehensive and careful response to Carter. The task has fallen to us in this House, to this Parliament and to this government. I hope we will recognize the importance and non-partisan role that we now need to play to ensure Canadians will be able to access medical assistance in dying.

● (1700)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Beloeil—Chambly, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to use Quebec as an example. In the years ahead, the Quebec National Assembly will serve as an example of what a Parliament can accomplish when it sets partisanship aside.

I understand that the members of the National Assembly had more time to deal with this. Nevertheless, considering all the parties involved in the debate in Quebec, they set an example for us to follow. This absence of partisanship is a real legacy for all Quebecers, and it shows the kind of results that can be achieved together.

Here, the only legacy that our consideration of Bill C-14 will leave for Canadians is a reminder of a dark day for democracy, when the government's sunny ways were tossed out the window.

Government Orders

The only thing that is remarkable about our current debate on Bill C-14 is the abuse on the part of this government. During the election campaign, the Liberals promised over and over again to be different. The only way this government is any different than the last government is that it is even worse.

Now that Quebec has become a model to be emulated in the future, does the minister really want our handling of such an important bill to become an example of what not to do?

Is this really the legacy we want to leave for our children? I think that we would not want to be remembered as a Parliament that did not work because of a government that kept imposing gag orders.

[*English*]

Hon. Jane Philpott: Mr. Speaker, that is an excellent question. Once again, I want to remind my colleague, and as I alluded to earlier, that the Quebec situation is very different from the situation we face today.

The topic had been discussed in Quebec for a number of years. The Government of Quebec was not facing a deadline by which time it had to put legislation in place. It put in place legislation which, I understand, is working extremely well. For that, I congratulate the Quebec government. It is legislation that is in some respects narrower than the legislation we have put in place, and that perhaps is an acknowledgement of the fact that the views of Canadians and the consultations have allowed us to take further steps on this matter in recent times.

I remind the member opposite that we, unfortunately, do not have the luxury that the Government of Quebec had. We are facing a very important deadline. I have serious reservations about what will happen if we do not meet that deadline. On one hand, I worry about the fact that Canadians will not be able to appropriately access medical assistance in dying for fear the health care providers do not feel they have a protective framework in place. On the other hand, it is important, and I have not had an opportunity to mention this yet, there is very real concern that without a legislative framework in place, vulnerable Canadians will access assistance in dying when adequate safeguards are not in place, and that responsibility lies with us all.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, part of my concern is that a number of opposition members are trying to promote a falsehood, which concerns me a great deal.

The essence of the falsehood is that the government on numerous occasions has afforded every member of the House the ability to address this very important issue. It is the opposition that has opposed the unanimous consent that denied those members the opportunity to speak.

The government has gone out of its way on numerous occasions to ensure that every member has the opportunity to speak to this legislation.

If a member feels they have been disenfranchised in being able to speak, they need to talk to their House leadership team. Would the member agree with that?

● (1705)

Hon. Jane Philpott: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his reminder of this very important fact. I want to compliment the Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons for their work in trying to find ways to address this crunch we are facing, the fact that we do have a deadline.

I know the House leader and his parliamentary secretary have worked with the other House leaders to try to find a way that we can extend hours. It has been very generous of them to offer that opportunity of extending hours late into the night. I am disappointed that they were unable to find consensus with the other House leaders to make this available. I hope those members who are disappointed about the lack of opportunity to address this bill will speak to their appropriate House leaders on this matter.

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister talked about maybe a quarter of the members who had the opportunity to speak at second reading. A lot of people expressed reservations. A number of amendments were made in the committee, as well as a number of amendments that we will vote on tonight with no time to discuss them.

I have some simple questions. When did this come back to the House? What did we debate on Monday? What did we debate on Tuesday, at the government's request? It was not this legislation. The Liberals could have called it anytime they wanted and they refused to do that.

We offered to debate until midnight each night. Instead, we debated Bill C-6 and Bill C-11. Therefore, the Liberals should not talk to me about time frames in getting it back.

Hon. Jane Philpott: Mr. Speaker, I understand my hon. colleague has participated in some of the committee debate that has taken place, and has recommended some suggestions related to this legislation. I want to thank her for her thoughtfulness in participating in this.

The committee process, as my hon. colleague is aware, was an effective process. Sixteen amendments were agreed upon, several of them with all-party support. I believe there have been opportunities on several occasions in the House, in the committee process, and with the special parliamentary committee to ensure there was an abundance of opportunities for all members of the House to contribute.

We will continue to work on this legislation. I hope we will meet the deadline of June 6 and this legislation will be passed. We are firmly committed that once the legislation is passed, the next chapter begins, that we will look at those difficult questions around mature minors, around advance directives, around the matter of palliative care. There are many other matters, such as patients with mental illness, which is a very serious one. There are many unanswered questions. This legislation will be assessed. I suspect we will be discussing it for decades to come.

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have great respect for the minister. I am going to ask a serious question, and I hope she has the respect for me and the House to answer it correctly.

Government Orders

In the Carter decision, the Supreme Court said clearly that people should be able to access physician-assisted suicide who had a grievous and irremediable condition. The issue of whether the condition had to be terminal was addressed specifically throughout the court process and rejected. Yet the government brought legislation before the House that would not adopt the Supreme Court's test of grievous and irremediable, but would add the requirement that death be reasonably foreseeable or, in other words, the additional criterion that the condition must be terminal. The Alberta Court of Appeal yesterday ruled three to zero that this was unconstitutional and did not conform with the Carter case.

When my hon. colleague talks about her concern for access on June 6, does she not realize that she is going to deny access? This bill would deny access to people accessing physician-assisted suicide if it adds the requirement that their condition be terminal, when the Supreme Court of Canada specifically has said that is not required.

Would the minister tell the House why she is proceeding with a bill that we know right now is unconstitutional and would deny access to many Canadians by requiring them to have a terminal condition, which the Supreme Court of Canada specifically has said is not required?

• (1710)

Hon. Jane Philpott: Mr. Speaker, I hope my hon. colleague will find that I will always treat him with the utmost respect, as he always treats me. I thank him for all of his outstanding work as the critic for health for his party. I look forward to many further conversations with him.

As my hon. colleague knows, I am not a lawyer. However, my understanding of the Carter decision, as I have read it and discussed it with legal colleagues, is that it is based on two specific cases. It uses the term “grievous and irremediable”. It very specifically makes the point that it does not presume to make a decision on behalf of all Canadians. Rather, it presumes to make a decision on behalf of those specific cases. I understand that within the House, and across Canada, there are various interpretations about what the implications of that are for terminal conditions.

I am aware of the decision that was made in Alberta yesterday. That decision specifically said that it was not a commentary about the charter or Bill C-14. Rather, it was a commentary about a specific case and whether it met the criteria for exemption that had been set out in this interim period. It is because of that case and the fact that we have not developed safeguards for terminality in medical assistance in dying that enforces for us why it is important we get this in place. There is very clear solid evidence that the number of physicians who are prepared to provide medical assistance in dying drops considerably with respect to non-terminal cases, and where mental illness is involved, it is even more unlikely physicians will be willing to participate.

It is a very serious matter. I look forward to further discussion and debate on this. We fundamentally believe the legislation is the right legislation for Canada.

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, earlier this week when the Speaker was ruling on whether to allow us to consider amendments at report stage, he declared this to be a once-in-a-generation piece of legislation and opportunity for members of

Parliament. Rather than embrace that, the government is shutting off debate at every stage for this once-in-a-generation piece of legislation.

There are many different views on all sides of the House. However, earlier this week, out of spite for having almost lost a vote with its huge majority, the government called Bill C-10, Bill C-6, and debate on the Copyright Act. After less than one-third of the members of Parliament in the House had been afforded the opportunity to speak, it cut off debate. It moved it on a Wednesday so there would be even less time for debate than on any other day in the House. There will be less than an hour of debate taking place on this bill, this once-in-a-generation piece of legislation, due to the tactics of the government House leader and the Liberal government.

Is the minister proud of the government using procedural tactics to shut down debate after less than a third of the members of Parliament have had an opportunity to pronounce on behalf of their constituents on a once-in-a-generation piece of legislation?

Hon. Jane Philpott: Mr. Speaker, I have already alluded to the fact that it is unfortunate that the debate on this did not begin in February 2015. Instead, we find ourselves in a situation where we are facing a very serious deadline.

I would agree with my hon. colleague that this is one of the most important pieces of legislation that we will be dealing with in this session. Because of that, it is very important that we have legislation that is appropriate for Canada for now. We recognize there is a wide range of opinions, even in the House. Many people wish we did not have this legislation at all and many people wish the legislation went much further. We have found an approach that is right for Canadians.

However, I want to point out for my hon. colleague that we have made it very clear within the legislation itself that the day this bill is passed we will address some of those more thorny and difficult issues. I have heard loud and clear from my colleagues about their interest in discussing the matter of advanced directives. That is perhaps the most common question I have been asked. We are prepared to look at that.

As with any other legislation in the House, we expect there will be further amendments. However, we have to get the initial legislation passed by June 6.

• (1715)

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): It is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith the question necessary to dispose of the motion now before the House.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

Government Orders

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Call in the members.

• (1750)

[English]

Before the taking of the vote:

The Speaker: I will hear the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby on a brief point of order or a question of privilege, whichever it is.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, I have been in the House now for 12 years and I have never seen what just transpired in the House of Commons. The right hon. Prime Minister stepped in to a group of opposition MPs, pushed aside members of the NDP opposition, and manhandled—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. I want to hear the member.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, he elbowed the member for Berthier—Maskinongé and he manhandled the whip of the official opposition. Physical force in the House is never permitted, is never welcome, and it is entirely inappropriate. The actions of the Prime Minister are entirely inappropriate. I have never seen any member of the House act toward another member or members as he just did, and I submit to you that those are entirely inappropriate actions.

The Speaker: Order. I see the Prime Minister rising on this serious matter.

We have heard the member for New Westminster—Burnaby, and it was important to hear him, but now I want to hear from the Prime Minister.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, as we were gathered here for a vote, after the time had counted down, I observed our whip walking down the aisle to proceed with the vote. I had noticed that the official opposition whip seemed to be impeded in his progress down the hall. I felt that this lacked in respect for Parliament and indeed for the function that the official opposition whip is endeavouring to deliver on behalf of all of us.

Therefore, I walked over to encourage the member to come through, and indeed, offered my arm to help him come through the gaggle of MPs standing there impeding his progress down the aisle, and impeding our ability to move forward with this important vote. In so doing, I admit that I came in physical contact with a number of members as I extended my arm, including someone behind me whom I did not see. I certainly did not intend to offend or impact on anyone. I was simply concerned that, unfortunately, the decorum of this place has been impeded by this kind of prevention of the work that the whips are doing.

If anyone feels that they were impacted by my actions, I completely apologize. It was not my intention to hurt anyone. It is my intention to get this vote done.

• (1755)

The Speaker: I have a couple of comments for colleagues, and I want to hear from all members.

There was an issue raised by the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby. It was not raised as a question of privilege, but the Prime Minister has indicated his apology for his actions.

Members ought to know, first of all, that if one whip walks down before the other and takes his or her seat, and that is either whip, the Speaker then reads the question and the voting process begins. Nothing else is required. That is what happens. That has happened before.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. It is not appropriate to manhandle other members. The Prime Minister has apologized for that, I believe.

That will conclude the matter for now, and we can go on to the vote.

• (1805)

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

(Division No. 63)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Alleslev	Amos
Anandasangaree	Arseneault
Arya	Ayoub
Badawey	Bagnell
Bains	Baylis
Beech	Bennett
Bittle	Blair
Boissonnault	Bossio
Bratina	Breton
Brison	Caesar-Chavannes
Carr	Casey (Charlottetown)
Chagger	Champagne
Chan	Chen
Cormier	Cuzner
Dabrusin	Damoff
DeCoursey	Dhalawal
Dhillon	Di Iorio
Dion	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Dzerowicz
Easter	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Ellis
Erskine-Smith	Eyking
Eyolfson	Fergus
Fillmore	Finnigan
Fisher	Fonseca
Foote	Fragiskatos
Fraser (West Nova)	Fraser (Central Nova)
Freeland	Fry
Fuhr	Gerretsen
Goldsmith-Jones	Goodale
Gould	Graham
Grewal	Hajdu
Hardie	Harvey
Hehr	Housefather
Hussen	Hutchings
Iacono	Joly
Jones	Jordan
Jowhari	Kang

Privilege

Khalid
Lametti
Lapointe
LeBlanc
Lefebvre
Leslie
Lighbound
Long
Ludwig
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)
May (Cambridge)
McCallum
McDonald
McKay
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
Mendicino
Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Sœurs)
Monsef
Morrissey
Nassif
O’Connell
Oliver
Paradis
Peterson
Philpott
Poissant
Rioux
Rodriguez
Rota
Ruimy
Sahota
Sajjan
Sangha
Scarpaleggia
Schulte
Shanahan
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
Sikand
Sohi
Spengemann
Tan
Tootoo
Vandal
Vaughan
Whalen
Wilson-Raybould
Young

Khera
Lamoureux
Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
Lebouthillier
Lemieux
Levitt
Lockhart
Longfield
MacAulay (Cardigan)
Maloney
McCrimmon
McGuinty
McKenna
McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mihychuk
Murray
Nault
Oliphant
O’Regan
Pescholido
Petitpas Taylor
Picard
Qualtrough
Robillard
Romanado
Rudd
Rusnak
Saini
Samson
Sarai
Schieffe
Serré
Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Simms
Sorbara
Tabbara
Tassi
Trudeau
Vandenbeld
Virani
Wilkinson
Wrzesnewskyj
Zahid— 172

NAYS

Members

Aboultatif
Albrecht
Ambrose
Angus
Ashton
Barlow
Beaulieu
Bergin
Bezan
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Block
Boudrias
Boutin-Sweet
Brown
Cannings
Carrie
Choquette
Clarke
Cooper
Davies
Diotte
Donnelly
Dubé
Dusseault
Egliniski
Fast
Gallant
Généreux
Gill
Godin
Hardcastle

Albas
Allison
Anderson
Arnold
Aubin
Barsalou-Duval
Benson
Berthold
Blaikie
Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)
Boucher
Boulerice
Brassard
Calkins
Caron
Chong
Christopherson
Clement
Cullen
Deltell
Doherty
Dreeshen
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Duvall
Falk
Fortin
Garrison
Genius
Gladu
Gourde
Harder

Harper
Hughes
Julian
Kent
Kmiec
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Lebel
Lobb
MacGregor
Maguire
Masse (Windsor West)
May (Saaneich—Gulf Islands)
McColeman
Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)
Nantel
Nicholson
O’Toole
Pauzé
Poilievre
Rankin
Reid
Ritz
Sansoucy
Schmale
Shipley
Sorenson
Ste-Marie
Stewart
Stubbs
Thériault
Trost
Van Kesteren
Vecchio
Wagantall
Warkentin
Waugh
Weir
Zimmer— 137

Hoback
Johns
Kelly
Kitchen
Kwan
Laverdière
Liepert
Lukiwski
MacKenzie
Malcolmson
Mathysen
McCauley (Edmonton West)
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
Mulcair
Nater
Obhrai
Paul-Hus
Plamondon
Ramsey
Rayes
Richards
Saganash
Saroya
Shields
Sopuck
Stanton
Stetski
Strahl
Sweet
Tilson
Trudel
Van Loan
Viersen
Warawa
Watts
Webber
Wong

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

ALLEGED ACTIONS OF PRIME MINISTER IN CHAMBER

Hon. Peter Van Loan (York—Simcoe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the rules of the House are quite clear. It is an offence to the privileges of members of Parliament to in any way physically intimidate them or otherwise interfere with them.

Today, I was witness to an extraordinary example of just such physical intimidation by no less than the first minister of this country. I witnessed as he strode across the floor, with anger fierce in his eyes and face, toward—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, please. The member for York—Simcoe has the floor.

Hon. Peter Van Loan: Mr. Speaker, he strode across the floor toward a group of individuals here, and I think the film will show it, but certainly there are many other witnesses here who can speak to what they saw take place. What took place was the Prime Minister physically grabbing people, elbowing people, hauling them down the way; and I am sure his defence will be that he was in some way, on their behalf, asserting their privileges.

Privilege

That is not his job. It is the job of individual members to assert their own privileges. It is his job to respect the privileges of every member in this House.

O'Brien and Bosc is entirely clear on this matter that, in a case such as this, the Speaker will normally find that the privileges of the members have been offended, that the conduct is unacceptable, and will make that finding of privilege.

I will point out that the individual member—and I witnessed it all right in front of me here, and I do not know if she has returned to the House—was so shaken up by the episode that she left the House. Her ability to participate in the vote was affected and denied. Her privileges were interfered with in a most direct and physical fashion that is unacceptable in this House.

Mr. Speaker, I think you should make the appropriate finding in the circumstances, and I will invite any of my other colleagues who witnessed this to provide further evidence to the House.

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am rising because I was a witness as well to what took place here, something that I do not think any Canadian could imagine would take place in the House of Commons.

I witnessed the Prime Minister walk over and manhandle the whip of the official opposition, and as he was doing so, he actually pushed my colleague, a friend of mine, a young woman who also sits in this House, and pushed her into the desk. In fact, as he was pulling away, pulled her along with him and physically pushed her into this desk.

I am ashamed, as somebody who sits in this House, to have been witness to the person who holds the highest elected position in our country to have done such an act in this House.

We were witnesses in this House. I also want to say that, for all of us who witnessed this, it is deeply traumatic. I am unwilling to make this political, but if we apply a gendered lens, it is very important that we recognize that young women in this place need to feel safe to come here, to work here, to speak here.

Not only was this the furthest thing from a feminist act, in and of itself this act made not only my colleague—and she can certainly speak to her own experiences—but any young woman, any woman, anybody who sits in this House feel unsafe and deeply troubled by the conduct of the Prime Minister of this country.

• (1810)

Mr. Greg Fergus (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I too witnessed this event. I would not like to try to take this any further than what has been described, which frankly I think might have been exaggerated, but what I would like to say is that I did see the hon. member—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, order. We are here talking about members' privileges. We are talking about order in the House. Let us show the respect that we are looking for here. We are talking about respect for other members. Let us show some, all of us, please. The hon. member for Hull—Aylmer has the floor.

Mr. Greg Fergus: Mr. Speaker, if one wants to exaggerate the situation and to make this into something that it was not, or make it reminiscent of a dive in the 2006 World Cup, perhaps we can go on.

What happened was exactly as the Prime Minister had described it. It was certainly not a purposeful, intentional movement. The person was out of sight and behind the Prime Minister. It was only that.

The Speaker: Order. We will hear a little more.

• (1815)

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise on the same and a related question of privilege. In the House, one of the privileges that we observe is to accept the word of other hon. members.

The member who just spoke questioned the word, given in good faith, of two members who just spoke. I will add my testimony. I saw the Prime Minister, I would use the word, charge across the floor, with intent, and shove people with the intent of moving the whip down the aisle, an intentional action by the Prime Minister, which is unacceptable in the House of Commons, the use of physical force.

As part of doing that, he knocked one of my colleagues into the desk. She was physically shoved into the desk. I witnessed this. Then she was unable to continue in the House. Her privileges were breached by the physical actions of the Prime Minister.

I would ask the Speaker to rule, both, on the question of the violation of privilege by the Prime Minister, and also on the question of whether we accept hon. members' words in the House or not.

Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau (Berthier—Maskinongé, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say I was the member in question. I was standing in the centre, talking to some colleagues. I was elbowed in the chest by the Prime Minister, and then I had to leave. It was very overwhelming, so I left the chamber to go and sit in the lobby. I missed the vote because of this.

I just wanted to clarify and make sure it is clear to all members in the House that it did happen.

The Speaker: I want to make it clear that we do accept the word of other colleagues in the House.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to take the opportunity, now that the member is able to return to the House, to express directly to her my apologies for my behaviour and my actions, unreservedly.

The fact is that in this situation I noticed that the opposite member whip was being impeded in his progress. I took it upon myself to go and assist him forward, which I now see was unadvisable as a course of action, and it resulted in physical contact in this House that we can all accept was unacceptable.

I apologize for that unreservedly. I look for opportunities to make amends directly to the member and to any members who feel negatively impacted by this exchange and intervention because I take responsibility.

Privilege

● (1820)

SPEAKER'S RULING

The Speaker: I appreciate the comments of all the members who have spoken, and I appreciate the Prime Minister's apology.

Having said that, I cannot help but find a prima facie case of question of privilege and I call upon the hon. member for York—Simcoe to move the appropriate motion.

REFERENCE TO STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Hon. Peter Van Loan (York—Simcoe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that finding. I will be brief and simple. I move:

That the matter of the physical molestation of the hon. member for Berthier—Maskinongé be referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

Mr. Speaker, I believe we have seen and heard evidence from everybody here that makes it apparent that such an occurrence took place and that the member's privileges were violated, as you found, Mr. Speaker, in your preliminary finding.

This is a very serious matter. It is not something that can be cured by a simple apology. We have seen that the member's privileges were offended to such a degree that her vote was lost, the most fundamental and basic right of representation in our Westminster parliamentary system.

Even the most heartfelt apology, and I am not sure we had that, is not sufficient to compensate for such a violation of one's privileges. When one combines it with the physical nature of the violation that took place, this is a very significant matter. I have read about this stuff in history books from the 19th century. I have never seen such a thing in my lifetime.

As a result, it is very clear that the House should move quickly to vote on that matter and have the matter referred to the committee for the appropriate study, appropriate recommendations, and to examine how we can avoid such an unfortunate occurrence in the future.

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is actually my hope not to debate this further. We are about to go, I hope, to a serious debate on very important legislation, medical assistance in dying.

I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that if you would seek it, you might find the consent of the House to send this to the procedures and House affairs committee. We are comfortable with the committee looking at this matter. That is the place where this issue should be dealt with. Then the House could get on with this important issue of discussing medical assistance in dying.

The Speaker: First, it being after 6 p.m., the House, if it were to proceed now, would be proceeding to private members' business. Second, is the hon. government House leader asking unanimous consent to adopt the motion? Is that what he is saying?

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: It seems the debate will be continuing in that case. The hon. member for Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix.

[Translation]

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister of Canada must represent Canada. The gesture was inappropriate and proves beyond a doubt that he is incapable of conducting himself like a prime minister of Canada.

● (1825)

[English]

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this is a very serious matter. I would hope that the Prime Minister would be here to listen to the words of opposition members.

The Speaker: Order, please. The member knows that we do not call attention to the presence or absence of any member in the House.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, there is another element, which is this. Most members of the opposition and I are still quite shocked by what we saw on the floor of the House of Commons. There is no parallel that I can think of, certainly in contemporary Canadian history. We sometimes hear of members becoming physical in other legislatures in other countries, but that is not Canada and that is not our democratic tradition.

[Translation]

In this place we respect all democratic values. In this place we sometimes do not agree with one another, but we listen. That is what is supposed to happen. However, for the past few weeks, we have seen things go downhill. The government does not seem to want to respect opposition members. That is becoming increasingly obvious. A few minutes ago, I rose to speak to Motion No. 6, which is another way of suppressing democracy in Canada. A few hours after moving a motion unlike any other in Canadian history, we see the Prime Minister, who seems to think he has the right to shove and push certain opposition members and come into physical contact with them, namely the chief whip of the official opposition and member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes and the member for Berthier—Maskinongé. That is unacceptable. That is completely unacceptable.

The saddest part is that the Liberals are laughing and comparing this situation to a soccer match. Some Liberal members do not seem to understand that what the Prime Minister did is completely unacceptable.

[English]

We have had Liberals laugh at this, make jokes, and compare it to a soccer match. I can speak for all four of the opposition parties that, regardless of who pushed another member, if it were a member of the opposition, I have no doubt that he or she would be the first to stand and apologize unreservedly to that member. In the case of the government, we did not see that apology. Rather, an apology came in a very roundabout and mitigated way.

Privilege

We have an opportunity in this debate, and I hope other members will rise to speak to this, for all members to say very clearly for the Prime Minister, or anyone else who would cause a physical altercation on the floor of the House of Commons, that in our Canadian democracy we listen, but we do not hit, push or manhandle. We respect each other despite our differences. This should be the message that comes from all members today.

The Speaker: Order, please. My apologies to members. We should be going to questions and comments, which I will do now.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for King—Vaughan.

Mrs. Deborah Schulte (King—Vaughan, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a comment and then a question. My comment is from my perspective, having witnessed the whole episode, and I will come to my question.

Having witnessed the whole episode, I would like to ask my colleague who brought this forward whether it is important to understand the intent. There is no way—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

• (1830)

The Speaker: Order, please.

Let me say again that we are talking fundamentally here about respect for each other and the kind of respect that we want to see shown in this place for each other. I urge colleagues to do that now, whether they like what they hear or not. That is the whole point, showing respect for each other in this place. Even if you do not like what you hear, you still have to do it.

The hon. member for King—Vaughan has the floor.

Mrs. Deborah Schulte: Mr. Speaker, what I witnessed was the Prime Minister striding across and coming to the group that was gathered and blocking the way of the opposition House leader. As he strode across, the group moved apart and he reached through and moved the House leader through. At the point that he did, he did bump into another member. However, I believe there was no intent to harm anyone or to actually bump into anyone.

What I am trying to ask the member from the other side is this. Is it not important and relevant whether there was a real intent to do any harm here or whether it was an accident?

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, given the gravity of what just transpired on the floor, I still find it difficult to understand why Liberal members are questioning or trying to, in some way, justify what is unacceptable. It does not matter which member did it to whom, it is absolutely not justifiable to hit, or push, or manhandle any member of Parliament, at any time, in any place. It is strictly not acceptable.

I fail to understand why the government members do not understand that it is simply unacceptable, what transpired tonight. A half roundabout apology 20 minutes later simply does not convey the importance of apologizing unreservedly right away for actions that were wholly, totally, and always inappropriate.

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is a very serious issue. I am glad that we have so many members here to be able to debate on this important motion.

I think we all agree that any material breach of a member of Parliament's privilege needs to be addressed as quickly as possible. The hon. Speaker has said that this behaviour is unacceptable. Obviously, he believes that there has been a breach in those privileges. Does he not agree, when we have the embodiment of the government involved in stopping a member of Parliament from carrying out her duties for her constituents, there is no greater material breach?

I wonder if the member would comment on that.

Mr. Peter Julian: It is very clear to me, Mr. Speaker. You have ruled in the only way you could rule on the motion from the member for York—Simcoe, that it is a breach of parliamentary privilege, but beyond that, that behaviour is inappropriate on the floor of the House of Commons. It is inappropriate in a community centre. It is inappropriate on any street or in any park in any of our cities in Canada. It is simply inappropriate. There is no other way to put it.

It was inappropriate to physically assault two members. It is inappropriate to drag a member halfway across the House of Commons. It is still surprising, I think, to all of us on the opposition side who saw it, yet we have members on the government side who are trying to justify it and do not seem convinced. This debate will continue, I think, and there are other members who will contribute to this debate, but the debate will continue until we have every member on the government side saying, "This is inappropriate. Physical violence is inappropriate. We will not permit that from anyone, even the Prime Minister du Canada."

• (1835)

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in my colleague's comments, he referred to what happened here as being unacceptable anywhere. I would ask him to speak to just how unacceptable it was, what took place in the House.

We as parliamentarians are counted on to come forward with policy and legislation when it comes to harassment, bullying, ensuring safe work places, fighting violence against women and fighting sexual violence. What took place here in the House was physical violence. We know, and outside, that people would call what happened here assault.

When we are talking about something as serious as what took place in the House, would anyone in the House, or anyone across the country, find that kind of conduct, not just by a prime minister but of anyone, acceptable?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, this behaviour is clearly unacceptable, whether it happens in community centres, here in the House of Commons, at work, in parks, or in our communities. I think Canadians understand that. I think there are people, on both sides here, who have experienced violence in their family. I have an aunt who was beaten to death.

Minor instances of violence can lead to serious instances of violence. That is why we must take a zero-tolerance approach to violence. We must not accept it, must not excuse it, and must not compare it to a soccer match, as the member for Hull—Aylmer did. That is unbelievable. I do not know how anyone could say such a thing.

The comments we have heard from government members since the Prime Minister committed this act are inexcusable. I am pleased that the member for Churchill—Keewatinook Aski brought this up. Physical violence, whether it is minor or serious, is unacceptable, period.

[*English*]

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I have been torn about trying to intervene on what I saw or did not see, but I felt I had to rise. It is because my friend, the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby, at one point spoke for me as all four parties in opposition.

I want to try, if possible, to put some oil on troubled waters, bridges over troubled waters. Forgive me.

What we saw was unacceptable, but let us keep it in perspective. What I saw that was unwise and unacceptable was that Prime Minister deliberately trying to move a vote along. There was some mischief. Let us face it. There was some mischief on the floor.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Ms. Elizabeth May: There was. I am sorry, there was an attempt to slow down the vote. There is no doubt about that, but it was innocent mischief.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Ms. Elizabeth May: Let me finish what I am saying. I am trying to keep it in perspective.

The Speaker: Order, please.

I implore colleagues. This is a debate which members are going to have very strong feelings about and they are not all going to agree, but it is a debate about respect for each other and for this place. I implore colleagues to help with the image of this place now by showing respect for each other.

Order, please. Members for Kenora and Windsor West will come to order.

We will now hear again from the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands.

• (1840)

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, I have respect for everyone in this place, but I also have respect for all Canadians. I think a reflection on what just transpired could be useful for Canadians.

It was most unwise of the Prime Minister to attempt to move along the vote by moving along the member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes. That movement was clearly contact that was unwanted.

The second contact with my friend, the member for Berthier—Maskinongé, which was certainly the one that was the most

Privilege

emotional for the member involved, was clearly, from my perspective, and I confirm what the member for King—Vaughan said, unintentional. I have to say that I saw the Prime Minister following the hon. member, trying to reach her, saying how very sorry he was, that he had not seen her behind him. That is the truth. Members can like it or not like it, but nothing that happened here today reflects well on us.

We do not want to be the House of Commons for some country that other countries watch on CNN and wonder what has become of us. We are grown-ups. Let us act—

The Speaker: Order.

I am going to ask the member for New Westminster—Burnaby to keep his answer short.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, I think the point that the member made is exactly the same point that we are all making: physical violence is unacceptable. Whether pushing or elbowing another member was unintentional, it is inappropriate, and it was absolutely inappropriate to manhandle the whip of the official opposition.

Therefore, I would hope that all members would join together—not excusing, not explaining, not making references to soccer matches, but join together—to say that physical confrontation or pushing of any nature is unacceptable in this place and unacceptable across the country.

Hon. Andrew Leslie: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. This is an emotional issue on an emotional day. There has been an unreserved apology from the right hon. Prime Minister. May I suggest that, as proposed by the hon. member opposite, we forward this to the appropriate committee and let the ruling unfold as it may.

The Speaker: I believe the hon. member was asking for unanimous consent to adopt the motion. It sounds like there is no unanimous consent at this point to do that.

Resuming debate, the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a few thoughts I would like to share with members.

One of the things I believe is important to recognize is that, at the end of the day, what we have witnessed is something, no doubt, all of us will want to reflect on.

I would ask members to be courteous as I try to express my thoughts and feelings with respect to the issue.

Through many years of being a parliamentarian, and most of that 25 years in opposition, I can tell members that there have been other occasions. For example, I look at what took place in the 1990s—

An hon. member: That is not a point of order.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I am speaking on the motion, for the member. If he were listening attentively, he would understand the point.

Privilege

For example, there was the very heated debate inside the Manitoba legislature that took place during the 1990s. I witnessed members from the opposition come forward and approach the premier's bench, shaking their fists with suggestions of violence, and so forth. When I reflect on what took place there, at the time, there was a great deal of emotion around an issue that was being debated inside the chamber.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I sat very patiently listening to other members address a very serious issue. I would ask that they respond in kind and listen to what I have to say on this very important issue.

We need to put things into perspective, much as I did back in the 1990s when we had members leaving their seats, suggesting all sorts of behavioural issues, much as I saw today, which included the Prime Minister and others.

I do believe that the government House leader, in a responsible fashion, has made the suggestion that we allow the matter to go before the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs where in fact we will have a good healthy discussion, and where we can take into consideration many aspects of what we witnessed here today. That is indeed the responsible thing for us to do.

I continue to understand the perception of what has taken place over the last couple of days—and I know first-hand because I participated in it—as many members have in the very emotional debate with respect to Bill C-14, as the government has attempted, on numerous occasions, to allow that debate to go on so that all members would be able to speak. However, on the other side, we have seen the opposition try to—

• (1845)

The Speaker: Order. On a point of order, the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, as much as we generally take a liberal attitude toward topicality in this place, we are debating a question of great importance, and the hon. member is now trying to divert this and make it about a completely different issue, to argue about things like extending debate hours. I think this is totally unacceptable.

We have a very important issue in front of us that Canadians expect us to deal with, and we need to stick to relevance on this issue so that we can address it in a proper way.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I believe that if you were to peruse *Hansard* you would find that I am absolutely relevant to the issue at hand.

What we are talking about is an incident that occurred not that long ago on the floor of the House. Using my parliamentary experience, I was reflecting on a similar incident from the Manitoba legislature that took place on the floor there. I am drawing a comparison in terms of the emotions of the day that took place there and how relevant that day is to the emotions we have been experiencing over the last couple of days here on the floor of the House of Commons. I would suggest that this is in fact relevant.

The Speaker: Members know that while they are encouraged to keep their comments relevant, the Chair, in all circumstances, gives a

broad leeway. However, I do encourage members to keep their comments relevant to the topic.

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I will try as much as possible to assure House members that we on the government side are taking the matter very seriously, and this is the reason why, when we look at the motion that has been brought forward by the House leader from the New Democratic Party, we want to respond in a very favourable fashion.

That is why I am encouraging members to recognize that, if they genuinely believe that this is an issue that we should be dealing with, the proper way to deal with it is in the motion that has been moved. That is that the matter go before the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, where we will be afforded the opportunity to hear what every member has to say with respect to what took place this afternoon. I am prepared to work the entire summer if need be.

It is very important that we, as legislators, as parliamentarians, recognize that the most valuable way we can contribute to drawing this issue to a conclusion is to allow the procedure and House affairs committee to do what it does best, and that is to deal with privileges. I have sat on that committee and have seen how beneficial the committee is in terms of being able to serve the House. I would suggest, if members are genuine in wanting to see this issue resolved and the question of privilege resolved as quickly as possible to have an outcome, that we need to allow the procedure and House affairs committee to do its job. I know the membership of that committee is more than happy to make this a first priority on its agenda, and I suspect there will be consensus from all members of the committee to do that. This is the reason why I would suggest that what we need is to be able to see—

• (1850)

The Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Calgary Midnapore.

Hon. Jason Kenney (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as you will know, the convention of this place is not only to be pertinent to the matter on the floor but to avoid unnecessary repetition, and we are getting an endless string of repetition by the member who does not want other members to speak to the motion. I would ask that you bring him to order.

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member, but he knows members have a broad leeway. I always encourage members not to repeat themselves.

By the way, in this debate, the speeches are 20 minutes each. It is 7 p.m. We will be going to the late show, but debate would continue tomorrow unless members decide otherwise by unanimous consent.

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader has the floor.

Privilege

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I must admit I am a little bit disappointed because I sat very patiently listening to many members of the opposition talk about what they felt and expressed what they felt had taken place. I believe that the government members have held themselves quite well while listening to the emotions that were coming from across the way. I do not think it is much to ask that the opposition members return that same sort of respect.

The point I was getting at, and which I believe does need to be emphasized, is that we are wanting as much as possible to see the matter brought to the attention of the procedure and House affairs committee. I do believe that the committee is in a position to deal with it.

Questions of privilege have been brought to the House in the past. The most recent one I was involved in dealt with members not being able to access the House. It was related to security issues where members felt their access to the House was being impeded. Through the experience I had in sitting on the procedure and House affairs committee, I witnessed publicly and while the committee was in camera a high sense of goodwill and understanding, and ultimately the procedure and House affairs committee was able to provide a report.

Even if you reflect on your ruling, Mr. Speaker, it would have the very same effect. I would therefore suggest that the House would be best served if we allowed it to go to the procedure and House affairs committee. For that reason, I move:

That this question be now put.

• (1855)

The Speaker: Questions and comments, the hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, like a third of the members of my caucus I have been here for just under seven months. However, I sat in the Quebec National Assembly for seven years and was a parliamentary press gallery reporter for seven years. I have been interested in politics for nearly 40 years.

Never before have I witnessed what we saw earlier. It is totally unacceptable and unworthy of any member, especially the Prime Minister of all Canadians. It is unacceptable.

Let us review what happened. I was physically here and I saw the whole incident unfold less than 10 feet away from me. In legal terms, I was an eyewitness.

The Prime Minister rose from his seat, made his way through a group of members and knocked into a few of them. Then he forcibly grabbed the official opposition whip by the arm and elbowed an NDP member in the chest on his way back to his seat.

That is unacceptable in and of itself, but the worst was yet to come. Unhappy about the situation, the Prime Minister, looking like a frustrated boxer ready to take out another opponent, rose to cross the floor again and went to see the NDP members, walked up the steps, and lashed out at another colleague.

What happened in the House was totally unacceptable. It is unworthy of any parliamentarian, especially the one who represents all Canadians.

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons this matter needs to go before the procedure and House affairs committee is that I believe we will get a better reflection of what has actually taken place.

I would emphasize that I have witnessed incidents on other occasions. A couple of years ago when I stood on the other side, I was speaking and another member approached me in a fashion that one might view as unparliamentary. We have to understand and appreciate that during the heat of debate, sometimes things happen that we all wish had not. However, I believe that we should not allow any form of exaggeration to take place. It is important that we stick to the reality of the events. We need to reflect on other incidents that have taken place. The best way to do that is at the procedures and House affairs committee. That is why—

The Speaker: Order. Questions and comments, the hon. member for Essex.

Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am very shaken by the events of today. I have spent most of my adult life fighting against violence against women, and fighting against violence in general. I saw the Prime Minister, someone in this honoured House that we all fought to sit in, stride across the aisle toward us with such purpose. As he entered the small circle of us who were standing there, he swore. He said, “Get the [bleep] out of the way.” He pushed his way into the circle we were standing in. He grabbed the opposition House leader and dragged him out, and in so doing elbowed my colleague quite viciously. She was physically hurt. I do not want any member of this House to stand and say that she was not, as no member of this House can judge what she felt.

Also, what we are talking about here is a choice. The Prime Minister stood up and made a choice to walk across that aisle and walk toward those members. In doing so, he chose that.

We are talking about intent versus impact. When we talk about violence, we talk about the impact. The impact is that my colleague's parliamentary privilege was violated and she had to leave this House and missed a vote, not to mention the physical impact that she endured.

We all have to ask ourselves if this was our mother, our wife, our sister, our daughter, would we be having this conversation in this House? All of us have a duty to not accept violence. When we walk through those doors we wear that duty and burden more heavily. Today, we should take this very seriously and say that we do not accept violence in this House.

Will the member opposite stand and say that we will not accept violence in this House, regardless of the intent, when it has an impact on another member that is not acceptable?

• (1900)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, with respect to violence, it is worth noting two very quick points.

Adjournment Proceedings

The first point is that we need to recognize how important it is that all members be allowed to vote, and there were other issues surrounding what had taken place. I also happened to be there and I would like to share those stories at PROC, the procedure and House affairs committee. There is a lot more that needs to be told. It is not just a reflection of the Prime Minister of Canada.

The second point is with respect to behaviour. I have seen some very angry faces in the past of those who have tried to intimidate members in different ways. Therefore, I would be very careful about throwing stones in glass houses.

I suggest that we need to get this issue before PROC.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

[*Translation*]

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, NDP): Madam Speaker, I have spent my life serving the community. I have worked in community organizations and in a shelter for battered women.

This evening, I am here to talk about employment insurance. However, when I became an MP, I never thought I would hear the same excuses here in the House that I heard from abusive husbands in the shelter where I worked with battered women. Abusive husbands said they did not do it on purpose, they did not mean to hurt their wives. I am sorry. There is no excuse.

It is a privilege to be in the House and to represent our fellow citizens. I want all of the women watching today, particularly those who have been victims of violence, to know that we are here for them too.

Now I am going to talk about what I was supposed to talk about. On February 26, I rose to ask for answers about two concerns. When workers lose their jobs, they face tough times, and I hope to get some answers to my questions tonight.

Workers need the five additional weeks for seasonal workers to be restored. We also need answers about how the employment insurance fund is managed.

After 20 years of Conservative and Liberal reforms, the EI system is in a pitiful state and cannot provide families with the support they need. The major reform that is affecting Quebecers and Canadians the most pertains to seasonal employment.

I am very proud to represent the riding of Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, the agri-food capital. Any time we talk about agriculture, of course we are talking about seasonal jobs. The various EI reforms have been particularly hard on the workers in my region.

It is still true that workers must accept work that is 100 km away from their homes and pays 70% of what they earned previously. Employers in this region are losing employees because they are being forced to accept other jobs.

My husband is the coordinator for Mouvement action chômage in Saint-Hyacinthe. That is actually where we met. These days, it is the employers who are appealing to that advocacy group, which works on behalf of workers with or without a job.

We are at the point where employers are reaching out to advocacy groups to talk about the impact of the EI reforms. We are at the point where these employers are denouncing the EI reforms and asking for assistance from workers' advocacy groups in order to help their workers. This reform makes no sense, and I hope I will get some answers here this evening.

● (1905)

[*English*]

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the question from the member.

Obviously, having been the critic over the last four years, many of the concerns that she has raised since coming to the House were issues I have been fighting for in my past role.

That is why I am so pleased that, as one of the priorities that has been identified by the government, and indeed by the current minister responsible for the employment insurance program, the announcement in the budget was for \$2.5 billion in additional benefits for the employment insurance program.

The member should know that the people she represents will all benefit from some of the changes that we have made to the employment insurance program. When we look at going from a two-week waiting period to a one-week waiting period, that is going to benefit 90% of the people who receive EI benefits.

We can look at changes to working while on claim. I come from a very similar riding where seasonal work is pretty much the foundation of the regional GDP. When we look at what took place under the previous federal government, we saw that changes to working while on claim really drove the economy underground. It hurt many workers. Many workers would not take work because there was a clawback of 50% if they worked at a low-wage job.

The minister took immediate action on that, and has made it so that a worker can now either apply for the rules that applied before the 2011 changes or the current rules. If a worker is able to work three, four or five days, the new program is enhanced and is a benefit to those workers who are able to gain that much work.

In many instances, they are only able to get one day's work. The old system was much better there. The changes the minister has now made allow a worker to make that decision, to make that choice, back and forth.

There is another thing of which I am really proud. I am sure my colleague gets the same calls of concern. We have seen changes over the last number of years to wait times for EI benefits. When I was first elected back in 2000, a typical turnaround time was two to three weeks. We have seen those wait times go to five, six, seven, and even eight weeks, which is not uncommon now.

Adjournment Proceedings

The minister, through her mandate letter, under the direction of the Prime Minister, has ordered a review of service standards. We are very much looking forward to that. All the past government did was continue to reduce the standards.

At one time, 90% of the calls were being returned and picked up in three minutes at call centres. They were not able to do that, so it was dropped to 80% as the new standard. Then it went to 80% in 10 minutes. The government kept dropping the standards and they were only hitting that 45% of the time. It kept dropping the standards.

We are committed as a government to fixing that. We are committed to ensure those Canadians who deserve those benefits get the benefits they need. That is what we are committed to and we will deliver on that.

• (1910)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy: Madam Speaker, I took up the cause of employment insurance when I decided to become a member of the board of directors of Saint-Hyacinthe's Mouvement action chômage in 1996. I found the Liberals' employment insurance reform completely appalling.

The problem is that fewer than four out of 10 workers have access to employment insurance. What am I supposed to say to the six out of 10 workers who are not getting anything and who spent their whole lives paying into EI? What am I supposed to tell those families? When a worker does not have any income, the whole family does not have any income. Those who happen to be entitled to EI benefits wait for weeks to get their first cheque, but six out of 10 workers will not even get one. That does not make any sense.

We need to do something. Workers do not choose to become unemployed. They do not choose not to work. That is not true. What people want is to support their families. It does not make any sense to tell workers that we are going to take the time to look into this. No. We need to do something and we need to do it now.

[*English*]

Mr. Rodger Cuzner: Madam Speaker, in the supplementary question, my colleague jogged my memory with regard to access. One thing we promised in the platform throughout the campaign was to increase access. The minister has already moved to ensure that access is according to the NERE principle, new entrants and re-entrants, and the hours have been dropped from 920 down to regional qualification. We know that young Canadians, especially, who are entering the workforce for the first time, or those who were displaced from the workforce and are re-entering, are going to benefit from these changes.

As well, as the member said, regarding the weeks that people have to wait, the review will certainly address those issues and I am looking forward to getting started on that.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to redress a question that I previously asked of the Minister of National Defence about a comment that he had made. He stated, in reference to the Canadian Armed Forces' mission in Afghanistan, that we do not need to repeat

the mistakes of the past. I asked him whether he thought the entire mission in Afghanistan was a mistake.

Essentially, the Canadian Armed Forces did an outstanding job in the 10 years they were in theatre in Afghanistan, a mission that started under the Chrétien-Martin Liberal government, and continued and ended under the Conservative government. We know that in that process, 158 Canadians paid the ultimate sacrifice in service to our country and to the people of Afghanistan by ridding them of the evil that they had been subjected to by the Taliban.

There were some great accomplishments. Over four million children were able to go to school who had not been previously, and most of them were girls. The rights of women and girls increased after the Taliban were removed. The opportunities for education, hospital care, and medicines dramatically improved after the Taliban were removed from power. That is because of Canada and its allies being on the ground, carrying the fight to an organization that was brutal in its approach to its own people and a regime that supported a safe haven for the training of terrorists, particularly al Qaeda and the many crimes that they committed around the world, not just on 9/11.

The amazing thing is that Afghanistan has a vibrant democracy today, with successful presidential and legislative elections taking place. *Maclean's* magazine published the results of an Afghan opinion poll, which asked the following question. This is key. It asked if Afghans preferred the current government or the Taliban regime and 91% said that they supported the new government, fully 85% said living conditions had improved since the Taliban were removed, and 77% believed that the country was headed in the right direction.

That would not have been possible if not for the efforts of the brave men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces. They helped settle refugees. What they were able to do was amazing. I do not see this as being a mistake. I see this as being a success for the Canadian Armed Forces, a success for Canada, and the recipients of that success are the citizens of Afghanistan.

I would again say that I was disappointed with the minister's comments when he made that speech back in February. We have to remember that the regime in Afghanistan was awful. It was totalitarian. It was male chauvinist in nature. Women and girls were treated like commodities, and ultimately, we did the right thing in ending that safe haven for the Taliban, al Qaeda, and other terrorist organizations.

Therefore, I thank every one of the 40,000 Canadians who served in Afghanistan.

• (1915)

Hon. John McKay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Madam Speaker, let me pick up where the hon. member left off. We all agree that our military is outstanding and did do an outstanding job. There is probably no person in the House who has more experience in Afghanistan than this minister. He did three tours of duty in Afghanistan and saw it up front and personally.

In fact, on Monday night, my hon. friend's colleague from Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles said:

Adjournment Proceedings

As a veteran, I am getting to know the minister, and I also recognize his human qualities and experience. He is a man who wants to do things well. He is a good man. In another time, I would have gone to war with him. He will understand what I mean. However, now we are politicians.

Unfortunately, that is kind of the point. My colleague wishes to make a point that the minister was not making. The only way which I can get the point across is to quote from an article in the *Ottawa Citizen*. The article asks whether the minister is wary of ripple effects from anti-terrorism policies. The article is in the context of a major foreign policy conference organized by a Canada 2020 think tank. The minister drew heavily on his experience in Afghanistan, saying Canada and its allies had done a poor job grasping the ramifications of their actions in various conflicts.

“Should we be patting ourselves on the back?”, he said. “From a security perspective around the world, I think we can say things have not gotten much better. Things have gotten worse”.

The article went on to say the minister said the government was taking its time deciding the future of Canada's mission because it wanted to understand the “ripple” that will result from its contribution. He said a failure to consider all the implications meant some development efforts in Afghanistan undermined what Canada and its allies were trying to do.

He said, “I want to make sure we get this right. That's why we're making sure we take a bit of time to get this right and create this ripple that's going to lead to some positive outcomes”.

The article stated:

A lack of understanding, or situational awareness, had undermined allied efforts in Afghanistan, Libya and Iraq. On Afghanistan, in particular, he said early efforts by some countries had helped create corruption, which fuelled the insurgency. A failure to clamp down on the corruption made matters worse. People have left, patted themselves on the back, didn't even realize the great work that they thought they did had actually created a negative ripple.

The minister speaks with a credibility and authority that no one else in the House can speak to.

● (1920)

Mr. James Bezan: Madam Speaker, I am not questioning the minister's character. I, too, like the minister. He is a gentleman, a leader, and as a veteran of the Canadian Armed Forces, I have nothing but the utmost respect for the service that he has provided Canada.

What I am questioning are the words he used to describe the Afghanistan mission as “mistakes of the past”.

I want to draw light to what General Tom Lawson, the former chief of the defence staff, said when he was in Afghanistan to close our mission there. He said, “As our flag comes down today, we look back on our mission with pride, knowing that through our efforts we have helped Afghans to gain the hope of a brighter and more secure future”.

Lieutenant General Stuart Beare, the former commander of the Canadian Joint Operations Command, said, “At the end of the day, the question is: have we made and have we seen real progress in Afghanistan?...The answer...is absolutely and undeniably yes”.

Hon. John McKay: Madam Speaker, we can all look back on the Afghanistan mission with pride. Our people were exemplary and the

sacrifices we like to believe were not in vain. But, did we do it perfectly? Of course not, and that is exactly what the minister is concerned about.

In another article, the Minister of National Defence said, “A surge of U.S. troops in Afghanistan could have been unnecessary if action had been taken at the first ‘clues of corruption’”.

The minister recounted what a ground forces commander in Iraq once told him to illustrate why the West must avoid repeating mistakes of the past. He said, “Today, we are dealing with the son of al Qaeda. If we don't get the next piece right, and the next piece is not the military piece, it's that political piece, we will be dealing with the grandson of al Qaeda”.

That is exactly ISIS. It is the son of al Qaeda and the minister is very concerned that—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Order, please.

The hon. member for Vancouver Kingsway.

HEALTH

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Madam Speaker, before I begin my remarks, I just want to say that, when I was first elected, I got an identification card, as every member does, and on that card it outlines the privileges of every member and it says that every member elected to this House has the right to the full run of the parliamentary precinct, impeded by no one.

What I saw here tonight, when I saw the Prime Minister come over and physically put his hands on the Conservative whip and move him along, was an absolute breach of that privilege. I will tell members that was intentional. The Prime Minister intentionally put his hands on another member and moved him along. In the process, he bumped the member for Berthier—Maskinongé. I just want to say that is unacceptable.

Madam Speaker, every year that Canadians must wait for progress on community-based care is a lost opportunity for progress in the kind of innovation that is so critical for our health care system. As hospitals overcrowd and our population ages, the time to build momentum toward a better home care service is now.

In 1984, Tommy Douglas, Canada's father of medicare, said:

Let's not forget that the ultimate goal of Medicare must be to keep people well rather than just patching them up when they get sick. That means clinics. That means making the hospitals available for active treatment cases only, getting chronic patients out into nursing homes, carrying on home nursing programs that are much more effective....

We can't stand still. We can either go backward or we can go forward. The choice we make today will decide the future of Medicare in Canada.

Indeed, the same holds true today. The choices we make, or fail to make, will decide the future of our medicare system.

It is time to envision and actuate the next essential phase for health care in Canada; that is, transitioning from an acute care model to one that includes greatly expanded community care, including home care.

Adjournment Proceedings

In recent weeks, I have had the opportunity of meeting with a variety of health care providers from across Canada. Through these conversations, I see a clear, shared consensus emerging for a patient-centred, sustainable, community-care health care system across our country.

Recall the old saying that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Community care provides the great opportunity not only to deliver better care to Canadians but also to save our system a great deal of money.

We know that a patient in hospital costs \$1,000 per day; we know that extended care homes cost an average of \$130 per day; and we know that home care costs an average of \$55 per day. While the fiscal argument here is plain, more importantly, we also know that Canadians will enjoy better health when they can stay at home and receive care in their community.

Imagine if we created a new system where \$55 a day were dedicated to each Canadian patient in need of home care services. Imagine if those \$55 funded rotating visits by health care professionals: on Monday, a visit from a nurse to help with medications; on Tuesday, a visit by a personal care attendant to help feed and bathe the patient; on Wednesday, a visit from the local paramedic to take blood pressure and assess health; on Thursday, a visit by a speech pathologist and audiologist to preserve speech and assess hearing; on Friday, a visit by a physiotherapist to help with mobility, and so on.

Imagine creating a health care system where prevention and care were brought into the home of each and every patient demonstrating need.

With visionary leadership and the appropriate funding, we can improve the delivery of care for all Canadians, save money, and ensure better patient outcomes.

Will the government do so?

● (1925)

Ms. Karina Gould (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity to stand in the House today to discuss the Government of Canada's commitment to support improved access to home care services across the country. We know that the majority of Canadians want to stay independent for as long as possible and receive the care they need in their homes and in their communities.

That is why our government has committed to working with our provinces and territories to support them in their efforts to make home care more available for Canadians across the country. Our goal for Canada's health care system has been and continues to be improving its efficiency and delivery, all while maintaining its universality particularly for our seniors.

Recognizing Canada's aging population, as well as growing rates of chronic disease, we must pursue a shift of our health care systems from a predominant focus on providing institutional care toward a greater emphasis on providing care both in the home and in our communities. After all, Canada's publicly funded universal health care system has not only been a source of pride for Canadians, but

also a source of security for the middle class and those who are working hard every day to join it.

While health care falls under provincial and territorial jurisdiction, our government is committed to working with the provinces and territories to ensure equitable access to health services for all Canadians. This includes collaborating to develop a new health accord that will support the delivery of more and better home care services.

In October, Canadians elected us on a platform that would, among many other things, work to strengthen our publicly funded universal health care system and ensure that it adapted to new challenges. As part of this goal, we will follow up on our campaign promise to work with the provinces and territories to ensure that Canadians have more access to high quality in-home caregivers, financial supports for family care, and, when necessary, palliative care.

We know that health care across Canada is changing at a rapid pace, and our government remains committed to keeping up with the diverse needs of an aging population and advancements in health technology. We will be an essential partner in improving not only outcomes, but also quality of care for all Canadians.

Though our government is only six months old, we have taken a significant first step in advancing the health accord, as a federal, provincial, and territorial health ministers meeting was held this past January. There, health ministers agreed, among other priorities, to work on improving home care to better meet the needs of patients closer to home, including those who needed palliative care. Already, federal, provincial, and territorial officials have started preliminary discussions related to areas of potential change to support the delivery of improved home care services.

Given the importance of advancing work on the health accord and our shared health priorities, health ministers will meet again later this year to take stock of progress and decide on next steps.

Budget 2016 reaffirms our government's commitment to working in partnership with provinces and territories to negotiate a new multi-year health accord. This commitment has been applauded and welcomed by major health care stakeholders across Canada, including the Canadian Medical Association and the Canadian Nurses Association.

Moreover, budget 2016 also works to strengthen the middle class by providing immediate investments to support progress on health accord priorities in the form of assistance for innovations within our health care system. This would include \$50 million for Canada Health Infoway to support short-term digital health activities in e-prescribing and telehomecare. This would also include \$39 million to the Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement to support its ongoing efforts to identify and introduce innovations in the health care system.

● (1930)

Mr. Don Davies: Madam Speaker, since the NDP first broke ground on providing universal hospital insurance in the 1940s, medicare has come a long way. From hospital insurance, we moved to full medical insurance for all necessary treatment. We built a system that at least in principle provided health care based on need and not on ability to pay.

Adjournment Proceedings

However, I am still concerned that we have stalled in delivering the next generation of comprehensive health care coverage for Canadians. In my meetings with groups like the Canadian Dental Association, the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association, Speech-Language and Audiology Canada, and other health groups, I was reminded that many health services critical to Canadians' well-being remained outside of universal health coverage and must be paid out of pocket.

We cannot separate mental health from physical health. We cannot separate oral or hearing health from physical health. I believe it is time for a national leadership to extend public health insurance into new domains of care to strengthen health delivery for all Canadians. Does the government share this belief?

Ms. Karina Gould: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his interest and advocacy on health care.

Universal health care is indeed a core Canadian value, and I would like to reiterate the government's commitment to support the delivery of more and better home care services for all Canadians.

As previously noted, while health care falls under provincial and territorial jurisdiction, our government is committed to working

collaboratively with our provinces and territories to develop a new health accord that will ensure more access to high-quality in-home caregivers, financial support for family care, and when necessary, palliative care.

Budget 2016 further highlights the importance of this commitment and provides immediate investments to support pan-Canadian progress on health accord priorities.

While discussions are ongoing, we are working continuously toward the development of a new long-term agreement, including a \$3-billion investment in home care. We look forward to announcing details once the agreement has been finalized.

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): 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 7:32 p.m.)

CONTENTS

Wednesday, May 18, 2016

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Transfer of Family Businesses

Mr. Barsalou-Duval 3519

Technology Sector

Mr. Fragiskatos 3519

Bladder Cancer

Mr. Scheer 3519

Television and Film Industry

Mr. Maloney 3519

Komagata Maru

Ms. Kwan 3520

Food Banks

Mr. Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Soeurs) 3520

Charities

Mr. Falk 3520

Fertilizer Industry

Mr. Drouin 3520

Food Banks

Ms. Dabrusin 3521

Afghani Sikhs

Mr. Saroya 3521

Sri Lanka

Mr. Anandasangaree 3521

Ontario Special Olympics

Mr. Longfield 3521

Fort McMurray Fire

Mr. Jeneroux 3521

Gender-based Analysis

Ms. Damoff 3521

Violence Against Women

Ms. Quach 3522

Crimea

Mr. Bezan 3522

Republic of Haiti's Flag

Mr. Dubourg 3522

ORAL QUESTIONS

Business of the House

Ms. Ambrose 3522

Mr. Trudeau 3522

Ms. Ambrose 3523

Mr. Trudeau 3523

Democratic Reform

Ms. Ambrose 3523

Mr. Trudeau 3523

Mr. Lebel 3523

Mr. Trudeau 3523

Mr. Lebel 3523

Mr. Trudeau 3523

Physician-Assisted Dying

Mr. Mulcair 3523

Mr. Trudeau 3524

Mr. Mulcair 3524

Mr. Trudeau 3524

Canada Post

Mr. Mulcair 3524

Mr. Trudeau 3524

Veterans Affairs

Mr. Mulcair 3524

Mr. Trudeau 3524

House of Commons

Mr. Scheer 3524

Mr. LeBlanc 3525

Mr. Scheer 3525

Mr. LeBlanc 3525

Democratic Reform

Mr. Rayes 3525

Ms. Monsef 3525

Mr. Rayes 3525

Ms. Monsef 3525

Ms. Harder 3525

Ms. Monsef 3526

Ms. Harder 3526

Ms. Monsef 3526

Mr. Boulterice 3526

Ms. Monsef 3526

Mr. Cullen 3526

Ms. Monsef 3526

Mr. Reid 3526

Ms. Monsef 3526

Mr. Reid 3526

Ms. Monsef 3527

Mr. Kenney 3527

Ms. Monsef 3527

Mr. Kenney 3527

Ms. Monsef 3527

Public Safety

Ms. Laverdière 3527

Mr. Goodale 3527

Mr. Garrison 3527

Mr. Goodale 3527

Labour

Mr. Sarai 3527

Ms. Mihychuk 3528

Foreign Affairs

Mr. Clement 3528

Ms. Goldsmith-Jones.....	3528
Mr. Clement.....	3528
Ms. Goldsmith-Jones.....	3528
Mr. Bezan.....	3528
Ms. Goldsmith-Jones.....	3528
Mr. Genuis.....	3528
Ms. Goldsmith-Jones.....	3528

Veterans Affairs

Ms. Mathysen.....	3529
Mr. Hehr.....	3529

Fisheries and Oceans

Mr. Donnelly.....	3529
Mr. Tootoo.....	3529

Veterans Affairs

Mr. O'Toole.....	3529
Mr. Hehr.....	3529
Mr. Clarke.....	3529
Mr. Hehr.....	3529
Mr. Clarke.....	3529
Mr. Hehr.....	3530

Canadian Space Agency

Mr. Grewal.....	3530
Mr. Bains.....	3530

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship

Mr. Saroya.....	3530
Mr. McCallum.....	3530

CBC/Radio-Canada

Mr. Nantel.....	3530
Ms. Joly.....	3530

Health

Mr. Ayoub.....	3530
Mrs. Philpott.....	3530

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship

Mr. Albrecht.....	3531
Mr. McCallum.....	3531

Physician-Assisted Dying

Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands).....	3531
Mr. Trudeau.....	3531

Presence in Gallery

The Speaker.....	3531
------------------	------

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Komagata Maru

Mr. Trudeau.....	3531
Ms. Ambrose.....	3532
Mr. Mulcair.....	3533
Mr. Fortin.....	3534
Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands).....	3534

Interparliamentary Delegations

Mrs. Gallant.....	3535
-------------------	------

Committees of the House

Justice and Human Rights

Mr. Housefather.....	3535
----------------------	------

Government Operations and Estimates

Mr. Lukiwski.....	3535
-------------------	------

Procedure and House Affairs

Mr. Bagnell.....	3535
Motion.....	3535
Motion agreed to.....	3537

Privilege

Government Business Motion No. 6

Mr. Julian.....	3537
Mr. LeBlanc.....	3538
Mr. Scheer.....	3538
Mr. Thériault.....	3538
Mr. Chong.....	3538

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Criminal Code

Bill C-14—Time Allocation Motion

Mr. LeBlanc.....	3539
Motion.....	3539
Mr. Kenney.....	3539
Mrs. Philpott.....	3539
Mr. Rankin.....	3539
Mrs. Vecchio.....	3540
Ms. Sansoucy.....	3540
Mr. Brassard.....	3541
Mr. Dubé.....	3541
Mr. Lamoureux.....	3542
Mrs. McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo).....	3542
Mr. Davies.....	3542
Mr. Strahl.....	3543
Motion agreed to.....	3545

Privilege

Alleged Actions of Prime Minister in Chamber

Mr. Van Loan.....	3545
Ms. Ashton.....	3546
Mr. Fergus.....	3546
Mr. Garrison.....	3546
Ms. Brosseau.....	3546
Mr. Trudeau.....	3546

Speaker's Ruling

The Speaker.....	3547
------------------	------

Reference to Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs

Mr. Van Loan.....	3547
Motion.....	3547
Mr. LeBlanc.....	3547
Mrs. Boucher.....	3547
Mr. Julian.....	3547
Mrs. Schulte.....	3548
Mr. Albas.....	3548
Ms. Ashton.....	3548
Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands).....	3549
Mr. Lamoureux.....	3549
Mr. Kenney.....	3550
Motion.....	3551
Mr. Deltell.....	3551

Ms. Ramsey 3551

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

Employment Insurance

Ms. Sansoucy 3552

Mr. Cuzner 3552

National Defence

Mr. Bezan 3553

Mr. McKay 3553

Health

Mr. Davies 3554

Ms. Gould 3555

Published under the authority of the Speaker of
the House of Commons

SPEAKER'S PERMISSION

The proceedings of the House of Commons and its Committees are hereby made available to provide greater public access. The parliamentary privilege of the House of Commons to control the publication and broadcast of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its Committees is nonetheless reserved. All copyrights therein are also reserved.

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its Committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the *Copyright Act*. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a Committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the *Copyright Act*.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its Committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

Also available on the House of Commons website at the following address: <http://www.ourcommons.ca>

Publié en conformité de l'autorité
du Président de la Chambre des communes

PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT

Les délibérations de la Chambre des communes et de ses comités sont mises à la disposition du public pour mieux le renseigner. La Chambre conserve néanmoins son privilège parlementaire de contrôler la publication et la diffusion des délibérations et elle possède tous les droits d'auteur sur celles-ci.

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

Aussi disponible sur le site Web de la Chambre des communes à l'adresse suivante : <http://www.noscommunes.ca>