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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Tuesday, November 15, 2016

—

Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, November 15, 2016

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1005)

[*Translation*]

INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

The Speaker: I have the honour to table the report of the Canadian parliamentary delegation on its visit to the Republic of Korea and to Mongolia from September 5 to 10, 2016.

* * *

CRIMINAL CODE

Hon. Jody Wilson-Raybould (Minister of Justice, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-32, An Act related to the repeal of section 159 of the Criminal Code.

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

* * *

PETITIONS

GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOODS

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saannich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, today I have the honour of presenting two petitions.

[*English*]

The first petition is from many members throughout my riding as well as stretching into the Edmonton area and calls for the House to refuse to register GMO fish. We know that this petition comes in the face of existing permissions for AquaBounty Atlantic salmon. The petitioners call upon Parliament to make sure no genetically modified fish or fish eggs are approved for production or sale in Canada.

The second petition is similar, but signed by entirely different communities from Victoria, to Meaford, Ontario, to Sherbrooke, Quebec and calls on the Government of Canada and the Parliament of Canada to ensure the labelling of genetically modified products.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Fin Donnelly (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present two e-petitions today. The first is a petition

that calls on the government to order a federal environmental review of the Massey Tunnel replacement proposal. The petitioners' concerns are numerous and I will highlight a couple of them. They are concerned about the risk to the ecology of the Fraser River Estuary impacting wildlife in the region as well as risks to commercial, recreational, and first nations fisheries. They are also concerned with this project's impact on food security, as it will lead to further loss of fertile agricultural land. The petitioners know a federal environmental review of the Massey Tunnel project would be a good place to start if we are going to protect the Fraser River ecosystem for generations to come. While the rules in the House do not allow members to endorse petitions, let me say I am pleased to present it on behalf of more than 340 people who have signed it.

ANIMAL WELFARE

Mr. Fin Donnelly (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to also present an e-petition initiated by Michael Donovan from Calgary, Alberta with 1,071 signatures collected online from across the country. The petitioners call on the government to ban the importation of all animal parts originating from Africa into Canada for the purpose of trophies. The petitioners are concerned about the rapid decline of African wildlife populations that they feel are due in part to trophy hunters, many of whom come from abroad, including Canada. Canadians care deeply about wildlife conservation and look forward to the government's response.

[*Translation*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry—Suroît, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have an electronic petition to present about the notorious *Kathryn Spirit*, a vessel that has been languishing in Lac Saint-Louis, which is in my riding, since 2011. The petitioners are calling upon the government to have the boat seized safely by appropriate experts.

I am presenting this petition, which has been signed by 4,000 people since 2011.

Government Orders

[English]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2016, NO. 2

BILL C-29—TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.) moved:

That, in relation to Bill C-29, a second act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on March 22, 2016 and other measures, not more than one further sitting day shall be allotted to the consideration at second reading stage of the bill;

and

That, 15 minutes before the expiry of the time provided for government orders on the day allotted to the consideration at second reading stage of the said bill, 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 said stage of the bill shall be put forthwith and successively, without further debate or amendment.

• (1010)

[Translation]

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

[English]

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let me begin by saying how disappointed I am that the government House leader has moved this motion. I think that to this point in time we have had a very good working relationship. There have been certain bills that our members have not wanted to speak to at length, and so the government has been able to see legislation move through at a pace it would have been happy with.

Definitely, in the case of this bill, we have a lot of members who are extremely concerned with the budget implementation bill. Our members on this side of the House wanted to speak to this important bill and get their voices on the record.

I recognize that maybe the government thinks that some of what is being said may be what it considers repetitive, but these are important points that need to be made. By moving this motion and stopping the time that we are allowed to speak, it does a number of things. It really disenfranchises the members of Parliament who have been elected, who are duly elected, and who want to speak. I think it also does not benefit our working relationship.

I have concerns about that.

However, I am also very concerned about something else. I am not assuming the Minister of Finance will be answering the questions that we have. This is his bill and he is not even here in respect of this place, so what is really the plan? Why is the government rushing this through? Why does it not see the importance of this budget implementation bill, in terms of the harm that it would do to Canadians, the massive deficit that would be passed on to generations and generations of Canadians? The government is not dealing with the problems of the bill and, instead, it is rushing it through.

Hon. Bardish Chagger: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to respond to the hon. member's question. I agree that we have been working well together. I believe that we can continue working together.

The reality is that, including today, there will have been six days of debate on this legislation. This is the budget implementation act. This bill will be moved on to committee, where it will be further debated and further studied. The committee will have an opportunity to invite Canadians to come as witnesses to answer some questions, and to share with the committee what they like about this bill and what their concerns are. The committee also has the opportunity of doing a clause-by-clause, word-by-word analysis. This furthers the debate on this legislation. It is important that we allow the committee to do the good work that it does.

Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP): Madam Speaker, I too rise more in sorrow than in anger. I agree with my colleague, the House leader for the Conservatives, that the working relationship in this Parliament has been affected as a consequence of this bill.

I can remember when the Conservatives, under the Harper government, moved time allocation on over 100 occasions, perhaps setting a parliamentary record, and that the Liberals joined with us many a time to advise the House how upset they were with time allocation. How things have changed.

The Minister of Finance told us just how important this budget was to Canadians. He talked about the importance of dealing with tax evasion measures, pollution measures, and so many other things. We have drawn attention to the incredible change in Canadians' lives that the infrastructure provisions are going to bring, and the government tells us how important this budget is.

My question is, if it is that important, why is the government limiting the right of parliamentarians to scrutinize such an important budget?

• (1015)

Hon. Bardish Chagger: Madam Speaker, I would like to take a moment to commend the working relationship that I have had with the hon. member, and I look forward to continuing that conversation. The member very well knows that I do believe in reaching consensus and that we can all work better in this place. We can work better for Canadians, for middle-class Canadians, who are the very people who elected us to do the good work that we do.

Government Orders

I recognize that members of Parliament are here to represent their constituents and I also recognize that Canadians expect this government to advance the legislation that they have mandated us to advance. It is important that we have the opportunity to have a fruitful and meaningful debate, but also to allow the committee to do the good work that it does. This budget implementation act actually would implement only measures that were introduced in budget 2016 on March 22.

I assure members of this House that the work will continue, and I look forward to working with all members of this House.

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Madam Speaker, once again we see the government members grabbing their toys. Like kids in a sandbox, they are grabbing their toys and going home if they do not like the way things are going.

Our hon. colleague from Portage—Lisgar, our hon. House leader, said that we have not had the opportunity to hear our voices. It is not our voices that the government needs to hear. There are 338 members of Parliament who have been elected to be the voices of their constituents, of Canadians. There are six days of debate, if that is actually what the number is, and if our hon. colleague says it I guess we have trust that. Similar to that, I guess we have to trust that they only spent \$10 billion; or I guess that is wrong as it is actually quite a bit higher than that.

The current government has pledged to spend billions of dollars, putting us further into debt. It is not for us here; it is going to be on the future generations who are going to have to pay that back.

This budget, this financial update, and this bill impact my riding. We do not have a softwood lumber agreement in place. This bill and the Liberals' update do nothing to create jobs in my riding. I have not had an opportunity, except for today right now, to be able to share what the government is doing and is not doing and how that impacts my riding. Six days does nothing to further the voices of the constituencies of the 338 members of Parliament.

I ask this of my hon. colleague. Why is the government trying to rush this through? Why not give a voice to Canadians and to the members of Parliament, as we have been elected to be the voices of our constituents?

Hon. Bardish Chagger: Madam Speaker, I agree that members of Parliament are elected to represent their constituents. I agree that we do important work for Canadians each and every single day. We are saying, let us continue that work. Let us continue to work hard for Canadians, whether they are in our constituencies or across this great nation.

Including today, we will have had six days of debate on Bill C-29 at second reading. The bill will move on to committee where it will be further studied and further debated. Canadians will have the opportunity to come as witnesses. It will return to this chamber where we will get to continue the debate, the dialogue, and the discussion so that we can represent our constituents and Canadians across this nation.

Our plan for middle-class Canadians and Canadian families in the hon. member's constituency, in my constituency, and across this nation and our plan for infrastructure are about delivering for Canada. They are about delivering for their families. They are about

delivering the plan that Canadians elected this government on. We need to work together so that we can ensure that we create the opportunities that Canadians need us to create.

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, I could not help but notice the coincidence that the motion for closure on the budget bill that would establish this new privatization bank was tabled on the very same day that the Prime Minister got together with investors of trillions of dollars of world capital, and that we are going to be voting on that motion the day after. When we talk about the purpose of debate in Parliament, sometimes that is to take the time to learn more about what the government plan is. Now, instead of having the benefit of information on what they discussed in that room as the details leak out, we will already have voted on second reading. I just could not help but notice that coincidence.

We can get a lot of fluff about moving on to committee and the next stage in debate and everything else. This is a seminal piece of legislation from the government. It would change the way that infrastructure projects are delivered in the country, and for the worse. This closure is really about trying to hide from Canadians the details of the Liberals' new privatization plan for Canadian infrastructure. Let us not pretend. I would like to hear what the government House leader has to say about that.

• (1020)

Hon. Bardish Chagger: Madam Speaker, this is the budget implementation act, No. 2. It would implement budget 2016 that was passed in the House, that was introduced in the House on March 22 of this year. It is important to note that this budget implementation act would only implement measures that were introduced in the budget in March 2016. It would implement the plan that Canadians elected us on, the plan that would help grow opportunities for Canadians, the plan that would invest in Canadian communities and families, and create the growth that we need for this great nation. We need to do this work and it is important that the committee has the opportunity to study this bill.

Ms. Pam Damoff (Oakville North—Burlington, Lib.): Madam Speaker, in the last week I have had the opportunity to speak to students from Brock University, the University of Manitoba, and Western, McMaster, and Wilfrid Laurier. Young Canadians are our future, but as we know, many are struggling with student loans and increasing debt.

Minister, can you tell us how this bill would help young Canadians succeed—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I would remind the member to address her questions to the Chair.

I would also remind other members to wait their turn to speak when someone else has the floor.

Ms. Pam Damoff: I apologize, Madam Speaker.

Could the minister tell the House how this bill would help young Canadians succeed and make education more affordable?

Hon. Bardish Chagger: Madam Speaker, that is an important question.

Government Orders

I, too, had the privilege of being in my constituency last week, just as all members of the House did. I got to interact with everyday Canadians, the very people whom we work hard for. I can remember being a student and the debt that came with it. The important measures this government has introduced would help those very students.

Now, more than ever, it is important that post-secondary education remains affordable and accessible. Young Canadians must have access to meaningful work at the beginning of their careers and must not be burdened by increasing student debt. Budget 2016 would make post-secondary education more affordable for students from low and middle-income families and would make it easier to repay student debt.

I heard this time and time again at doorsteps. It is something that Canadians and Canadian families want, something that students are asking for, and something we are committed to delivering on.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Before we continue, I want to remind members to stay in their seats until members have stopped speaking. Then, when I ask for questions and comments, members can stand.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola.

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am sure the minister is very happy to be speaking about something other than the pay to play fundraisers that she has become so familiar with. It seems that the Minister of Finance has completely abdicated his responsibility by pinning the defence of this bill and this motion on the member, so I feel sympathy for her in this case.

However, this half hour is for the government to tell parliamentarians why it is necessary to go ahead at this time. Liberals conducted a technical briefing and gave parliamentarians eight hours' notice. They have already directed, through their majority, to put forward a motion at committee to start the pre-study of it. They know exactly what they are doing. They are saying they want consensus. The minister said earlier that she wants consensus, and yet she is applying the government's majority rather than listening to the legitimate concerns of parliamentarians. That is disrespectful of the chamber.

I would like the minister to stand and articulate why this bill must push aside all of the parliamentarians who have not yet had a chance to speak at second reading. I want to hear exactly why a time limit is needed. They are simply using their majority because they can.

• (1025)

Hon. Bardish Chagger: Madam Speaker, I was looking forward to receiving a question from the member, because I feel that he is projecting something that the previous government did, but which is not true.

It is actually with great regret that I had to bring forward this motion today. I was hoping that we could work together better and would know how much debate was needed. Part of working together is having those conversations. I really believed we could have those conversations to know how much debate the members opposite wanted. We would be more than willing to work with the opposition,

but when are not getting an answer, it is really hard to work with them in this case. I know there will be many more opportunities.

I would like to remind the hon. member that our budget implementation bill is half the size of a bill the previous government once introduced. We have given more time to debate this legislation at second reading, six days of debate. The previous government thought that three or four days was always more than enough. It is interesting to see how perspectives change.

We will continue to ensure that we have meaningful debate and that committees have the ability to do the good work they do, as well.

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Madam Speaker, to hear the Liberal House leader say this budget implementation bill is a reflection of the Liberals' campaign commitment to Canadians is hard to square with the government's failure to live up to its commitment to reduce the small business tax to 9%.

Its failure to do that in the March budget was a broken promise to Canadians. The parliamentary budget officer estimates that this cancellation, this broken promise, will cost small and medium-sized enterprises more than \$2.1 billion. Small business was looking forward to those promised tax reductions as a way to stimulate the local economy and create jobs. We know that 80% of new jobs are created by small business.

In what way does the small business tax cut broken promise square with the Liberals' election commitments to Canadians? As well, why is the government unwilling to allow further debate on this broken promise?

Hon. Bardish Chagger: Madam Speaker, this is a great opportunity for me to rise in the House during Global Entrepreneurship Week when small businesses and entrepreneurs are being celebrated. They should not only be celebrated for a day or a week, but every day. I agree that small businesses are the backbone of this economy. They are our job-creators. They are the people that grow communities.

We have been working very closely with them. We are taking a whole-of-government approach, with over 20 departments recognizing how they are relating directly to and working with small businesses. We know we can always do more. We are listening to them and engaging with them.

We are taking the priorities and changes they want to see, so we can advance and implement them. It is important to note that small business owners do believe they can grow their businesses. They want measures so they can grow and create the opportunities and jobs they want to create. Small business owners do not want to remain small. Some may, and they are welcome to. However, there are many who want opportunities to grow their businesses, to create the jobs that Canadians want them to create, to grow their communities and the opportunities in them.

We look forward to continuing to work with all members of the House and small business owners, especially.

Government Orders

Mr. Jim Eglinski (Yellowhead, CPC): Madam Speaker, I, too, had a great return to my riding last week. While there, I visited a number of high schools and met with four different classes. They were all kids who are about to graduate. They are very concerned.

They are concerned about where the Liberal government is going with their taxes, asking how they were going to pay for this. Some of the kids were telling me that they were looking at the budget as part of a class project. They wanted to know how a government comes out with a budget that does not even factor in indexing. The kids were very concerned about that.

I would like to ask the government House leader a question. How can you bring in a budget without putting in indexing, and how much is that indexing going to cost us over the next five years?

• (1030)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I am assuming the member is asking that through the Chair, not directly to the member.

Hon. Bardish Chagger: Madam Speaker, it is always great to hear about colleagues visiting their constituents and visiting kids.

I would like to commend that teacher for bringing the budget into her classroom so that our youth had the opportunity to discuss it, and for more youth to have the opportunity to engage with the Government of Canada to see the work we are doing. They are not only the leaders of tomorrow, but the leaders of today. Therefore, I applaud that teacher and the hon. member for taking the time to speak with those very students. Those are the kind of people we are investing in.

The hon. member said this government has lowered taxes on middle-class Canadians. This government increased taxes on the 1% of wealthiest Canadians. That is something we have not seen done before. That is investing in Canadian families. That is investing in middle-class families. That is living up to the commitment we have made.

As the member said so eloquently, the youth are watching to see what this government is doing. They expect us to deliver on our commitments. That is why the implementation of the budget is so necessary and why the committee should have the opportunity to study this legislation.

Mr. Daniel Blaikie: Madam Speaker, I want to return to the issue of privatization, because a central piece of the Liberal promise and budget was to invest in infrastructure. What we learned from the economic update is that the way the government will do this is by selling that infrastructure and having that new infrastructure owned by private investment firms, many of which are not from Canada. Therefore, the idea that we should be closing down debate just as we are learning the details of this central pillar of the Liberal financial platform is ridiculous. Perhaps it is the fact that the only person from the government side that I have heard standing up and defending this cockamamie scheme during the debate is the member for Spadina—Fort York. He likes to talk about how this is really about affordable housing, and that we should look at the platform. He mentioned the Canada infrastructure bank. The platform mentions it as a bank that will lend money to municipalities and provinces that want to build infrastructure; it does not talk about using it to leverage private funds

and then having our highways, airports, and bridges owned by multinational foreign investors. That is simply not in the platform. Maybe the member for Spadina—Fort York is running out of breath and the government cannot find anyone else to defend this scheme.

Is that why we have to close down debate, because the government cannot find anyone else on its benches willing to defend this ridiculous scheme?

Hon. Bardish Chagger: Madam Speaker, I will remind members that this is the budget implementation act. It does not refer to the infrastructure bank. The budget implementation act brings in the amendments that we committed to to Canadians, which were introduced in budget 2016 in March of this year: amendments to the Employment Insurance Act; to the Old Age Security Act; to the Canada Education Savings Act; to the Canada Disability Savings Act; and to the financial consumer protection framework.

To go back to an earlier question, our tax measures closed loopholes to protect consumers, to support our small business owners, and to do the work that Canadians want us to do. This act implements the measures that were introduced in budget 2016 in March of this year. Every measure in this implementation act was in the budget of 2016. It only advances and implements that act.

Mr. Daniel Blaikie: Except this part.

Hon. Bardish Chagger: Madam Speaker, we are saying let us get it to committee so that it can study it.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I would remind the member for Elmwood—Transcona that he was afforded the opportunity of respect while he was standing. I would expect that he will do the same when someone else is speaking.

Mr. Chris Bittle (St. Catharines, Lib.): Madam Speaker, Canadian veterans have bravely served our country. They have stepped up to serve us in the most difficult of situations. We owe them our respect, gratitude, and support.

Can the hon. government House leader tell the House how this bill will support our veterans?

• (1035)

Hon. Bardish Chagger: Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for that great question, especially as last week was Veterans' Week. As I am sure many members did, I had the opportunity to be with our veterans on Remembrance Day. The night before Remembrance Day, I went around my community to visit cenotaphs and to thank our cadets as well. Last week, I also had the opportunity to bring together land, sea and air cadets in one room to have a fruitful discussion with the Minister of National Defence.

Government Orders

We recognize the important work that our veterans have done. We recognize that the rights and freedoms that we enjoy today are because of our men and women in uniform, not only those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice but also those who came home and those who continue to fight for our rights and freedoms. The government will give back to the veterans who have given so much in service to all Canadians. Canada will restore critical access to services for veterans, and ensure the long-term financial security of disabled veterans. Canada's veterans will receive more local in-person government services, as well as better access to case managers.

I was in the Waterloo region and I had multiple people commend this government for opening up the offices—and most recently in Nova Scotia as well. I have to say that it has been very well received, not only because it is the right thing to do but because it is what we should have done a long time ago.

Mr. Ron Liepert (Calgary Signal Hill, CPC): Madam Speaker, I heard the government House leader talk about the importance of moving this legislation to committee so it could hear from witnesses, study the bill further, and send it back to the House with recommendations. Is the government House leader aware that closure has already been introduced in committee on this particular legislation? If committee only has a limited amount of time to study the bill, then how can moving closure at this time in the House be justified?

Hon. Bardish Chagger: Madam Speaker, the committee has recognized the important work that has to be done. Under this government, committees are working. They are doing good work. They are a part of the process, and there is a reason why the process exists. The work of the committee is the work of the committee. I do not comment on the work of committees. That was part of the commitment we made to Canadians. Our parliamentary secretaries do not even have a vote in committees, so that they can do the open and transparent work that they do.

I understand that the committee wants to study this legislation. I understand the committee recognizes the importance of this legislation, especially when it comes to the Canadians we represent in the House.

We have important work to do. I know that if we really want to, and if we work a bit harder, we can work together for Canadians. That is a commitment this government has made, and it is a commitment we will continue to live up to.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Madam Speaker, I have two points I want to make to the government.

First of all, we are in the middle of a session of Parliament, and we just returned after a week in our constituencies. What I am trying to say is that when we gather for a parliamentary session, we have a duty, which is to speak directly to the legislation before the House.

In addition, we have nothing against ministers or the Prime Minister meeting with people outside of the House, but there is a time for that, and that time is when Parliament is not sitting. Ministers need to be present in the House in order to respond directly to our questions and so that all members who want to speak to a given bill have the opportunity to do so. The motion being put forward by the government right now does the exact opposite.

[*English*]

On the other point, the member for Yellowhead raised the issue of youth. It is important to tell our youth the truth. May I remind the minister that she has been elected under the oath of her platform? It said a modest deficit and getting back to zero deficit in three years. The reality is everything but that. The deficit is expected to be three times higher, and we do not know when we will get back to a zero deficit. How can she deal with that?

Hon. Bardish Chagger: Madam Speaker, I am sure the hon. member was not implying that I am not telling the truth. The member has been in the chamber far longer than I, and he knows that we do not make such implications.

[*Translation*]

We have already had six days of debate, and we want the committee to be able to study the bill, hear from witnesses, and work hard so that we can continue our discussions.

I find it unfortunate that we could not reach a consensus. We wanted to work together to find out how many days of debate the Conservatives wanted, but they did not provide us with that information.

[*English*]

When it comes to youth, we are committed to working with youth and we will continue to engage with youth. We have done that at unprecedented levels.

• (1040)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry—Suroît, NDP): Madam Speaker, it is truly a shame that the Liberals are imposing time allocation on a bill that has more than 146 clauses and amends 13 statutes. Its 234 pages make changes to a number of aspects related to the budget.

The Liberals claim to be transparent. They claim to be agents of change, the kind of change ensuring that all Canadians will be consulted, that there will be time to talk things out, and that there will be fewer inequalities.

There are several measures in this bill that will not help reduce inequality. For example, there is no tax credit for hiring young people in this budget. There are a number of inconsistencies when it comes to employment insurance. The board that is meant to ensure that workers are heard—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I must interrupt the hon. member if she wishes to obtain a response. The minister, for a brief response to the hon. member.

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is precisely for the reasons the hon. member has given that we want to refer the bill to committee for review.

Again, we do not take these decisions lightly. We are committed to ensuring that all members have enough time within reason.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): It is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith the question on the motion now before the House.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

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

Some hon. members: Nay.

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

And five or more members having risen:

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Call in the members.

• (1120)

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

(Division No. 144)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Alleslev	Amos
Anandasangaree	Arseneault
Arya	Ayoub
Badawey	Bagnell
Bains	Baylis
Beech	Bennett
Bibeau	Bittle
Blair	Boissonnault
Bossio	Bratina
Breton	Brisson
Caesar-Chavannes	Carr
Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)	Casey (Charlottetown)
Chagger	Champagne
Chan	Chen
Cuzner	Dabrusin
Damoff	DeCoursey
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Di Iorio	Dion
Drouin	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	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	Garneau
Gerretsen	Goldsmith-Jones
Goodale	Graham
Grewal	Hajdu
Hardie	Harvey
Hehr	Housefather
Hussen	Hutchings
Iacono	Joly

Jones	Jordan
Jowhari	Kang
Khalid	Khera
Lametti	Lamouroux
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	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod (Northwest Territories)	Mendès
Mendicino	Mihychuk
Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Sœurs)	
Monsef	
Morrissey	Murray
Nassif	Nault
O'Connell	Oliphant
Oliver	O'Regan
Ouellette	Paradis
Peschisolido	Peterson
Petitpas Taylor	Philpott
Picard	Poissant
Qualtrough	Ratansi
Rioux	Robillard
Rodriguez	Romanado
Rota	Rudd
Ruimy	Rusnak
Sahota	Saini
Sajjan	Samson
Sangha	Sarai
Scarpaleggia	Schiefke
Schulte	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sikand	Simms
Sorbara	Spengemann
Tabbara	Tan
Tassi	Trudeau
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Anderson
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Harder
Hughes

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Julian	Kelly
Kent	Kitchen
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Lake	Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Laverdière	Leitch
Liepert	Lobb
Lukiwski	MacGregor
MacKenzie	Maguire
Malcolmson	Masse (Windsor West)
Mathysen	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McColeman
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)	Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)
Moore	Mulcair
Nantel	Nater
Nicholson	Nuttall
Paul-Hus	Plamondon
Poilievre	Quach
Ramsey	Rankin
Rayes	Reid
Rempel	Richards
Ritz	Sansoucy
Saroya	Scheer
Schmale	Shields
Shiple	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
Stetski	Stewart
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PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

I wish to inform the House that because of the proceedings on the time allocation motion, government orders will be extended by 30 minutes.

● (1125)

SECOND READING

The House resumed from November 14 consideration of the motion that Bill C-29, a second act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on March 22, 2016 and other measures, be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the amendment and of the amendment to the amendment.

Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP): Mr. Speaker, let us imagine that I am a television game show host who has a multiple choice question for those who are following the debate on Bill C-29.

I will give a few numbers and they can tell me which political party those numbers make them think of. For example, I am thinking of a bill with 146 clauses. That is a fairly common occurrence. However, the bill I am thinking of also amends 13 laws. People may now be starting to get a better idea of which party I am talking about. Another hint is that the bill is 234 pages long and has to be examined at record speed. Also, as of just a few minutes ago, the bill became subject to a time allocation motion, or what is commonly known as a gag order. If people answered “the Conservative Party”, they are incorrect, but I understand their reasoning. What this clearly shows is that the Liberal Party does not seem to have brought real change. Once again, the government is using the same old strategies to ram through bills that should be debated more extensively in the House.

That is exactly the situation that we find ourselves in right now. Once again, when it comes time to debate a bill like Bill C-29, a second act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on March 22, 2016 and other measures, we do not have enough time.

There are some aspects of this bill that I could get on board with. However, since I have only 10 short minutes to share my views on this bill, I will focus on the aspects that I find completely incomprehensible and even surprising.

The first example I would like to talk about is the infrastructure bank. There was no mention of this type of measure during the election campaign. It came as a total surprise, and God knows that not all surprises are good ones. We have to discuss this. For those who are watching, I would like to show just how harmful this approach will be.

Taxpayers like me, hon. members, and all citizens heard no mention of this before. During the election campaign, the Liberal Party told us that it was going to invest heavily in infrastructure by borrowing money, supposedly because interest rates are so low. That message struck a chord, 39% of Canadians thought it was a good idea, and now we have a Liberal government. No matter how low the interest rates are, we are going to have to pay back these billions of dollars one day. I see no way to pay back these low-interest loans other than through taxation. We might feel a bit better if there were a plan for paying back these loans, but it seems that issue has been left for another day. The modest \$10-billion deficit is now hovering around \$30 billion.

Worse yet, now we learn something that was never mentioned before, namely that the government wants to privatize a significant portion of our public infrastructure. I want to emphasize the word “public”. The Liberal strategy involves transferring \$15 billion earmarked for infrastructure into a bank that will be used as a lever to attract private investors.

The first problem is that those \$15 billion, which are actually in the infrastructure bank, are earmarked for infrastructure projects of \$100 million or more. The result is that \$15 billion is taken out of the public infrastructure budget for projects under \$100 million. A town like Trois-Rivières and a region such as Mauricie have much infrastructure they would need to build or upgrade, and these projects seldom come in at more than \$100 million. The Liberals have just taken \$15 billion that could have been used to fund these projects, and there will be interest to pay.

Once the \$15 billion is in the bank, the government wants to attract many more hundreds of millions of dollars from private investors: pension funds, retirement plans, major corporations, and private investors.

Government Orders

•(1130)

Government finances and personal finances are subject to the same main principles of sound management. If I invest \$100, I am looking for the best return. I imagine that those who are going to invest billions in a public investment bank will also want a return well above the low interest rate on the loans that the government talks about making. We even heard Michael Sabia, of the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec, say that he hopes for a rate of return of 7% to 9% on the investments made by the infrastructure bank.

Second, who will be paying these returns? The citizens, as always. I would remind members that they have already paid once by paying the interest on government loans. Now, they will be paying a second time by offering a return on the investments of private companies. If there is one thing we agree on, it is that Quebec and Canada have an infrastructure deficit. Our infrastructure is in bad shape and needs major investments. Many economists agree that we need about \$500 billion. We could debate that amount, but let us just say that it is somewhere in that range. There is too much of a gap between \$500 billion and \$15 billion. They really need to do something else.

Too often, we forget to talk about how economists estimate that, over the past 10 years, as the corporate tax rate fell from 28% to 15%, the government missed out on \$15 billion to \$20 billion per year, money that it could not invest in updating our infrastructure. The government called its economic approach revolutionary. It said that corporations would inject the money they were able to save back into the economy, that they would create jobs, that everything would go gangbusters and be totally awesome, but in fact, that did not happen.

Even more unbelievable is the fact that the money corporations saved is now available to be invested in an infrastructure bank. Not only did taxpayers forgo the fair share that all members of society should pay, but also, if corporations take the money they were allowed to keep in the hope they would create jobs, and if they invest it in this bank, it will cost us to pay them a return on their private investments, which they expect to be between 7% and 9%, investments that they will make using money they saved at the expense of the public purse.

In other words, this is the third time that taxpayers, including me and my colleagues, have had to use their own money to pay for the very same public infrastructure, which will be private from now on. If we compare that to the \$15-billion federal infrastructure fund and the hundreds of billions the government hopes to attract, it becomes clear very quickly that the government is going to become a minority in its own regime and that our public infrastructure will be increasingly privatized. Private infrastructure automatically means additional taxes, user fees, tolls, and so on. Imagine all the systems needed to ensure good returns.

I was hoping to address a number of other topics, including EI. We have some interesting ideas on that, such as coming up with a better definition for “suitable employment”, although it is not clearly defined in the act. However, nothing has been done so far regarding accessibility.

I also would have liked to talk about SMEs. We are still waiting for support measures for them. Instead, a promise to lower the tax

rate from 11% to 9% has been broken. On top of that, nothing has been done to cap credit card rates and fees for our SMEs.

I will use the few minutes I have left to answer questions.

•(1135)

Mr. François-Philippe Champagne (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I had the pleasure of listening to the long speech given by my colleague from Trois-Rivières.

I would like to come back to the example that he gave, since there are people from the Mauricie and Trois-Rivières who are watching these proceedings.

People had a choice and they chose to vote for a government that invests in the middle class and Canadian families, a government whose budget implementation bill seeks to help young Canadians to succeed, improve employment insurance, improve our seniors' quality of life, support veterans, and strengthen fiscal integrity. That is why they voted for a Liberal government, our current Prime Minister's government.

I would like to ask the member for Trois-Rivières a few simple questions. Why is he against investing in Canadian families and our country's young people? Why is he against investing in our seniors and veterans? That is exactly what the budget implementation bill does. It invests in Canadians. Ambitious, confident countries invest, and that is exactly what we are doing. Why is he not in favour of that?

Mr. Robert Aubin: Madam Speaker, I will give an example which aptly demonstrates the dichotomy, or should I say the yawning abyss, between the message sent and the reality.

We come from the same region. People talk to me of the middle class, but the Liberals have now defined the middle class as people earning between \$45,000 and \$190,000, which does not apply whatsoever to the population of the Mauricie.

In Quebec, the median wage is \$31,500. In the Mauricie, the median wage is a tad below that. No one in the middle class has benefited from the government's income tax reductions, even though the government boasts of supporting the middle class. That is true of every example I could cite. But I will not cite them all, for I do not have enough time.

With regard to employment insurance and the support being offered to small business and individuals, there is an abyss between rhetoric and reality. It is for that reason that it will be an honour for me to vote against the bill.

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry—Suroît, NDP): Madam Speaker, I appreciated the speech by my colleague from Trois-Rivières, who points out a great many inconsistencies on the part of the government.

I will speak a little now about employment insurance. The people on an unemployment committee in my riding have told me that, with the application of the new rules, compassionate care benefits have increased from 26 weeks to 28 weeks. A sick person, however, can only receive 15 weeks of health insurance. That makes no sense.

Government Orders

Something else that makes no sense is the Social Security Tribunal of Canada, of which we have been critical for a very long time. New evidence can no longer be presented. The tribunal is used to review certain cases. However, people can no longer present new evidence or new facts.

What is more, a single judge represents both employer and worker. Before, there were three judges. What does my colleague think of this?

Mr. Robert Aubin: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her important question.

Every constituency office deals on a weekly basis with people grappling with employment insurance. All of the cases my colleague has mentioned have this in common: most of them will at least be eligible for employment insurance and will subsequently experience all of the problems associated with that. Most people are not yet eligible. That is the crux of the matter, the first thing that should be emphasized: how to set up measures that will make a plan accessible that is paid for by employers and employees. Fewer than four workers in 10 have access to EI when the worst thing that could happen, happens: they lose their job.

I would simply recall the notion of a universal 360-hour eligibility standard.

• (1140)

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, in his response to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, what the member did not allude to is the fact that we have the middle-class tax cut. We also have the increase in the GIS and the increase in the Canada child benefit tax-free portion, lifting thousands of vulnerable seniors out of poverty and thousands of children out of poverty. I wonder if the member might want to provide comment on that aspect of the budget.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Robert Aubin: Madam Speaker, once again, I could give plenty of examples, but I will only give one, that of the Canada child benefit. In theory this benefit was supposed to be more generous than the Conservatives' benefit.

I do some door-to-door in my riding, and people have very clearly understood that they are the ones paying for their benefit, which they will hand down from generation to generation. Since it will not be indexed until 2020, it will lose its value and revert to the equivalent of what we had previously.

[*English*]

Mr. Shaun Chen (Scarborough North, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am truly honoured and privileged to rise for the first time during debate here in the House of Commons on this traditional territory of the Algonquin peoples.

Allow me to begin by thanking the people of Scarborough North for continuing to put their faith and trust in me. It has been an incredible journey serving this community over the past 10 years, starting in 2006, when they first elected me as their public school board trustee. I am deeply humbled to now represent them in this House, where I will fight on their behalf each and every day.

The people of Scarborough North constitute a cultural mosaic in which visible minorities are the vast majority. More than 90% of the population are people of colour, which is the highest percentage of any riding in the country, and 70% of them were born outside of Canada. They have come from all corners of the world to make Scarborough North their home.

Indeed, this is the story of my parents, who emigrated from India to Canada over 40 years ago for a better life not only for themselves but for future generations. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their unconditional love and support. When I speak about the residents of Scarborough North, I am reminded of the hopes and dreams my parents brought with them to Canada.

My constituents are hard-working families. Many of them are new immigrants. They work long hours to pay rent or the mortgage, to put food on the table, and to provide a good life and education for their children. They are young Canadians who have studied hard, graduated, and are now looking for work. They are seniors who have worked hard their entire lives, contributed to society, and are now hoping to spend their retirement days in comfort.

Now more than ever, many people in Scarborough North, and across Canada, are finding it increasingly difficult to get ahead. That is why our government has focused our investing on our people to make their lives better and to build a country that works for everyone.

That is precisely why I stand today in support of Bill C-29, the budget implementation act, which would round out the measures our government introduced in the 2016 budget. This bill would help create a stronger economy by supporting the middle class and those working hard to join it. It would enable Canadian families to have more money in their pockets. It would create more opportunities for youth, give seniors a bit more assurance, and ensure tax fairness and a strong financial sector.

There is no better time than now to invest in Canadians. Interest rates are at historic lows, and Canada has the lowest debt-to-GDP ratio among the G7 nations.

At the heart of our country is the middle class. When the middle class has more money to save, invest, and grow the economy, all Canadians benefit.

One of the key measures our government introduced to help build the middle class is the Canada child benefit. As of last July, nine out of 10 Canadian families with children have more money each month to spend on the things they need, like school supplies, groceries, and winter jackets. What is so great about the new Canada child benefit is that it is not only more generous than previous programs but is also better targeted to help the families that need it the most. This new tax-free benefit will lift 300,000 children out of poverty this year by providing an annual benefit of up to \$6,400 per child under the age of six and \$5,400 per child aged six through 17. It will mean that Canadian families with children will see an average increase of approximately \$2,300 in child benefits this year.

Government Orders

This budget implementation bill would further help these families by ensuring that the Canada child benefit is indexed to inflation, starting in 2020. I know how important this is for Canadian families, having worked with many parents, children, and youth in my previous role as a school board trustee.

Our government is also working hard to set up young Canadians for success. This past summer, I witnessed first-hand how the 2016 budget is helping our youth gain valuable work experience, experience they need. In my riding of Scarborough North, close to 80 non-profit organizations, businesses, and faith groups received funding through the Canada summer jobs program to hire youth. All across Canada, twice as many young Canadians were employed this year through Canada summer youth jobs, earning income and experience that will help them land a good-paying job after graduation.

As caring and compassionate Canadians, it is important for us to empower the next generation but also for us to take care of older generations. That is why I am pleased to see that this budget implementation bill would help seniors by enabling them to retire more comfortably. Our elders have worked hard their entire lives. They deserve to be treated with the utmost respect and dignity.

• (1145)

[*Translation*]

In budget 2016, the government returned the age of eligibility for old age security and guaranteed income supplement benefits to 65 from 67, thereby putting thousands of dollars back in seniors' pockets. Since last July, 900,000 single seniors across Canada have enjoyed improved financial security thanks to a guaranteed income supplement top-up benefit of as much as \$947 per year.

[*English*]

It is the right thing to do because single seniors are especially vulnerable and have a much higher risk of living in poverty. This budget implementation bill would take it one step further by making benefits for seniors more flexible. For couples living apart due to extenuating circumstances, each senior would be entitled to the guaranteed income supplement and spousal allowance benefits based on their individual incomes. This measure, along with the changes our government has made to strengthen the Canada pension plan, will help our seniors live with dignity and respect. It is dignity and respect that they deserve.

This budget implement bill supports a plan to invest in Canadians not just for today but for the years and decades ahead. As we approach the 150th anniversary of Confederation, let us work together to build an even better Canada where all Canadians can flourish and find opportunities to achieve success.

Hope and hard work was not just the campaign slogan we ran on. Hope and hard work represent the values that have built this great nation, the true north strong and free. Let us create a climate of hope across this country, a land of opportunity, for every single person who works hard to make Canada a better place.

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member talked about the generous programs of the government, which it is basically financing with debt, large volumes of debt that will be paid for by future generations. This debt will have to be paid

by them through higher taxes. That is quite the legacy the government is leaving for our children, the next generation that comes after us, and probably our grandchildren.

The member talked about how we are going to help children in school. With his school board experience, it is interesting that the member also voted against Bill C-241, which was a private member's bill that would have helped school boards have an easier time paying the excise tax with a reduction.

On child poverty rates, the member must know that the Liberal record is quite terrible. Between 1993 and 2005-06, when the Liberals were in charge, child poverty rates stayed exactly the same. During the Conservative government's years, child poverty rates actually went down significantly. They went down from 14.7% for the last year figures are available. There was a nearly 2% difference from the start to the finish of the government's record. Why is the member voting for a budget that will basically leave future generations with huge amounts of debt and worse off—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member for Scarborough North.

• (1150)

Mr. Shaun Chen: Madam Speaker, to correct the record, I voted in favour of the private member's legislation on excise school taxes. Indeed, having sat on Canada's largest public school board and having been chair of that board, I know how important it is for us to ensure that our young people and children have a strong education system and have an opportunity to succeed. It is exactly why our government is working hard to support our children and the next generation of leaders in this country. Our Canada child benefit will lift 300,000 children out of poverty this year. That is what our government is doing to support our children to make sure they have a chance to succeed.

Mr. Kennedy Stewart (Burnaby South, NDP): Madam Speaker, I was wondering why the member is in favour of using public funds to give to foreign companies so they can then privatize public infrastructure. I am wondering about the logic behind his supporting this measure.

Mr. Shaun Chen: Madam Speaker, our government is making historic investments. We are investing nearly \$12 billion in new funding. This money will go to help build bridges and create new roads. It will link our communities together, building bridges between people all across our great country, from coast to coast to coast.

Not only will this money be used to support child care centres and social infrastructure, but it will also create cultural and recreational facilities. These facilities are much needed and will only serve to generate an even better economy as we invest now for the betterment of our future as Canadians.

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Madam Speaker, I certainly appreciate the member's contribution to this debate. He is a very eloquent speaker.

However, he does bring new meaning to “the silent majority”. We hear from the parliamentary secretary to government House leader on a regular basis, yet this is the first opportunity for this member. It has been over a year since he was elected.

Government Orders

How will the member feel when his constituents find out that after he has had a whole year to be part of the discussion in this place, this is the first time he has given a speech in the House? I ask this because all of us are accountable to our constituents. I mean him no personal ill will, but I would like to hear the answer to that.

Mr. Shaun Chen: Madam Speaker, I have had the incredible privilege of serving in the House and of working hard on behalf of my constituents each and every day. Whether it is holding consultations in my riding or hosting pre-budget consultations with MPs across our Scarborough region, I have been working hard to ensure that the voices of the people I represent are heard.

I have had the incredible opportunity to speak many times in the House on important issues, for example, to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Scarborough Gurdwara in my riding, and to talk about how I accompanied our Prime Minister on his official visit to China.

Each and every day, I feel proud and privileged to represent the people who elected me.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Before we resume debate, I want to remind a few members, only because it appeared there was some question as to how I had allocated the questions.

I just want to remind members that on November 3, the Deputy Speaker did raise this. He said:

...we recognize that the time for questions and comments is often the most valuable time for an exchange between members. In accordance with the procedures and practices, we will do our best to ensure that time is generally afforded to the members of the parties who are not associated with the member who has just spoke but not to the exclusion of that party.

That is the way we will do it. We will also be attentive to members who are particularly present during the day and paying attention to the debate to ensure that as many members as possible can participate during questions and comments.

Again, I want to indicate that this has had a bit of a change, but it is to allow full debate so when a member gives a speech, the questions and comments will mostly come from the other parties.

Resuming debate, the member for Central Okanagan—Similkameen.

• (1155)

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is a great honour to rise in this place and speak on behalf of my constituents.

While in the riding this past weekend, I was fortunate to meet many citizens of Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola and hear first hand their concerns. To be candid, while many appreciate the new tone in Ottawa, they are increasingly losing confidence in the direction. Let me explain that.

Every member in this place knows full well that economic growth continues to be downgraded, much as we also know there are no promised net new jobs. Keep in mind that these facts are irrefutably true.

We also know the Liberal government has basically pulled an Evel Knievel and jumped over all the promises of modest \$10 billion a year deficit budgets. The same Liberal government has pulled off a four horsemen magic performance and turned a promised \$10 billion

modest deficit budget into a \$25 billion budget, with no end in sight for red ink. While turning that \$10 billion promised deficit budget into a \$25 billion deficit budget, the Liberals also made their promise of a return to a balanced budget in the 2019-20 fiscal year. That has magically vanished as well.

As citizens told me last week, they have not felt this betrayed since the Liberals originally promised, if elected, they would eliminate the GST in the 1990s. How did that Liberal red book promise turn out? We all know, but why does that matter?

If we look at the 2013-14 fiscal year, the federal government spent \$28 billion servicing debt. Let us put that \$28 billion into perspective. That is more than was spent on national defence that year, at \$21.5 billion. In fact, that same year the federal government spent over \$30 billion on the Canada health transfers to provinces. In other words, we are spending almost as much servicing debt as we are transferring to provinces to pay for their health care.

Let us be clear. The Liberal budget in Bill C-29 sets a series of deficit budgets that will exceed \$113 billion by 2021. There is no path to a balanced budget despite Liberal election promises to the contrary.

We heard from people at finance committee during the pre-budget consultation process. For example, the Chamber of Commerce for Metropolitan Montreal said that it was a credibility issue for the government and for the finance minister. It said that a return to balance had to be a part of the budget.

When and exactly how does the Liberal government propose to reconcile the obvious? How do we return to balance? We all know the Liberals have no answer to this question. What we do know is that the Liberals like using buzz words. Debt is now called “investing”. Deficits, interestingly enough in Liberal speak, are also called “investing”. I suspect if the Liberals offered a VISA card instead of a credit limit, we would see an investment limit on our credit card bills. Canadians know there is interest on debt and so far we have yet to hear what the translation for interest on debt is in Liberal speak. Perhaps it could be called “a price on investing”.

Now the infrastructure bank is coming. Is this directly related to the bill? We do not know. The bill hints about all kinds of spending on infrastructure, yet \$35 billion, about the same amount as annual health transfers to provinces, is being carved away from somewhere for this infrastructure bank.

Government Orders

P3 partnerships used to mean that the private sector would borrow money to finance public infrastructure in partnership with the government, all done with private capital. Now the Liberal government wants to borrow money it does not have to ensure private capital receives a generous rate of return to finance public infrastructure. What do we call that? The borrow low to pay high interest plan. This week the Liberal government is promoting a plan where, according to Liberals, for every \$1 that the government puts in, borrowed, it hopes to attract \$4 in private money in return.

• (1200)

Let us think about that for a moment. Where else on the planet does anyone borrow \$1 and get \$4 of private money lent to them in return? It seems the Liberal government has taken a page from the four horsemen. There is only one problem with turning \$1 of borrowed money into \$4 of private sector investment. Private sector investment requires a return. Not even the four horsemen can change that.

Exactly what level of return to private investors has the Liberals promised to their Bay Street friends? We do not know. So far, I have yet to see any rate of return being promised. However, we should make no mistake that it is the taxpayers who will be paying. When? We do not know. The Liberal budget implementation act enacts a cone of silence on returning to a balanced budget. The only thing we do know is that the billions of soon to be added debt will now be financed by Liberal friends with interest paid by Canadian taxpayers.

After one year, we already know the Liberal plan is failing. Economic growth has been downgraded. We just have to ask the Parliamentary Budget Office or the Governor of the Bank of Canada. There are no new net jobs. What is worse that the Liberal changes to mortgages will hurt the housing market.

We know from internal finance reports that the expanded Canada pension plan will be a drag on the Canadian economy and will particularly hurt jobs for the next 15 to 20 years.

Let us keep in mind that this is not just speculation by me. All of this is factually verifiable. The Liberal solution is to borrow more money and throw more money at this failed plan. I am not trying to sound partisan, however, that is really what is on the table and why I am opposing the budget implementation bill.

I would also pause for a moment to point out that it is easy to criticize, more so at the present time given that the PBO, major bank economists and Statistics Canada all provide data and reports that easily show this Liberal plan is failing, and failing badly.

What should the government do? First, members should raise their hands if they think an MP or anyone earning up to \$199,000 a year should have a tax cut? The Liberals are wrong to do this. What should have been done instead? Instead of penalizing potential homebuyers in all of Canada for a problem that existed largely in the Liberal strongholds of Vancouver and Toronto, and keep in mind that recent B.C. government changes to foreign buyers was already cooling off the Vancouver housing market, the Liberal government should be implementing measures that would help to increase housing supply across the country.

Increasing housing supply will lower prices. It will get more Canadians into home ownership, which in turn opens more rentals to

ease the demand for rental accommodations. More important, it also helps our Canadian economy. It will put more people to work and it will help the Canadian lumber market as well. That is very important considering the Liberals have made zero progress on the softwood lumber deal with the United States.

How could Ottawa help to catalyze housing supply? By increasing the threshold for the GST rebate on new housing, so new homeowners are not penalized by Ottawa for realizing their dream to own a home. The B.C. government is already doing this with the property purchase tax, and it is working. It is time that Ottawa stepped up and did the same.

This policy would not only help our economy at a time of desperate need; it would also help the very middle-class Canadians who have become the Liberal government's second favourite talking point right behind debt—sorry, I mean investing. That is one idea that I would propose the Liberal government could do in the budget implementation bill to help.

I have one final thought. If more Canadians were homeowners and had home equity, the Liberals might realize that harming jobs and our economy through a bigger CPP is the wrong way to go. There is already an alternative that will help jobs and our economy through enhanced home ownership.

I have other proposals as well. We also know the Liberals have no interest in imposing internal trade on Canadian provinces. They would much rather impose a national carbon tax. On that note, I would simply point out that none of our major trading partners will be imposing such a tax. All those same trading partners have superior internal trading policies of their own, something we should all be thinking about if we are serious about growing the economy.

I am thankful for the opportunity to not just oppose this bill, but to make a few proposals on how I believe we can strengthen our economy and increase the unity of our country.

• (1205)

Mr. François-Philippe Champagne (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the member knows the enormous respect I have for him, because he sits on the finance committee with us. I respect him not only for that but also for the perspective he brings to the debate. However, instead of trying to sound partisan, which obviously he was, he sounds very much out of touch with Canadians and the world. I would just like to remind him that the plan we have put forward is a plan to invest in Canadian families, the Canadian middle class, and infrastructure. That is what ambitious and confident nations are doing today.

Government Orders

I would like to remind the member, because I know he is very studied on this issue, that the IMF director said just recently that she hopes the plan Canada has put forward for the middle class, for Canadian families, and for infrastructure goes viral around the world. Not only is it good for Canada, but it would be good for the world.

Therefore, I would like to ask why the member voted against cutting taxes for the middle class. Why would he be against improving employment insurance for the same constituents whom he represents and for whom he says he is working? Why would he not support our Canadian veterans? Those are the measures in the budget implementation act that we are talking about. We are not talking about the infrastructure bit, on which I am quite happy to answer questions, but we are talking now about measures that would make a difference for Canadians today. These are measures that would help our youth, our veterans, and our seniors. I cannot understand why, today, when he saw the things in our budget, he would vote against implementing those same measures that would help the people in his riding.

Mr. Dan Albas: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member opposite for his contributions. He says I am out of touch with Canadians. I talk to my constituents and I make sure my priorities align with theirs.

I would also just remind the member that he is actually not a member of the finance committee. It was his own government that said it would keep the two separate, yet he acts as if he were a member. While I value his contributions at committee, he is not a member.

I do not know where to go with that, other than to say that if we can all agree that economic growth is important and the government should have a plan, as previous administrations have had, then let us put that plan to the test. We see economic growth downgraded. We see no net new jobs, despite what was in the budget. To me, the importance of a plan is not just in having a plan. It is in the execution of said plan to the benefit of all Canadians. That is where the member and his government fall short.

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the opportunity to share two quotes with the House.

[Time allocation]...is not only preventing business and debate in this [House], but...hurting the ability of committees to do their work.

Who said that? It was the Liberal member for Malpeque.

[Time allocation] is undemocratic and a type of abuse, as a rule, of the House of Commons....

Who said that? It was the Liberal member for Winnipeg North.

I would like to ask my colleague why Liberals always change their minds once they are in power.

Mr. Dan Albas: Mr. Speaker, that is such a nice, easy, softball question for me. I appreciate where the member is coming from. I will say that things like time allocation are helpful tools. In the previous Parliament, I supported the government because it had a plan and it wanted to implement those measures to the benefit of the economy, and it got results.

Unfortunately, this government chooses to say one thing during election. The House leader said today that she loves to build

consensus, yet despite legitimate concerns of members such as him and our own House leader, that was thrown aside in favour of the majority bulldozer that the government has chosen.

It is the difference between what they say and what they do. They say during the election they have a plan that will work. Then we find out that it is coming off the rails. We find that now, suddenly, they have to invest in ideas like an infrastructure bank when no one understands what exactly it will do, and conveniently, it will take five years for a new crown corporation to get set up with full policies and to implement those policies. Therefore, the public will not be able to judge if they are actually good managers of it.

It is important to point out that what the government says and what it does are two different things. Members across the way would do well to take a hard look in the mirror and ask themselves if that is okay.

• (1210)

Mr. François-Philippe Champagne (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, before I start my speech, I would say for the member who just spoke that he should be happy to vote in favour of this bill, because actually, we are sending the bill to the same committee of which he is a proud member, the finance committee. Therefore, he should be happy that he will have the chance to look at the bill in detail, and I hope he will invite his constituents to share their perspective on the great things we are doing for Canadians.

[*Translation*]

I will now speak of the matter before us today. My colleagues have spoken at length about the Canada infrastructure bank, but what we are talking about is very simple: implementing the plan we have proposed to help Canadians and Canadian families. This is the plan to help the middle class, to help families, and to invest in our infrastructures.

It is also a plan to help young Canadians succeed, and to improve employment insurance and our seniors' quality of life. This plan also supports our veterans, and it will bolster our fiscal integrity. I hope that all of my colleagues will be able to vote in favour of this bill and send it to committee, because it is a plan for Canadians.

I am pleased to have the opportunity today to speak about part 2 of the budget implementation act. As the House knows, the government has an ambitious plan to ensure the growth of the middle class, and with it, the growth of the country's entire population.

Canada was the first country to act on the idea of focusing on the progress of the middle class in order to spur growth across the entire country. We understand that when the middle class is thriving, the whole country thrives.

Government Orders

We have received major support from all over the world for the measures we have taken. The *Financial Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and the managing director of the IMF, Ms. Lagarde, cite Canada as a model to be followed for its capacity to utilize every possible lever to generate growth. I am sure that my colleagues in the House today will want to support a bill that generates economic growth.

The government of Canada is resolved to pursue its economic agenda centred on the middle class and on Canadian families. Since November, our government has taken concrete steps to support the middle class and so make our economy grow.

That is why we have taken measures to support the middle class. The first thing we have proposed is an income tax reduction for the middle class. Nine million Canadians are in fact paying less tax today thanks to this government, which has adopted this initial key measure.

Next we introduced the Canada child benefit. I would say that this is probably one of the measures of which my colleagues and I are most proud. It is probably the most innovative social measure since universal health care. It is a measure that helps reduce child poverty. Indeed, it may be possible to lift 300,000 young people out of poverty.

When we visit ridings and talk to people, we realize the extent to which this sort of measure, which helps our youth succeed and emerge from poverty, creates a profound transformation in our society in terms of the fight against poverty.

In addition, we have increased the guaranteed income supplement for nearly one million seniors living alone. Often our single seniors are women. People have talked to me about this situation.

At the time of the last budget framework, I had the opportunity to travel from Moncton to Yellowknife to consult with Canadians. People talked to me about these measures that would help them. They asked us for two very simple things, namely that we help them and their families, and that we help the middle class grow. That is exactly what these measures have done.

Next we managed to conclude an historic agreement with the Canadian provinces to top up the Canada pension plan, because this finance minister is someone who looks to the long term. He is someone who looks ahead, who knows that we have to make some changes now to help young Canadians prepare for their retirement. We know that today some 2.3 million Canadian families are not saving enough for retirement, and we want to give them the tools they need to live with dignity in their retirement. That is important to us.

Now I want to talk about the plan for the Canada child benefit.

● (1215)

As you know, Mr. Speaker, even in your riding Canadian families have been receiving more money since July 1 thanks to the Canada child benefit. They are receiving up to \$6,400 a year for each child under age six and \$5,400 for each child between 6 and 17. Nine families in ten have seen their benefits go up. This is an outstanding measure for reducing poverty in the country.

The 2016 budget implementation act no. 2 also strengthens the Canada child benefit by indexing it to inflation. This government has a long-term vision and is making sure that families can count on supplemental assistance today and for many years.

Canadians also need to feel supported and protected once they have taken their retirement. That is precisely the aim of the Liberal government's plan. This plan helps people at every stage of their lives. We have talked about measures for youth, for families, and for pensioners. We have decided to invest so as to ensure that people who are retiring can have more money in their pockets.

In 2014, the latest year for which data have been collected, 3.9% of senior citizens in Canada, or about 200,000 of them, were living below Statistics Canada's poverty line. Nearly 80% of these low-income seniors, a large majority, are single, and most of them are women. This is why we have also increased the guaranteed income supplement for low-income single seniors by \$947 a year. It is one of a series of measures aimed at investing in the middle class, because it is the right thing to do.

I would like to return to comments made some of my colleagues. They have talked a great deal about the Canada infrastructure bank. That is another important measure that will enable us to do more and do it faster. However, that is not the purpose of budget implementation act, 2016, no. 2. That is a measure we announced in the 2016 fall economic statement, but that is not what we are talking about.

Since my colleagues said that they needed to express their views, that they were commenting on the measures intended to improve the lives of Canadians, such as the legislative measures we have just taken on employment insurance, I would like to hear their views on this. Why are they opposed to measures that will give more people access to employment insurance?

I would also like them to talk about the increase in benefits for senior citizens. I am sure that seniors in my colleagues' ridings are talking to them about this important measure.

In addition, I would like to hear their views on the measures in this bill to assist veterans. We all care about helping and respecting veterans, and there are specific measures on this in budget implementation act, 2016, no. 2.

I would also like to hear my colleagues' views on the integrity of the tax system. My colleagues are wondering about many things on this issue, and rightly so. Well, budget implementation act, 2016, no. 2 in fact contains measures to strengthen the integrity of Canada's tax system.

My colleagues must realize that these measures will help Canadian middle-class families and provide for more fairness. I am sure that this is exactly what my colleagues want: to foster prosperity at home, to provide financial security for families, and to allow senior citizens, as well as young people, eventually, to retire with dignity.

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All these measures are improving the living conditions of Canadians. Every one of us is here, in Ottawa, today, working on their behalf. That is exactly what the budget implementation bill does. It helps families and middle-class people and invests in infrastructure.

[English]

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have listened intently to the last few speakers and tried a couple of times to ask a question. I appreciate being recognized and allowed to ask a question, though I know I have a short period of time for that.

The Liberals would like us to believe that this is a plan for our future and our youth. We heard the House leader say earlier that, indeed, the youth are our leaders of tomorrow. The Liberals would be taxing our youth. They are putting high debt on the backs of our youth, who will be future leaders. Honestly, a future of high debt, high taxes, and no jobs would do nothing and does not sound like a bright future to me.

The hon. parliamentary secretary said Canadians are questioning the government's tax program. No, Canadians are questioning the integrity of the government, because it told us one thing, did another thing, and is now putting closure on debate and not allowing the 338 members of Parliament, who were elected to be the voices of Canadians from coast to coast to coast, to have a voice. The government is not spending its own money. It is not the government's money; it is Canadians' money. The transformational infrastructure spending is less than 7% of overall debt that the government is projecting.

I would ask my hon. colleague this question. Is limiting debate and forcing closure truly open and transparent?

• (1220)

Mr. François-Philippe Champagne: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question by the member because it allows me to explain the process. People at home are listening to the debate.

We are saying that we want to send this bill to committee so that the member and his constituents can be heard. We want to listen to Canadians. That is being transparent and open. We want to listen. We are just sending the bill to committee. It will come back to the chamber at third reading. However, let me be more precise.

Members have been talking in general, but let me say what this bill would do. I am sure the member has people in his riding who will benefit from improved employment insurance. Let me say what this bill would do. It would change the eligibility rules, which would make it easier for new workers and those re-entering the workforce to claim benefits.

Let us look at veterans. I am sure the member has veterans in his riding. What would this bill do? It would help Canada's veterans. They would receive more local in-person government services, as well as better access to case managers.

Let me talk about tax fairness, because I am sure his constituents are very concerned about that. What would this bill do? The government would invest in effective administration and enforce-

ment of the tax law and would propose actions to improve the integrity of the Canada tax system. This is what we are talking about.

Those measures would help people in my riding and his riding. They would help Canadians. That is what Canadians voted for and that is what we are delivering.

[Translation]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have listened carefully to my colleague's speech.

Unfortunately, the first thing that comes to mind is Jacques Dutronc's song *The Opportunist*.

There are those who do contest, who make demands and who protest
There's just one thing I always do: I change my tune

Only a short while ago, the Liberals were getting all worked up and finding it incomprehensible that a guillotine would be imposed and a House majority would be used to limit debate and discussion between parliamentarians. Surprise, surprise! Now that they are in power, the Liberals are back to their old tricks; they are changing their tune and doing exactly what they condemned.

What is my colleague the parliamentary secretary afraid of? Why can we not take the time to discuss the budget implementation bill in depth and find all its flaws, like the privatization of our public services and infrastructure and the forsaking of all those who do not earn \$45,000 a year and do not benefit from the Liberals' tax reduction measures, in contrast to what they said in the election?

Mr. François-Philippe Champagne: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question and his prose. He is a man of economy, but I know that he is also a man of letters, who has spoken to us about prose.

That said, I would like to remind him of the facts. I hope his constituents are listening to us, because if the member votes against budget implementation act, 2016, no. 2, he will be voting against reducing income taxes for the middle class, against measures that will help young Canadians succeed and against improving EI.

I know, because I know the member, that an issue of great interest to him is the improvement of Canada's employment insurance system. I also know that the member would like to support a government that intends to improve the quality of life of senior citizens and veterans, because I have often heard him ask questions about that.

Why not do so today? Why not support measures that will help the middle class—

• (1225)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Order.

Resuming debate. The hon. member for Calgary Shepard.

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[English]

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be joining this debate on what is now the amendment to the amendment of the bill. Sadly, this will be the last day, so I am lucky to be getting a chance to get up and speak in the House. I will probably not get a chance to speak at committee, although the Liberals are saying that it will be a great opportunity for all of us to go there to participate. But I do not think they are expecting all 337 of us to show up at the committee and all ask to speak, and talk to the witnesses and have an opportunity to debate the contents of this bill. I doubt the Liberals are expecting all of us to be there. I would like to see that, as it would be an interesting committee meeting to have all 300-plus members there. I think the best place to have a debate is right here at second reading, so we can have a fulsome debate by all of my colleagues from different political parties, with an opportunity to have their voices and those of their constituents heard.

I would like to thank my seatmate, the member for Calgary Signal Hill, for this opportunity and for moving a subamendment that would add the words “a stagnant economy” after “exemplified by”. On that concept of a stagnant economy, what is happening in Alberta is the direct result of the economic policies of the current federal Liberal government and the provincial Notley New Democratic government. What was a commodity downturn has been turned into a full-blown recession. Although there are hints of a possible recovery, I just do not trust the government to have the best interests of Albertans in mind when it is making policy decisions that will have an influence over that.

Indeed, what we have here is a wholly owned Liberal stagnant economy. The biggest benefit from the Liberals so far today is the so-called middle-income tax cut, which they know would benefit those earning over \$100,000 because those are the individuals who will take full advantage of this tax cut. For those people earning just over \$45,000 and up to \$95,563, they will be able to save a few dollars at most from this, whereas those earning more, including the members of the House, will be able to save all of those dollars.

The Liberals on the other side took away the children's fitness tax credit; they cut in half the TFSA; and they took away many of the other tax credits that the working class and the working poor were taking advantage of. The Liberals are going to make it more difficult for those people to earn a living. To earn a living, they have to have a job as well. They could find a job working on behalf of someone else or for themselves as small business owners. Then small business owners are hoping that they will be able to earn a profit and provide for their family and pay their workers.

Talking about small business, one thing I want to mention is the common reporting standards in the budget, which would have a severe impact on small credit unions. Alberta has a thriving credit union sector for many generations. The credit unions have been contributing especially to rural Alberta, but also to Calgary and Edmonton's economies. During the downturns of the 1980s when the big chartered banks were refusing to turn over mortgages and extend lines of credit to Albertans, it was the credit union sector that filled the gap and helped Albertans keep their farms and their homes. With the common reporting standard, it is one size fits all. That simply does not work for smaller credit unions that do not have the means to comply. But the current government loves one size fits all.

I have a couple of examples to demonstrate this. We have heard from the government that it will be imposing a one-size-fits-all carbon tax across every single province. Whether a province likes it or not, it really will not matter, because they will have to live with the carbon tax.

There are provinces like Saskatchewan, which has a great premier, Brad Wall, who is fighting to ensure that the people of Saskatchewan will not have to pay the tax, because the province has made a policy decision repeatedly during elections not to go down that path.

Then there are governments like Alberta's, which already had a carbon levy and is introducing a carbon tax on January 1. It is something that the vast majority of Albertans do not want, including the vast majority of Alberta business owners. But the Liberals have said that if the provinces do not do it, the federal government will impose it. Hopefully we will change provincial governments in 2019, and hopefully it will be a former member of this House, Jason Kenney, who will be leading that political party to victory in 2019. Even if provincial governments say they do not want a carbon tax provincially, the federal government will impose one with that one-size-fits-all mentality.

On the Canada health transfer negotiations, again the government has said that one size fits all and that the provinces will get what they will get. No negotiations are going to happen. There is no give and take. It is one size fits all.

• (1230)

On the CPP or Canada pension plan premium increase, which basically is a payroll tax, the government has again said that one size fits all. It does not matter what type of seniors they are. It does not matter how they are trying to save for their future. It does not matter what choices they have made in terms of income, career, or moving around the country. None of that matters to the government. It is one size fits all for everyone.

The government has been talking about how it will help seniors. The premium increase will not help seniors immediately because CPP works in a very particular way, like any pension plan, which is that we make an investment into it, we put a certain amount of premiums into it, and 40 years down the line, our investments then return as a pension to us. The seniors of today will gain no new benefits. They cannot. They have to pay into it.

Unless the government amends this budget bill or introduces another budget bill at some point, what they are saying is that it will simply increase unpaid benefits to someone who has not invested into it. For the younger generation especially, my generation, the CPP is not a great return on investment. I can make real estate investment decisions, I can use my TFSA. Many young people I know are making those types of decisions and planning for their own retirement. They are being responsible with their own savings. This will take away the opportunity to choose the types of savings they want to make and the investment vehicles they want to have, and it will give all of these decisions to the government.

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We have an inkling as to why the government is doing this. It is potentially this infrastructure bank that it wants to use to finance large infrastructure projects. However, will it be touching CPP money to make it happen? Is that why it is increasing all of our premiums? It is just an extra tax that businesses will have to pay, which they cannot afford at this time, especially in Alberta.

Here I will cite the Human Resources Institute of Alberta quarterly report, which track things among the 6,000 HR professionals across the province of Alberta. It tracks how people are losing their jobs and why they are leaving the workplace.

For the longest time, dating back 2013-14, the leading reason for losing a job or moving on from a workplace was resignation for a better opportunity, which simply reflects an economy that had surplus job vacancies and people who were taking advantage of that and hopping between jobs, earning better pay, perhaps better benefits, and perhaps more flexible hours. They were taking that opportunity to better their careers, to grow their personal human capital.

However, today, thanks to the decisions of the federal Liberal government and the provincial New Democratic government, we have termination without cause all across the board. Whether employees, executive managers, professionals, technical staff, tradespeople, or administrative support staff, across the board, termination without cause is the leading reason they are leaving their workplaces.

I have heard members talk about infrastructure spending, which is something I had corrected the parliamentary secretary to House leader on in a prior debate. When the Liberals were in power many years ago, over the entire time they were in office, they only invested \$351 million in Alberta. That is a pittance, really. There was even a year when they invested exactly zero infrastructure dollars. The past Conservative government, in contrast, invested \$3.4 billion in Alberta, in things like highways and economic infrastructure, the things that would grow the economy, not only social infrastructure, which is spending that would probably be wasted.

The economy of Alberta is stagnant, as the subamendment of my colleague alludes to, an economy with 122,000 out-of-work energy workers. The Calgary unemployment rate is just over 10%, or 10.2%. The Calgary vacancy rate for downtown lease space is going up to 30%. That does not even capture the true depth of how bad things are, because there are so many leases with no sublease opportunities. There are leaseholders paying full price to occupy buildings that no one wants to occupy. It just gets worse from there. The unemployment rate has increased over the past year by 1.9 percentage points province-wide. It is not just the story of Calgary suffering, but Edmonton and the rural areas as well. Out-migration is increasing. Alberta used to be a place where 30,000 people per year were moving to for work. Now we have this number dropping precipitously. Retail sales are down 3.9%. Cattle prices are down 25%. Electricity generation is down 10%, which is a great indicator of how much manufacturing is going on, how much usage there is, and thus economic activity.

I will be voting against this bill with a clear conscience. There is very little for Albertans in this. There is no pipeline approval in this budget. There is nothing for the Trans Mountain pipeline in this

budget. There is nothing laying the groundwork for economic recovery in Alberta, which Alberta workers, energy workers in particular, need. That is what I am looking for from the government.

I do not see it in the budget, and I will be voting against it.

● (1235)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I am going to pick up on the points that relate to the carbon tax.

When putting a price on carbon across the country for business certainty, it is very important that there be the same price on carbon across the country. The use of the term “one-size-fits-all” actually does not fit the facts. Every province can design their own. Quebec and Ontario have already decided to work on a cap-and-trade market with California.

That is distinctly different from British Columbia's carbon tax, which is a straight-up tax at the pump, but revenue neutral. All British Columbians, such as myself, will get back in their taxes what they pay in carbon prices.

The structure of the carbon price that was announced by the Prime Minister, and I have problems with it but not the same ones the hon. member does, allows that for any province that has not put in place a price, the federal government will. However, all the money will be returned to that province.

I note, and congratulate, a member of the Conservative caucus in the leadership race, the hon. member for Wellington—Halton Hills. He called for a much steeper carbon price than that being put forward by the Liberal government, but with a very important distinction that it would also result in deep cuts in income and corporate taxes. He was recently commended for this in the pages of the *National Post* by Andrew Coyne.

Could the hon. member take off the assumption that carbon taxes are somehow always bad and look at it as a pricing mechanism to internalize externalities in the economy, which is ultimately correcting a market failure and not a partisan issue?

Mr. Tom Kmiec: Mr. Speaker, I will say I support a carbon tax if it is 0% collected and 0% levied. Basically, no carbon tax is the only one I will accept.

We are an export-driven economy, and when I look at the markets that we compete against internationally, none of them are really moving full hog towards a carbon tax. We have President-elect Trump who has basically said he has no interest in keeping the COP21 targets. There will be no carbon tax there. He loves it, because there will be more manufacturing jobs in the United States and more energy jobs in the United States if we impose it on ourselves.

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We know that GHG emissions, carbon emissions have gone up in British Columbia, despite there being a carbon tax. It does very little. We cannot simply raise the carbon tax in one area and not in another. That is called carbon displacement. We will have energy-intensive industries moving to other locations. We have talked about value upgrading, refining upgrading for energy products, but that is a very carbon-intensive industry sector.

I have heard that member asking before why we do not do more value upgrading, refining, but in truth it would actually increase carbon emissions, not decrease carbon emissions.

When I look at this, I ask, "What is in this for Albertans?" All I see is another tax and another way of taking their money away, instead of them using it for themselves.

Mr. Kennedy Stewart (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to my colleague's speech.

Since we are talking about pipelines, and he was talking about pipelines in his speech, I wonder if the member could define for me what he understands the word "consent" to mean.

Mr. Tom Kmiec: Mr. Speaker, the member's question is very short and is more of a philosophical question. I will not answer it directly, but maybe we could have a conversation offside about it.

I have said in this House before that I have been a big promoter of all pipeline projects across Canada, as long as they go through the regulatory process as it is supposed to be done, without protestors intervening in panel meetings, without people trying to actively undermine the process that was established by law.

We believe in a society's rule of law. We should let the law take its place, and then decisions be made by the regulatory bodies that have been given the authority to render a decision and then by cabinet for approval.

I know Albertans are expecting to see every single pipeline project approved, one after another, once they go through the regulatory process, with the conditions that the regulator deems necessary.

Ms. Yasmin Ratansi (Don Valley East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise and speak on Bill C-29, the budget implementation bill.

As we all know, the Budget Implementation Act provides the legislative framework to implement the key campaign promises that were reiterated in budget 2016. In this bill, our key focus is to grow the economy by investing in people through tax cuts, as well as investing in the environment.

For the past 10 years, there has been no growth. The economy was lethargic, because the previous government did not take measures to invest in the economy. It made a lot of announcements and spent millions of dollars on advertising but not on people. Our government is more focused on investing in people and in helping to grow the middle class.

We know that middle-class Canadians are working harder than ever, but they are not getting ahead. We know that there is a growing consensus globally that governments need to invest in the economy, and that this investment has to be on a long-term basis and not short term. Therefore, to grow the economy, we need an ambitious agenda and an innovative agenda, which is the focus of our government. If

we wish to move forward and not be stagnant, we need to think outside the box.

A strong economy starts with a strong middle class. When the middle class grows, so does the economy, because there is more purchasing power, and more money to save and invest. For example, in my riding of Don Valley East, our government's budget has had a great impact on the constituents. The riding is primarily a middle-class riding. Youth unemployment is above the national average. Our government's tax cuts have helped 90% of my constituents. This has put more money in their pockets. In my riding, I have seen a renewed sense of hope.

Families with children have also benefited from our government's Canada child benefit. This has alleviated the poverty level for nine out of 10 families in the riding. We know how expensive raising a child is. Families work hard to provide for their children. Our government's Canada child benefit program has been a welcomed impetus for these families.

As well, in the area of youth unemployment, we doubled our investment in the Canada summer jobs program. In my riding of Don Valley East, 66 businesses employed over 234 students. This was very important for these students, because it provided them with the skill sets and resources to help them through their university years.

While we are talking about employment and the area of creating jobs for the future, our government has been bold in not only taking steps to invest in infrastructure, but working with provinces and municipalities to help them address the issues of falling bridges, tracks, bicycle paths, walking trails, switches, etc. These were neglected by the former government, because it never participated or talked to the provinces or municipalities.

These are important first steps. In my riding, I have seen that there is an investment of over \$125,000 in walking trails and paths. How does that benefit the residents? It benefits the citizens, because it is an area where people walk and build healthy lifestyles. As well, we help the environment.

Also in my riding are engines of growth, which have benefited from our government's innovation agenda. The companies in my riding have been able to create over 100 good-paying jobs for young professionals.

● (1240)

Confident, ambitious countries invest in their own future. They invest where the economy is growing. They do not shy away from progress. This type of progress is not easy. It takes smart investments in infrastructure, in technology, and most important, in the skills and creativity of its people.

Our government has taken that bold step. We have worked with provinces. We have worked with municipalities. We have invested where there are shovels in the ground, when municipalities have come as our partners, when provinces have come as our partners, and we are seeking to expand that pool as well.

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Through our budget implementation bill, Bill C-29, that is what we are doing. We are moving forward. We are thinking outside the box. I would urge members opposite to participate in this bold, innovative agenda.

● (1245)

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, perhaps my hon. colleague's memory has failed her, because clearly she did not want to mislead Canadians with her comments, but under the governance of the previous government, we cut GST from 7% to 5%. We had the best job creation and economic growth in the G7 over the decade that our Conservative government was in power.

It goes beyond that. That came at a time when the world was seeing one of the worst global recessions since the 1930s, the Great Depression, and our government did that. How did we do that? By strong fiscal management.

The government continues to talk about strong investment. I might add that the Conservatives removed 380,000 seniors from tax rolls completely. When we talk about things that have measurable impacts, our government did that over a decade of governance.

The present government is spending billions and billions of dollars. In my riding of Cariboo—Prince George, we are a resource-driven economy. Canada is a resource-driven economy, but the government has failed to renegotiate a new softwood lumber agreement. There are communities in my riding that are facing some serious times, and the budget, the bill we are debating today, does nothing to get people back to work.

It is great that the government is putting more money in EI, but Canadians need jobs. They do not want to be reliant on the government. They need jobs to be successful.

I ask my hon. colleague to show me in the budget, in the bill, where the budget will create jobs in my riding of Cariboo—Prince George, which is resource-driven. High-speed transit does nothing for my riding.

Ms. Yasmin Ratansi: Mr. Speaker, let me remind the hon. member of a little bit of history. When our government, the Martin-Chrétien government, took over, we took over a bankrupt country. The Conservatives had left it bankrupt. We left them with a \$13-billion surplus. What did they do with it? Economists called Mr. Harper the worst economic manager. GST is a regressive tax. They took boutique tax cuts without creating any jobs.

We do not need to learn any lessons from them because there they were stagnant, they were inward looking, and they put more money into advertising and in building gazebos instead of people.

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there are certainly measures in the budget bill that I support, that our party supports, and the community supports.

I would appreciate getting the member's feedback on some of the community-oriented disappointments that I have heard. One is the Liberal failure to reduce the small business tax cuts to 9% as they indicated in their election platform that they would. That has an impact on local spending and on job creation.

We are disappointed that there are no child care spaces created with the bill, disappointed that the value of the new child benefit tax is eroded over four years, taking a significant amount of money out of family pockets in year four, compared to the first year. There was a failure to close the stock option loophole for the wealthiest CEOs. Right from the municipalities, there was a great disappointment that the newly announced privatization bank will actually take money away from the pool that municipalities would have been able to draw directly on.

Those are all immediate impacts. They affect the environment, family, and the economy. I would like to know if the member shares my concern that the budget does not live up to those promises.

● (1250)

Ms. Yasmin Ratansi: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for her questions and for her concerns. In my riding, I have held more than 21 coffee meet and greets and town hall meetings, combined. The one thing I hear, as a business owner, as an accountant, as somebody who has been guiding businesses, is that people want investment in infrastructure. To be productive, they need rail, transportation, and the infrastructure that helps them move their goods along. They are quite happy that we have invested so much money in infrastructure. Municipalities and mayors have been very reflective and very happy with our investment money.

When we talk about child care spaces, I would remind the member opposite that, under the Martin government we had a child care agenda and it was the NDP who voted against it. In my riding alone, it would have created 25,000 child care spaces. So I think the budget is on the right track.

Ms. Sonia Sidhu (Brampton South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am rising today to speak to a bill focused on building a strong middle class that will build up our economy, Bill C-29, the budget implementation act 2016, no. 2.

Budget 2016 is a real plan to do the two things Canadians told us to do: help them and their families, and grow the economy.

I want to take a moment to compliment the finance minister and his team's work. I also want to thank his parliamentary secretary. The member for Saint-Maurice—Champlain came to Brampton last week. He is an honorary Bramptonian now. We consulted the Brampton Board of Trade and a number of economic stakeholders on important issues going forward into budget 2017.

Brampton has a lot to celebrate. There have been so many exciting developments in these past months: a long-desired university site coming to Brampton; the opening of Peel Memorial hospital in February; and other infrastructure developments, such as water and wastewater funding, which will protect Brampton against another flood situation, investment in post-secondary institutions such as Sheridan College in my riding, and Canada 150 local arts funding in order to keep our vibrant downtown an arts hub.

Government Orders

At the consultation we heard that these developments need to be expanded upon, and I agree. I will not stop listening to Brampton's needs as we move forward into this exciting period of growth and development for all our children.

I was pleased to hear at the event last week that many agreed with the fact that there is much ahead. I look forward to engaging in that discussion, building upon budget 2016 and these measures we are discussing today.

People in my riding have noticed we have accomplished a lot already in our first year. A number of online lists outline the things we have accomplished.

It is important for Canadians to understand that our government's plan builds upon things that strengthen the infrastructure of our system itself.

Without a strong CPP, without strong cities, without post-secondary investment, everything else suffers. Building the Canada of tomorrow means investing today, now. We as a government understand that it matters to build from the ground up and focus on people first. Brampton understands that these major developments will make our community stronger and our children's lives better.

In the last year, we took some important steps toward helping families regain the confidence they will need to drive our economy forward. We cut taxes for close to nine million Canadians. Our middle-class tax cut was the first thing we did as a government. We increased Canada student grants for students from low- and middle-income families and for part-time students. We increased monthly payments for the most in need seniors. We signed an agreement with the provinces to enhance the Canada pension plan to provide young people and future generations of workers with a stable and dignified retirement. We have also begun making major investments that will help the middle class grow and prosper today, while delivering economic growth for years to come.

This second budget implementation act proposes items that will complete the implementation of outstanding measures from the Government of Canada's first budget, growing the middle class.

We should be proud of what the House has passed. Budget 2016 puts people and families first. It introduces investments that take an essential step to growing the middle class. It is the first step of a long-term plan to restore hope and revitalize the economy for the benefit of all Canadians.

The bill we are debating today would help foster a strong Canadian economy and would enable Canadians in the middle class and those working hard to join it to keep more of their money to save, invest, and ensure economic growth.

The bill includes measures that would help families, give seniors a little more flexibility, protect consumers, and improve the quality and integrity of our country's tax system.

In budget 2016 one thing that we introduced, which is at the centre of what I notice making a real difference in Brampton South, is the new Canada child benefit. The Canada child benefit is simpler and more generous than the benefits it is replacing. It is also tax free and better targeted to help those who need it most.

●(1255)

The Canada child benefit will lift hundreds of thousands of children out of poverty in Canada. The cheques began to go out in July, and nine out of 10 families are now receiving more money than they did under the previous system. Families in my riding of Brampton South can use that money to make more nutritious choices for children's lunches, buy a warm coat for winter, or invest in activities like soccer or basketball.

Let me explain how this benefit will help Canadian families. Parents with children under the age of 18 will receive a maximum annual benefit of \$6,400 per child under the age of six and \$5,400 per child aged six through 17. Supporting this budget implementation bill would help ensure that the Canada child benefit will be indexed to inflation so that the families can count on this extra assistance today and for years to come.

This budget implementation bill would also support seniors by helping them retire in more comfort and with dignity. Canada's retirement income system has been successful in reducing poverty among seniors. However, some seniors continue to be at a heightened risk of living with low income. In particular, single seniors are nearly three times more likely to live with low income than seniors generally.

I see an unfortunate number of them in my riding. There is much more to do to help seniors living in poverty and to prevent the next wave of people who are retiring from facing this situation some day. Budget 2016 aims to help seniors retire comfortably and with dignity by making significant new investments that support them in their retirement years. In budget 2016, we repealed the provision of the Old Age Security Act that increased the age of eligibility for old age security and the guaranteed income supplement benefits from 65 to 67 years of age, and the allowance benefits from 60 to 62 years of age over the 2023 to 2029 period. Restoring the eligibility age for old age security and the guaranteed income supplement benefits to 65 will put thousands of dollars back into the pockets of Canadians as they become seniors and look to retire. That is the right thing to do.

Budget 2016 also increased the guaranteed income supplement top-up benefit by up to \$947 annually for single seniors most in need, starting in July 2016. This is helping those seniors who rely almost exclusively on old age security and the guaranteed income supplement benefits and who may therefore be at risk of experiencing financial difficulties.

This measure represents an investment of over \$670 million per year and will improve the financial security of about 900,000 single seniors across our nation.

Government Orders

In the second budget implementation bill, we are delivering on the promise we made in budget 2016 to support senior couples who face higher costs of living and are at an increased risk of poverty because they must live apart. The second budget implementation bill would amend the Old Age Security Act to make the program more flexible. When couples who are receiving the guaranteed income supplement and spouse's allowance have to live apart for reasons beyond their control, each will receive benefits based on their individual income. With respect to the income supplement and spouse's allowance, the government is improving fairness for seniors and helping them live with the dignity they deserve and need in retirement.

In conclusion, budget 2016 represents a giant step forward in our plan to put people first and deliver the help they need now, while investing for the years and decades to come.

I am so proud of these measures. They are focused on middle-class communities like Brampton South, which is a model riding where these benefits make a real difference.

We can and must do more, and we will do more. We can achieve the Canada of the future together. Therefore, I encourage all members in the House to support this bill. It is right for Canada, it is right for families, and it is right for the middle class.

• (1300)

Mr. Robert Kitchen (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I remember the days when Brampton actually was a rural part of Canada. However, the Liberals' concept of rural Canada today is a paved-over suburbia. The reality is this. I do not know whether the member was in the House when the member for Saint-Maurice—Champlain, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, talked about this budget giving increased handouts. Canadians do not want handouts; they want a hand up, and they want help. They want to do that by having the government do things.

The present government campaigned on lowering small businesses taxes, which it did not do. The farmers who are in these small agriculture industries are businessmen who want to see those decreases, and they are not seeing that. I wonder what the member would say about how the Liberals will create jobs when small businesses do not have the opportunity to be economically viable?

Ms. Sonia Sidhu: Mr. Speaker, the real concern the member should be asking about is the difference between our government's approach and the previous government's approach.

In the first year, we accomplished so much for the middle class and those working to join it, such as the CCB cheques. We are focusing on the middle class. When people receive their cheques, they invest in the small businesses. When small businesses invest in our economy, it will be booming.

We are not resting on our laurels. We are continuing to work to build a Canada that works for everyone. I am proud of our government's positive, optimistic approach, as seen in the bill.

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, sadly, there is nothing for small businesses in the budget. Also, everyone who makes less than \$45,000 in our country is not part of the middle class.

I want to quote an interesting thing about time allocation. It is “not only preventing business and debate in this chamber, but...[it is]

hurting the ability of committees to do their work”. Who said that? It was the Liberal member for Malpeque.

Another quote is that time allocation “is undemocratic and a type of abuse, as a rule, of the House of Commons”. Who said that? It was the Liberal member for Winnipeg North.

Why are the Liberals changing their minds now that they are in power?

Ms. Sonia Sidhu: Mr. Speaker, today we are focusing on Bill C-29. The budget implementation bills does a number of important things, including strengthening our tax system, indexing the CCB to inflation, improving EI, and supporting seniors.

Our government has taken real action. It is a bill the Minister of Finance and the parliamentary secretary have consulted widely on, and it is working. I am hearing a lot of positive feedback in Brampton South.

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the benefit of being in the House for 16 years, and the anniversary is next week, is that we have seen a number of closure motions. The Conservatives talk about closure. They used it 100 times in the last Parliament.

The NDP are talking about it. I remember when David Anderson was trying to get the Kyoto agreement through the House, and the Conservatives were filibustering on its ratification. Day after day, a friend of mine, Alexa McDonough, a fellow Nova Scotian, would get up and hammer David Anderson, asking, “When are you getting it done?” and saying, “The Liberals don't want to do it. Get this done. Don't pay any attention to the Conservatives”. We called closure after about four weeks of debate. There were 13 NDP members, and only six of them showed up to vote, and the six of them voted against closure. They talk a good game, but they cannot get it done.

I want to commend the member for her speech today.

• (1305)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I want to remind the hon. member not to refer to the presence of members, even it was in the past.

We are out of time. We will go over to the hon. member for Brampton South.

Ms. Sonia Sidhu: Mr. Speaker, the infrastructure bank that is under way would support affordable housing. This is also a big accomplishment of our government. It would very much help people in my riding of Brampton South. Homelessness and mental health issues in our urban areas are serious problems.

Government Orders

We are focusing on the middle class. The CCB cheques and strengthening the CPP for seniors are also very helpful in my riding of Brampton South.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to join this important debate on the government's fiscal update and the fiscal policy of the government in general.

To be frank, there is a lot to sink one's teeth into in terms of objections to the government's direction. I can say, having just come back from constituency week and having spoken with constituents in my riding, that people in Alberta, but I think across the country, are being hit very hard by the policies of the government.

As I think through it and talk to business leaders, I am reminded of the fact that every single tax they pay is going up. Small businesses in my riding face a higher small business tax rate as a result of the fiscal policy of the government. They face a carbon tax, a carbon tax brought in by the provincial government but which the federal government will do everything it can to prevent any subsequent provincial government from repealing.

We have the elimination of the hiring credit for small business. Bill C-26 would raise payroll taxes that individual employees as well as small businesses would pay. There is the undoing of employment insurance reforms, which would, in the long run, force up employment insurance premiums. Of course, small businesses are facing higher business tax rates in general from the provincial government and are grappling with the minimum wage hike and other changes that are happening, and there still has been no serious effort when it comes to market access for our resources.

We have a government that is hitting businesses again and again and again. The reality is that these are the job creators in our economy. These are the people whose investments and ingenuity create jobs and opportunities for our country. I just went through the list, objectively, of things that are happening to businesses in my riding, and I have to say that I find the continuing optimism and the continuing desire of business leaders in my constituency to move forward and build truly inspiring. The government should be there to try to help them succeed, not make their job more difficult when it comes to creating jobs and opportunities.

I will mention one specific thing in this fiscal update, and that is the implementation of certain regulations with respect to credit unions. There are credit unions in my constituency. The application of one-size-fits-all regulations, perhaps designed for the big banks, to every small credit union is a huge red-tape burden. Again, we have a government that is not listening, that is not paying attention to small businesses. This deals with one specific sector of the economy, credit unions, but it is another example of how the government is simply out of touch with the needs of the job creators in our economy.

Moving beyond that, I was to talk about two general points: deficit spending by the government in general and the issue of the employment insurance changes contained in this fiscal update.

The government's approach to deficit spending is, yes, to run deficits, but it is more than that. It is to undertake a policy of constant structural deficits. This is very different from the traditional arguments made for deficits. There are, I think, good arguments

for running deficits in certain situations. The basis of that would be the Keynesian economic principle of counter-cyclical government spending, a government doing more spending during times of economic challenge to offset the pullback happening in the economy as a whole and then the government pulling back and running surpluses during times of economic prosperity.

The importance of this is that the government is providing that stimulus for economic activity during relatively difficult times but is still balancing its budget over the long term. It is still in a position, in the long run, to balance its budget. I think we should all accept that we have to balance the budget in the long term. We cannot constantly, over a sort of forever time horizon, spend more than we have. Eventually, the capacity to borrow will run out. There is nothing wrong with running deficits in certain situations, provided that we intend to balance the budget over the long term.

When we talk about stimulating the economy, the important thing is that it needs to be in times that are relatively less good. Of course, even during good times, there will be people who are struggling. There will be people without jobs. There will perhaps be a desire to increase growth. However, if the government always spends more than it has in good times as well as bad times, then eventually, it is going to run out.

• (1310)

The government talks about stimulus, but it is really abusing these arguments, because its position is not that the government can do counter-cyclical spending at certain times to stimulate the economy. Rather, its position, stated by the finance minister, is that we can just run deficits all the time. The finance minister responded to a question I asked earlier during committee of the whole about whether the government would ever balance the budget. He would not say yes to that very simple question.

If we look at what is happening in the economy, the government is constructing arguments that are entirely resistant to the evidence. If things are going well, Liberals will say it is an indication of the fact that they can spend more. When things are going poorly, they say that they need to spend more. Every situation, good or bad, every data point, in their minds, is proof that they need to constantly be spending more money. Of course, there are limits.

Although Canada has a relatively low federal debt-to-GDP ratio, our total government debt-to-GDP ratio, which includes what the Kathleen Wynne Liberals in Ontario are doing and other spending programs of provincial governments, is comparable to countries like the United States and the U.K. It is important that we look at the total debt-to-GDP ratio, because in Canada we have relatively more public services provided at the provincial level than we do federally. For the federal government to say that it has lots of room to run deficits just is not true, because it needs to look at the overall debt-to-GDP ratio.

Government Orders

We see in this fiscal update the government making promises to people, increasing spending, and announcing the indexing of the new child benefit program. The Liberals are just not dealing with real money, because they are making promises into the future that are not costed, and that, in the long run, they should know they will not have the capacity to do. I think it is wrong to promise people that the government is going to spend money on things it knows it does not have the capacity to. When it has this kind of policy, when it undertakes government spending and assumes that it can run deficits forever, what it leads to eventually are significant cuts. The benefit of running surpluses during relatively good times and stimulating deficits during relatively less good times is that the government is able to spend more during challenging times, whereas countries that have consistently spent more than they have find themselves during bad times also in a position where they are forced to cut spending before they go off the fiscal cliff. That is the situation of some countries in Europe. We know that this has happened. We do not want to see Canada go down this road.

Just to complete blowing a hole in this stimulus argument, if we look at government spending, it is not targeted or temporary stimulus spending. Liberals are instituting what they would like to propose as permanent new social spending. They are proposing spending that is not targeted to economic stimulus. It is permanent new promised spending, a promise they know, or should know, simply cannot be kept.

I will conclude with a few comments about employment insurance reforms. In the last government, we brought in some very sensible reforms for employment insurance. Under new rules we brought in, it was expected that individuals would be actively involved in a job search to receive benefits. That is a reasonable requirement. We worked to define suitable employment in a way that said that even if individuals could not find exactly the same job they had before, there should be a broader definition of suitable employment but also that the government should provide more help to people in terms of finding jobs. We instituted a stronger system of providing job information to people who were seeking jobs.

It is important that individuals be actively involved in a job search when they are on employment insurance, that employment insurance be a meaningful insurance system, and that it be designed to help people get back to work, not something that can be constantly relied on year after year. I think that is a sensible way of structuring the program. The government, in undoing those employment insurance reforms, is creating additional costs for small businesses as well as for individuals, because everyone has to pay into that EI fund.

• (1315)

Therefore, if we take away those reforms to encourage job search on the payout side of it, then we have to increase the burden on those paying into it. This has a real cost for the creation of jobs and for people who work in our country. I prefer a policy that makes it easier for people to get jobs, not one that cuts back on jobs.

This is the wrong direction for our country, and I will be voting against this.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham (Laurentides—Labelle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I always find it a little ironic to hear the Conservatives talk about deficits.

If we look back to the turn of the 20th century, back to 1900, the Conservatives managed to balance one budget in the 20th century, which was in 1912, and they inherited it from the Liberals. The next year they were in deficit. In 1914, we went into the First World War already in a deficit position. The next time the Conservatives balanced a budget was in 2006, when they inherited it from the Liberals. However, if we go back to Confederation, there was only one Liberal prime minister who did not post at least one balanced budget, and that one had no budgets tabled at all as he was only there for four months.

Does the member have any comments on that?

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, I do not really see any need to go through and defend the policies of every Conservative government or oppose the policies of every Liberal government since Confederation. However, I really wish we had a prime minister and a finance minister who were more willing to align themselves with the Liberal fiscal policies that we have seen in the past. Although I would have many disagreements with some of those past Liberal governments, generally they had a much more sensible approach to fiscal policy than the current one.

What we are debating are the budget documents in front of us, which very clearly show no plan for ever returning to a balanced budget. There is even no acknowledgement that it is necessary.

Specifically to the record of the last Conservative government, one that I am very happy to defend in this respect, there was value in those stimulative deficits during the worst global financial crisis since the Great Depression. They were timely, targeted, and temporary stimulative investments. It is clear, and the parliamentary budget officer agrees, that we were back to a balanced budget, which the Liberals inherited before thoroughly destroying it, as quickly as they possibly could, in hopes of pinning their deficit on the previous government. However, we know from the parliamentary budget officer and from what the “Fiscal Monitor” has said that the current government plunged us into deficit after the Conservatives had balanced it.

It is a nuanced argument. There are times when it makes sense to run a deficit, but just because there are times when it makes sense to run a deficit does not mean that it makes sense to run deficits all the time. The Liberals think we should run deficits all the time. The Conservatives support deficits in certain situations for that targeted, stimulative approach, but we need to have a balanced budget over the long term.

Government Orders

• (1320)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I know the member was not elected in this place at the time Bill C-60, the omnibus budget bill of spring 2013, first brought in changes to disadvantage credit unions by increasing their tax rates and removing the tax credit they used to have. However, I was pleased to hear him speak in favour of the importance of credit unions, particularly to rural Canadians.

I have been disappointed that the changes made under Harper have not been rolled back by the current government. Would the member favour restoring to the credit unions the status they had before the spring omnibus budget bill of 2013, which was then known as Bill C-60?

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, I certainly agree with my friend about the importance of credit unions. I would be happy to dig more into the specifics of that provision from a previous budget and hear her perspective on it.

I am certainly not wedded to defending every policy of the previous government, although, in the broad direction when it comes to fiscal policy, we were moving very much in the right direction in terms of the stimulative deficits I talked about, but also moving back toward a balanced budget.

Definitely with respect to the bill in front of us, I have some significant concerns about what it would do to credit unions. However, I am happy to look at the provisions the member mentioned.

Mr. Andy Fillmore (Halifax, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to rise in support of Bill C-29, a second act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on March 22, 2016 and other measures.

Members of Parliament know better than most the staggering importance of the federal budget. I am speaking not only about this budget in particular but federal budgets in general. The spending choices federal governments have made since confederation have in fact shaped the Canada we live in today.

We know that billions of dollars of investment, if spent wisely, can transform our nation for the better. Indeed, a good budget has the capacity to push Canada closer to our shared ideal, a country where every Canadian, especially those struggling or who have been historically neglected, has a chance to succeed and find happiness, to feel secure, included, cared for and valued by his or her government.

I believe the budget we are debating today is one of those budgets, a very good budget, one that leaves no Canadian behind, and one that I am proud to support.

I represent a very diverse riding as the largest metropolis in Atlantic Canada. The riding of Halifax is home to people from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences. It is part of what makes my city so great. However, as with any diverse urban core, there is a range between those who are doing well for themselves and their families, that is those who are financially secure, and those who struggle every day to put food on the table, to pay rent and to make basic ends meet.

This is a city that is on the leading edge of some truly amazing things, gripped by an excited, ambitious energy, a city on the rise, growing every day at an exceptional pace, second in Canada only to Vancouver. Now more than ever, we cannot afford to leave anyone behind.

Yet the hard truth is that some of our most vulnerable populations in Canada have been overlooked for too long. For 10 years, their potential was left unrealized, their interests put on the back burner, their most basic needs often ignored. Therefore, I want to focus my remarks today on some of the important provisions proposed in budget 2016, in particular investments that will support Canada's struggling vulnerable and otherwise neglected communities.

I would like to begin with our government's investments in indigenous communities, which seek to support a renewed nation-to-nation relationship with indigenous peoples. Members may know that I have the honour of serving as the chair of the House Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs. It is a role that, for me, has put a sharp focus on the extraordinary challenges facing indigenous peoples in Canada, as well as the daunting work that lies ahead for our government to address the tragic state of affairs caused by years, centuries, of neglect.

This budget demonstrates our government's commitment to begin this important task to remove the obstacles faced by indigenous people through investments in on-reserve education, training, and infrastructure, to name just three.

All in all, the government seeks to invest \$8.4 billion over five years "to improve the socio-economic conditions of Indigenous peoples and their communities and bring about transformational change." That funding includes \$40 million for a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women and girls; \$3.6 billion to ensure all first nations children receive quality education, including building and repairing schools; \$1.2 billion for housing, early learning and child care centres on reserve; \$2.2 billion for water and waste water treatment on reserve; and \$33 million to support first nations to build sustainable fishing enterprises.

Many members here will know that following the release of the budget, the Assembly of First Nations National Chief Perry Bellegarde called the \$8.4 billion investment historic and a break against the status quo. However, this funding is only the beginning and there is still much work to be done on this matter. It is the start of transformational change that is long overdue, and it is one of the sections of the budget of which I am most proud.

The next set of investments I would like to speak to are those supporting Canada's seniors. Our government understands that many seniors in Canada are facing difficult financial times after retirement, in particular single seniors who are three times more likely to live with low income than seniors more broadly.

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For this reason, our government has proposed to enhance seniors' pensions, including an increase in the guaranteed income supplement for single seniors by up to \$947 per year, a measure that will improve the financial situation of 900,000 seniors across the country. Further, as promised, the budget returns the age of retirement from 67 to 65, giving seniors thousands of more dollars as they retire from the workforce.

• (1325)

Another matter addressed by the budget is housing for seniors. On the campaign trail, I spoke with many seniors living in conditions that were inappropriate or inaccessible or where their rent and associated costs would eat up a devastating share of their monthly earnings. To help address this problem, the budget would invest \$200 million in the construction, repair, and adaptation of affordable housing for seniors. These investments would unburden struggling seniors across Canada, allowing them the secure and dignified retirement that we all want for our grandparents, our parents, and ultimately ourselves.

I would like now to speak about support for students.

My riding of Halifax is home to seven colleges and universities. I learned this summer from representatives of the Nova Scotia chapter of the Canadian Federation of Students that one in 10 Haligonians is a student. As their MP, the issue of student debt is very important to me. We must make post-secondary education affordable to everyone, without burdening our future workforce with an impossible debt burden on the day of their graduation. That is why I am proud to support this budget, which would increase the Canada student grants program by 50% for low and middle-income students and which increases the loan repayment threshold, which is the amount an individual must be making per year before being required to make a student loan payment, from \$20,000 to \$25,000 per year.

I am also happy to support a budget which would double the number of Canada summer jobs available to students. This is money that would go right into the pockets of Canadian students and would give them valuable work experience. In my riding, students benefited tremendously from the Canada summer jobs program this year, but so did the employers of students as many would otherwise not be able to hire student help. It is truly a win-win for our students and our community in Halifax, as it has been across the country.

The final item I would like to speak about is the budget's support for low-income families.

One of this government's flagship initiatives, and one I was proud to bring to the doorsteps of voters when I was running to be the Halifax MP, is the new Canada child benefit. It just did not make sense for the previous government to be sending cheques to millionaires to cover their child care costs. It sure did not make sense that it was sending the exact same amount to millionaires as it was sending to the low-income families. That was unfair and plain wrong, and yet the Conservatives and the New Democrats thought it was the proper approach. Canadians saw just how out of touch that scheme was and they voted for a plan that included an improved child benefit, the new Canada child benefit.

The CCB is a simple, tax-free, and more generous benefit tied to family income where those who need it most receive the most, and

no more cheques to millionaires. Now, nine out of 10 families receive more in child benefits than before, with the average family seeing an increase of \$2,300 per year, and 300,000 fewer children will live in poverty in Canada. Simply put, the CCB is a transformational tool for low and middle-income families and it is another part of the budget that makes me so proud to support it.

There is one other item that will improve the living conditions of low-income families, and that is affordable housing.

All Canadian families deserve safe and affordable housing. Without stable housing at a price they can afford, every other goal families seek to achieve becomes secondary. Without adequate shelter, families struggle to raise their children, to get educated, to find employment, and even to stay healthy. Therefore, I am very glad, as an MP and as a career city planner, that budget 2016 would invest \$2.3 billion over the next two years in affordable housing investments, which would be a great help to many low-income families and would lay the groundwork for a healthy economy for all.

At the beginning of my remarks today, I spoke about how the federal budgets had shaped the Canada we know today. Budget 2016 would reshape Canada again, for the better, a Canada that would work for everyone, including our most vulnerable Canadians, those who are struggling to make ends meet and those who have been neglected for far too long. I support the vision this budget puts forward, and I will be voting for it. I implore my colleagues in this chamber to do the same.

• (1330)

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague spoke about a number of the proposed spending items in this fiscal update. What he knows, and what many of the member's colleagues would know, is that these are committed spending items which cannot possibly be permanent, given the massive hole in this budget. There is no balance, and no intention to balance the budget. Therefore, one can talk about these short-term spending proposals that are not in any way sustainable.

As my colleague thinks about this budget, I want to ask if in his mind there is any limit. Is there any point at which the member would say to the government that it is too much? Is his limit \$40 billion, or \$50 billion, or \$60 billion? At what point would the member say that, as much as those are nice things to spend money on, if the government is not able to sustain that level of social spending in the future, maybe it should pause and look at investments in Canadians that are sustainable over the long term rather than make promises of things that are not sustainable? I wonder if the member would tell us how much is too much and when, if ever, he thinks the government should balance the budget.

Mr. Andy Fillmore: Mr. Speaker, as it happens, we are debating this year's budget today, Bill C-29.

Government Orders

The budget is responding to a ticking time bomb of deferred liability in the form of deferred infrastructure maintenance and deferred investment in social structure in this country. Right now there is a tremendous amount that we can and should be doing, and that the budget is getting done.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech.

I would like to make three points. How is it that the Liberals, after roundly criticizing guillotines to force bills through, are using the same strategies as the Conservatives? How is it that the new government, without ever mentioning it in the election campaign, wants to privatize our infrastructure on such a massive scale? Lastly, could my colleague from Halifax explain to us why people who earn less than \$45,000 a year, which is less than \$23 an hour, are being completely ignored by the Liberals, who do not consider them part of the middle class?

[*English*]

Mr. Andy Fillmore: Mr. Speaker, I think it is incumbent on everyone in the House to use to the greatest effect possible the time we have been given here by those who elected us. That is what the rules of Parliament allow us to do.

I would add that low-income families who earn less than \$45,000 per year are in fact tremendously helped by the budget, largely through the Canada child benefit, through improvements to retirement packages, through investments in seniors housing, through investments in affordable housing across the board, and the list goes on.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I have been wanting to put this question to a government member all day and this gives me a chance to do so.

The difficulty I see happening in the House today is more a problem of how well the House leaders are getting along in scheduling time than it is the substance of the budget bill.

I just want to put on the record what I see, and although I am not privy to the meetings of the House leaders of the governing Liberal Party, the Conservative opposition, or the New Democrats, my sense from the fact that we have time allocation on the bill is that things are not going as co-operatively as they might.

I know that the bill has been before us for quite a while at second reading because of the fact that I was allowed to speak to it, and slots for members in the parties that are smaller only come along rarely, so we have had quite a lot more debate at second reading. But I object to these time allocations just the same.

While I am not going to say, “a plague on all their houses”, I wonder if the member for Halifax can give me any kind of insight as to what is going on, why we have time allocation when the bill, with co-operation, should have gone to committee already.

• (1335)

Mr. Andy Fillmore: Mr. Speaker, I was very sympathetic to the words of the government House leader earlier in the day when she said it is only with great regret that she brought forward the motion for closure in the House.

Unfortunately, we have been unable to use our time together wisely, and this is merely an attempt to make sure that we do the job today that we were sent here by Canadians to do.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry—Suroît, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the NDP opposes Bill C-29, the budget implementation bill, for a number of reasons. It has multiple flaws. The Liberals were very vocal in their criticism of the fact that the Conservatives introduced mammoth budget implementation bills known as omnibus bills.

Now the Liberals have introduced a bill with 146 clauses that amends 13 acts and is 234 pages long. It is quite an eclectic mix. The Liberals are also undemocratically imposing time allocation, which is a tactic they themselves condemned back then. Imposing time allocation prevents us from debating our positions in depth. The Liberals want to rush this bill to committee, which means that our constituents will not have access to all of the information. This is moving too fast, and the Liberals are not honouring their democratic commitment to transparency.

Throughout the campaign and even to this day, for the past year, they have been talking about working for the middle class and reducing inequality. However, and I will talk about this in my speech, many of the proposals in Bill C-29, the budget implementation bill, are utterly incompatible with their stated aim of reducing inequality.

Let us start by talking about SMEs. During the election campaign, we heard time and again from the Liberals that they would reduce the small business tax from 11% to 9%. Now they are not moving ahead with that proposal, which is not in the budget. We know, as do the Liberals who keep saying this, that SMEs are the job creators in the regions. They create 80% of jobs and keep the economy running. Why then are the Liberals putting obstacles in their way?

Two independent grocers in my riding came to see me because they wanted to tell me that it makes no sense that our country has still not passed legislation to cap exorbitant credit card fees. One of these grocers told me that it costs him \$141,000 a year just to be able to accept credit cards. Grocers make a net profit of only 1% or so a year. Credit card charges are between 1.5% and 2.5%.

What should we do to ensure that these independent grocers continue to invest in our community? Every time there are school or community projects, independent grocers are asked for their involvement and financial support. However, if they are constantly hobbled, how are they going to survive in order to create jobs, first of all, not to mention to be able to contribute to their communities and our society? Times are tough.

The Liberals also promised a tax credit for hiring youth. However, that is also missing from Bill C-29. Young people really are the forgotten ones in this bill. Just look at the lack of funding for youth organizations.

Government Orders

My riding has three youth consultation forums. One is in Vaudreuil-Soulanges, a second one is in Beauharnois-Salaberry, and the third is in Haut-Saint-Laurent. During the three meetings I had with over 100 youth organizations, everyone agreed that the Liberal budget does not include any investments for prevention.

The Conservatives made cuts, and then the Liberals came along and said they wanted to focus on youth and give them the tools they need to thrive. However, there is nothing for prevention, nothing for mental health, nothing to tackle crime and drug addiction. In my riding, Salaberry—Suroît, those three issues are related to a great many problems. When has this government ever talked about investing in youth programs and prevention? It never has, unfortunately.

● (1340)

Problems related to housing, homelessness, and youth suicide persist.

The NDP recently moved a motion calling on the government to reinvest in child services for first nations. This year alone, there is a shortfall of \$155 million. In the end, the Liberals voted in favour of our motion after initially being opposed to it.

However, there is nothing in the budget to suggest that there will be a reinvestment. No announcement has been made on reinvesting in first nations youth. In January, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal found that by failing to provide recurring investment year after year, the Government of Canada was demonstrating systemic discrimination and racism toward first nations children. How can this still be happening in 2016? There are cases where 25 young people are crammed into a substandard home and have limited access to drinking water, education, and health care. The Jordan principle is not always applied. Still, the Liberals are patting themselves on the back and imposing time allocation. They see no problem. They think the bill should be sent to committee right quick so that we can study it there. It is unbelievable.

That is not the only measure affecting youth services. Young people were supposed to receive \$105 million, as announced in budget 2016, to help them gain work and life experience while also supporting communities. However, those funds still have yet to be allocated, and there is nothing on that in this bill. Young people are important, but the federal government is not taking any meaningful action that reflects that.

On the subject of legalizing marijuana, no new funds have been announced for prevention. In my riding, organizations like Liberté de choisir work on preventing addiction. According to them, every time the Prime Minister talks about legalizing marijuana, young people think it means that they can use it, because he said it was legal. This demonstrates a lack of awareness and a lack of prevention. This government has not announced anything on that. The Prime Minister is putting young people at risk by saying these things without giving the organizations and groups that work with young users the tools they need.

In a French article entitled “Légalisation du cannabis: les intervenants jeunesse aux aguets”, which was published two days ago on November 13, 2016, Jean-Sébastien Fallu, a professor at the University of Montreal's École de psychoéducation, stated:

Unfortunately, very few investments are made in prevention. When it comes to drugs, nearly 90% of the funding is allocated to the court system or addiction treatments.

I could talk for a long time about youth, but I would like to move on to other things. The Liberals have been bragging about lowering taxes for the middle class. However, if we look at this measure even just a little more closely, we see that the Liberals are lowering taxes for those who earn \$45,000 or more. Over half the population earns less than \$45,000, and these people will not benefit from a lower tax rate. Is that what working for the middle class and reducing inequality in Canada looks like? Personally, I do not agree with that.

The Liberals are also saying that they are going to help lift seniors out of poverty. However, they are only focusing on seniors who live alone. Seniors living alone will be entitled to more guaranteed income supplement benefits. That is a step in the right direction. However, what about those who do not live alone? Do they not also have the right to live out of poverty? Can the government not also increase their guaranteed income supplement benefits and make sure that those benefits are paid out automatically?

Many of the people who come to my office have heard about this measure, but they do not know what to do. They do not have the tools they need. They do not have Internet access. Most of our seniors live in difficult circumstances.

I would like to wrap up with some comments on employment insurance, where there are still problems. Only four in 10 workers have access to employment insurance even though all workers pay premiums. Six out of 10 workers who need help are denied the benefits, never mind those with serious illnesses. The people who help these individuals are entitled to 26 weeks of employment insurance compassionate care benefits, but the individuals who are gravely ill are entitled to just 15 weeks of benefits. That makes absolutely no sense. There are still problems, and we still need to talk about them.

● (1345)

It makes no sense to impose closure.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member talks about equality. I would challenge the member to tell the House when there was a more progressive budget than the one we are talking about today. There would be a redistribution of wealth of great significance where we would have a substantial increase to Canada's wealthiest, in terms of a tax; we would have the middle-class tax break, which would help everyone, from health care workers, firefighters, factory workers; we would greatly enhance the Canada child benefit; we would have a substantial increase to the guaranteed income supplement; and there is a litany of other things that would be redistributing Canada's wealth. Yet, the NDP seems to have chosen to vote against these types of measures.

The question for the member, specifically, is, can she indicate, to the best of her knowledge, if there was another budget in the last 30 or 40 years that has been more progressive than the one that we are actually voting on today.

Government Orders

[*Translation*]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach: Mr. Speaker, it would have been really nice if my colleague from Winnipeg North had taken the time to listen to everything I said because he would never have stood up and said that to me. In fact, once upon a time, my colleague had this to say about time allocation:

[*English*]

It is undemocratic and a type of abuse, as a rule, of the House of Commons of Canada.

[*Translation*]

Those are his own words, and now his government is imposing time allocation.

With regard to inequalities, since the member talked about the Canada child benefit, it has been shown that the Liberals' benefit will not be indexed for four years. Therefore, families who thought they would receive more money from that child benefit than from the Conservatives' benefit are realizing they have been duped. Because the indexing will not take place for four years, they will lose \$5,500.

My colleague also talked about tax breaks. I will repeat what I said about that, since he probably did not understand: the tax breaks do not affect people who earn \$45,000 or less per year, which is more than half the population. More than nine million people will not benefit from that measure.

[*English*]

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there are going to be many areas of disagreement, obviously, but one area of agreement I think that we have with the NDP is that we believe that social spending needs to be sustainable. We believe that, in the long term, we need to have a plan for getting the revenue for the spending. We cannot just promise things and do so on the basis of massive deficits that are then going to lead to cuts in the future. I think most opposition members understand the importance of having a balanced budget over the long term.

I wonder if the member would comment on that. Really, how many spending promises from the government are not real spending promises? Given how far ahead of actual revenue it is with spending, it knows these are going to lead to cuts; it knows it cannot sustain the promises it has made to people; it knows, in the long term, that these things are not going to be in place for people. Why is the government making commitments that are clearly not costed and not paid for?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, who has asked some very relevant questions.

The Liberals promised that they would only run up a deficit of about \$10 billion if they were elected. Now, we realize that that deficit has tripled and future generations will bear that burden.

Since we are talking about measures that were not announced by the Liberals and are being announced in this budget, let us talk about infrastructure. They said they would invest in infrastructure that would meet the needs of communities for public transit and green infrastructure. However, as if by magic, we are now hearing that

there will be a lot of privatization. When we talk about privatization, we are talking about companies whose primary goal is to make a profit and not to meet the public needs of the community.

Once again, the Liberals are pulling a rabbit out of their hat. No one saw that coming, and they themselves had not announced it. Now, we are stuck with it, because they decided to tell us about it at the last minute. This goes against the public interest of Canadians.

• (1350)

Mr. David de Burgh Graham (Laurentides—Labelle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak about Bill C-29, which implements a number of important elements of the 2016 budget. I proudly support this budget, because it represents the best that this country has to offer its citizens.

I have been following Canadian federal politics closely for more than 20 years, especially during the more than seven years that I worked as a constituency assistant, a parliamentary assistant and now as a member of Parliament. As a result, I have seen many budgets and changes, many attempts to try out new ideas, and numerous mistakes.

The bill before us is not just an annual budget intended to stay the course with policies that did not work before, in hopes that they will work this time. On the contrary, it is a budget that focuses on our future. It lays the groundwork for years of even better budgets, investments and innovations.

In the economic update presented a few weeks ago, new investments were announced. As the MP for a very rural riding, I am pleased to see a new \$2-billion investment, as a first step, for rural infrastructure priorities.

We need to make up for the decades of negligence the regions have suffered. That money, along with \$180 billion for infrastructure in many categories that are not specific to the regions, demonstrates the government's interest and its plans to deliver on that.

Where I come from, high-speed Internet access is a very important issue. As far as we are concerned, all socio-economic issues can be linked to high-speed Internet access. The government allocated \$500 million for this in the budget. That money cannot come quickly enough. However, we are not so naive as to believe that this small amount is going to solve the problem of rural Internet access after 20 years of failures in digital communication. That money is merely a first step. I am very proud to finally see a forward-looking budget that focuses on long-term planning after 10 years of mismanagement.

I know the Conservatives will ask me how we can plan anything with such large deficits. It does not surprise me that they keep asking that question. For years, they looked at their own deficits and had no idea what to do about them or where they came from, even as they cut taxes and investment in our economy. They actually increased the national debt by more than \$150 billion. Year after year, the Conservatives never stopped to think about how future generations would pay off the debt they accumulated.

Government Orders

The Conservatives eliminated government revenue sources and spent willy-nilly. They did not have an infrastructure plan to build the country and our future. They fixed potholes and built gazebos. They spent, but they did not invest, with the possible exception being economic action plan posters, which sprouted up all over the country like mushrooms.

During this debate, the Conservatives have repeatedly questioned whether paying taxes is the way to go. They do not believe that taxes are society's best tool for sharing common costs. They do not agree that it is the government's responsibility to manage that money and spend it in the country's best interest.

Clearly, our job is to improve the lives of all Canadians. However, I can assure the House that we are not going to change things just by listening to the Conservatives. It will take concrete action by the government, and that means spending money in almost every case.

As far as I am concerned, it is obvious that the government has an important role to play in the economy. As I said during yesterday's debate, taxes allow us to pool our resources in order to pay for the expenses shared by our society. The role of government is to improve citizens' lives and it does that by managing these pooled resources, in short, taxes.

We should be talking more about citizens rather than taxpayers. We often do not consider the goal of the institution we work for and the reason why we are here. When the Conservatives imply that the government has no useful role or function, or that taxes are nothing more than a burden for citizens and business, they have completely missed the point.

I find it amusing that the Conservatives are complaining about the government moving forward with enhancements to the Canada pension plan when they have a parliamentary pension plan. They complain about the fact that the government collects taxes and decides how to spend them to improve people's lives, but they do not turn down their own salaries, benefits, or their parliamentary budget.

• (1355)

They know that, as members of the government and members of Parliament, we have the vital role of managing common resources and expenditures and of debating the best ways to improve the lives of our fellow Canadians.

Accordingly, I believe that, eventually, we should consider the possibility of ensuring that all Canadians have a guaranteed minimum income. This idea has been debated in many countries by many generations and may have been around for as long as the debate on whether to annex Turks and Caicos, a measure that I am also not likely to oppose.

Because so many aspects of our society are becoming automated, one day, there may not be enough work for all Canadians. However, I may be wrong, but I believe that that day is still a long way off.

One of my favourite movies is *The Gods Must be Crazy*. The beginning of this South African and Botswanan movie from the 1980s explains how society becomes more modernized. We have created technology to simplify our lives, but the more simplified our lives become, the more complex the technology becomes. We need

more education to understand our simplified lives, which are in fact becoming more complicated.

To come back to what I was saying, the Canada child benefit, which provides parents with up to \$6,400 a year per child, is a type of guaranteed minimum income. We already have a guaranteed minimum income for seniors in the form of the guaranteed income supplement, which we increased by 10% in the budget for those who need it most. The idea is already present in our social structures because one of the shared commitments we made as a society was to take care of those who do not have the means or ability to take care of themselves.

Our budget therefore includes a number of components that focus on improving our future. Investments in infrastructure are essential, but we have to run a deficit to make those investments because our infrastructure is already in a deficit situation.

For example, Internet access in our regions is often so unreliable that it is having a significant harmful effect on our economy. Many of our roads are in disrepair. It is estimated that only 400,000 km of Canada's one million kilometres of roads are paved. The investment needs of indigenous communities are so great that I cannot even begin to describe them here. It costs money to make all of these changes and fix these long-standing problems. However, all these investments will improve the quality of life of Canadians in the short term and strengthen our economy in the long term.

Yes, we must go into debt to get there, but our society is already in debt, whether we are talking about our roads, our communities, or our basic infrastructure. By investing, we are simply quantifying this deficit.

With a stronger economy, improved infrastructure, and essential investments, government revenues will increase without hurting the economy and the deficits will start to go down. We have the record to prove it. There has not been a Liberal Prime Minister since confederation who has not managed to balance at least one budget. The only exception was when no budget was tabled. As for the Conservatives' record, the opposite is true.

The good news about infrastructure in the budget does not stop there. I initially had concerns about the idea of an infrastructure bank that the private sector would contribute to, as I consider myself more left-leaning. However, I now understand how we might benefit from it and I see the tremendous potential. I am by no means an expert on this, but if it is done correctly the possibilities are immense.

Private-public funding of infrastructure gives us the chance to finally address the issue of high-speed Internet access in the regions, seriously address the issue of affordable housing, and build other green, social, and traditional infrastructure where traditionally user-pay models are used, without giving up on the idea that infrastructure should belong to the public sector. It is quite interesting and I look forward to following this project.

I am proud of our budget, Bill C-29 and of our government's plans and I am not afraid to say so.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

•(1400)

[Translation]

PARTI QUÉBÉCOIS

Mr. Rhéal Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, “I never thought I could be as proud to be a Quebecker as I am tonight”, said an emotional René Lévesque during the Parti Québécois' victory on November 15, 1976. It was an historic victory and the theme was “Beginning today, tomorrow belongs to us”.

Over the following years, the Lévesque government would express that pride through the Act to govern the financing of political parties, the Act respecting the preservation of agricultural land and agricultural activities, anti-scab legislation, the Charter of the French Language, and Quebec's first referendum on sovereignty. Tomorrow belonged to us.

Forty years later, the Bloc Québécois commends these men and women who contributed to forging the unique identity of the people of Quebec, who, let us not forget, are “something akin to a great people”.

Thank you, René.

* * *

[English]

PAT QUINN

Mr. Bob Bratina (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Hockey Hall of Fame has added new stars to the galaxy: Eric Lindros, Sergei Makarov, Rogatien Vachon, and my old friend and neighbour Pat Quinn.

Pat was born and raised in the east end of Hamilton and lived a life that brought honour to his family, his neighbourhood, his city, and his country.

Pat was one of hockey's greatest coaches, a darn good hockey player, an all-round athlete, a scholar, a family man, and a guy who never forgot the people with whom he grew up.

I first knew Pat as a baseball player on our 1955 championship team. He was the best player, but mostly he was a big, tough, friendly guy we were glad to have on our side. Pat was one of the greatest Toronto Maple Leaf coaches, and coached Canada to two world junior hockey championships and an Olympic gold medal.

Pat was kind enough to endorse his old baseball teammate when I ran successfully for mayor of Hamilton, because despite all his success, including membership now in the Hockey Hall of Fame, Pat Quinn never forgot his roots.

* * *

2016 U.S. ELECTION

Mr. Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our Prime Minister was elected just over one year ago. Although not my choice, I personally congratulated him and assured him that I would pray for him and wish on him God's blessings.

Statements by Members

Democracy can be messy, and election campaigns often bring out the worst in people. We have seen that.

I would like to congratulate Donald Trump on becoming president-elect, as well as the newly elected and re-elected members of Congress and state governors. The United States is, and will remain, Canada's closest friend. Our unique relationship is time honoured. We have been friends, partners, and allies for nearly 150 years.

My focus will continue to be on bilateral initiatives that will help move our economy forward, create jobs, promote trade, and enhance our collective security.

My riding of Provencher shares a significant stretch of border with the United States, and I will be encouraging our government to continue to enhance the special relationship we have with our long-time friends and neighbours.

May God continue to bless America. God bless Donald Trump.

* * *

LEONARD COHEN

Mr. Marc Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Sœurs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I quote from *The Partisan* by Leonard Cohen:

When they poured across the border
I was cautioned to surrender,
this I could not do;
I took my gun and vanished.
I have changed my name so often,
I've lost my wife and children....

There were three of us this morning
I'm the only one this evening
but I must go on;
the frontiers are my prison.

Oh, the wind, the wind is blowing,
through the graves the wind is blowing,
freedom soon will come;...

[Translation]

The Germans were at my home
They told me to surrender
But this I could not do
...

I have changed names a hundred times
I have lost wife and children
But I have so many friends
And I have all of France

An old man in an attic
Hid us for the night
The Germans captured him
He died without surprise

[English]

Oh, the wind, the wind is blowing,
through the graves the wind is blowing,
freedom soon will come;
then we'll come from the shadows.

Statements by Members

Rest in peace, Leonard.

* * *

● (1405)

SASKTEL

Mr. Erin Weir (Regina—Lewvan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in most parts of Canada the federal government has struggled to foster competitive telecommunications to lower prices for consumers. In Saskatchewan, phone companies face stiff competition, and consumers enjoy the lowest prices in Canada. That is because we own SaskTel, a crown corporation dedicated to providing good service at affordable prices across our province.

Unfortunately, Brad Wall's SaskParty has presented legislation allowing it to start privatizing SaskTel without the approval of the Saskatchewan people. However, such a deal may require the approval of the federal Competition Bureau, the CRTC, and the minister of industry.

If the federal government is truly committed to competitive telecommunications and consumer protection, it should strive to keep SaskTel public.

* * *

SIKH COMMUNITY

Mr. Raj Grewal (Brampton East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, thousands of Sikhs in Canada and all across this world celebrated the birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji. He was a man of towering intellect with a fierce passion for community service and he spent his entire life helping others and fighting for equality.

Guru Nanak stressed the importance of meditation, *Naam Japna*; selfless service *Seva*; sharing *Vand Ke Chakna*; and hard work, *Kirt Karni*. These laid the principles of the Sikh way of life.

Canada is proud to be the home of one of the largest Sikh communities outside of India, and these values of love, compassion, and serving humanity and the community are evident every day.

For example, yesterday, Seva Food Bank, in coordination with CJMR Radio 1320, raised over \$115,000 for their food bank, which will help alleviate food insecurity for the region of Peel.

Happy Gurburab and congratulations to—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound.

* * *

VETERANS' WEEK

Mr. Larry Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to honour veterans across this country and remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

During Veterans' Week, I met and talked to dozens of veterans. Whether it was over breakfast at the Hanover Legion, or after Remembrance Day services in Tara, Chatsworth, and Owen Sound, it was an honour to personally thank veterans of Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound.

I spoke with 101-year-old veteran Art Haley, who was recognized as Ontario senior of the year, and 92-year-old Ken Reimer, who celebrated 70 years with the Chatsworth Legion.

We must make no mistake. Canadians would not enjoy our free and democratic way of life without the sacrifices of these Canadian heroes. Veterans are veterans 365 days a year, not just on Remembrance Day.

I urge all members of the House and every Canadian citizen, if they see a veteran, to shake their hand, thank them for their service, and never forget their sacrifice.

To all veterans, we thank them.

* * *

NEW CIRCLES COMMUNITY SERVICES

Ms. Yasmin Ratansi (Don Valley East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the work of New Circles Community Services, a not-for-profit organization in my riding of Don Valley East.

New Circles operates the largest clothing bank in Toronto, GLOW, gently loved outfits to wear. GLOW donates contemporary used clothing to those in need, including Syrian refugees, in a retail setting where they can pick outfits for themselves and their families. It also trains youth in retail marketing.

In addition, New Circles has a mobile mall, which travels to six Toronto community housing seniors residences, enabling them to shop at their leisure.

I applaud New Circles for the generosity of the organization and the positive impacts it has had on so many people.

* * *

WORTHY DEVOTION DAY

Mr. Anthony Rota (Nipissing—Timiskaming, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Abbey Thompson founded Worthy Devotion 2015 as part of her senior year project at Chippewa Secondary School in North Bay, Ontario. She wanted to do something that would have a lasting impact even after she graduated.

[*Translation*]

Ultimately, the goal of the program is to give students in grades seven to ten at Chippewa secondary school the necessary tools to build healthy self-esteem.

Local businesses have given students the opportunity to attend workshops that promote physical activity and healthy eating, and that teach self-defence.

● (1410)

[*English*]

I would like to thank Abbey, who is now a first year student at Nipissing University, for helping to build strong young women and thank her for her continued dedication in organizing Worthy Devotion Day.

*Statements by Members***VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise today to highlight wear purple day in support of the London Abused Women's Centre's Shine the Light on Women's Abuse campaign.

Today we wear purple to raise awareness of violence against women and girls, and to stand in solidarity with abused women and support them in understanding that any shame or blame they may feel does not belong to them but belongs to the perpetrators of their abuse.

During the month of November, cities, regions, and counties across Canada are lit up purple to show support, and here in Ottawa I am honoured to advise that tonight the Peace Tower will be illuminated in purple, beginning at 7:10 p.m.

I invite all members, senators, and staff to attend the reception to Shine the Light on Women's Abuse tonight from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

I thank Megan Walker and her team from the London Abused Women's Centre and centres from across Canada for their incredible work.

I hope to see everyone there as we shine a light on women's abuse.

* * *

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the month of November is Woman Abuse Prevention Month. This month, from community groups to the House of Commons, Canadians will come together to fight gender-based violence. In my own riding of Guelph, groups like Women in Crisis offer support and raise awareness of abused women.

This past November 3, members from Burlington, Sarnia—Lambton, and Nanaimo—Ladysmith hosted Hope in High Heels on Parliament Hill. With both my male and female colleagues, I was honoured to kick off my shoes and don pink high heels to march for the rights of women.

To the organizers and my fellow participating MPs, I extend my most sincere thanks.

It is important to keep in mind a quote from Guelph's Women in Crisis Centre, "You don't have to be hit to be hurt".

* * *

[*Translation*]

LOUIS RIEL

Mr. Dan Vandal (Saint Boniface—Saint Vital, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on this historic day, I would like to pay tribute to Louis Riel.

[*English*]

Today, the Government of Canada and the Manitoba Metis Federation signed a historic framework agreement setting the path toward reconciliation.

[*Translation*]

Tomorrow, Manitoba's Métis community will gather at the tomb of Louis Riel, in the cemetery of St. Boniface Cathedral, to commemorate the 131st anniversary of his death.

We have long recognized the important role that Riel played in creating our country. He is the Father of Manitoba, and his photograph now hangs alongside those of the premiers of Manitoba in the legislature.

[*English*]

Louis Riel is highly regarded as the father of Manitoba and is widely respected for his ability to build consensus among those around him. Tomorrow, I will join the Manitoba Metis Federation, l'Union nationale métisse, and the community to honour our Métis leader, a great Canadian, Louis Riel.

* * *

PANCREATIC CANCER

Hon. Tony Clement (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians' awareness of pancreatic cancer is unfortunately exceptionally low compared to other cancers, despite it being the most deadly form. November is national awareness month for this disease, and Pancreatic Cancer Canada has initiated a purple lights program to encourage landmarks across Canada to shine a purple light to raise awareness.

[*Translation*]

Pancreatic Cancer Canada is asking us to help literally shed light on this terrible disease and its presence in the life of Canadians.

[*English*]

I encourage all members of the House to reach out to their community leaders and request that a local landmark be turned purple. They can also request that the city or municipality declare November as national awareness month, or November 17 as world pancreatic cancer day.

Pancreatic cancer knows no bounds. It can strike anybody, at any time. It is estimated that 5,200 Canadians will be diagnosed with this disease this year alone.

I encourage all my fellow members to wear purple this November 17 to shed light on pancreatic cancer and to help educate Canadians about this deadly disease.

* * *

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Ms. Kate Young (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this November marks the seventh year of the Shine the Light on Woman Abuse campaign. Launched by the London Abused Women's Centre, the campaign engages communities across Canada to stand in solidarity with abused women and girls, while supporting them in seeking services, by turning cities and regions purple for the month of November.

Oral Questions

Purple is a symbol of courage, survival, and honour, and it has come to symbolize the fight to end woman abuse. This year, we honour two women: Paula Gallant, a 36-year-old Nova Scotia resident who was murdered by her husband while her baby slept upstairs; and Mary Meadows, a southwestern Ontario woman who survived abuse with the support of the London Abused Women's Centre.

I encourage all my colleagues to join me and representatives from the London Abused Women's Centre for the lighting of the Hill ceremony on the steps of Parliament tonight, after the votes, to shine the light on abuse against women.

* * *

•(1415)

[Translation]

OPERATION RED NOSE

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry—Suroît, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the 26th Operation Red Nose campaign has begun in Salaberry-de-Valleyfield. This year, the goal is to provide transportation for 1,000 people.

Between November 25 and December 31, hundreds of volunteers will give rides to drivers who have been drinking while celebrating. Proceeds will go to Fondation Tournesol, an organization that helps families with children who are critically ill or have a major disability.

This year, the honorary chair is Marilyne Picard, co-founder of the Parents jusqu'au bout movement and mother of a four-year-old girl, Dylane, who has had several serious illnesses since birth.

I would also like to point out the new youth component, "Party sans dérapage", organized by Liberté de choisir, a local organization that promotes healthy living and addiction prevention. Let us remember that young people continue to be the primary victims of motor vehicle accidents in Quebec, where young people under the age of 35 account for over one-third of traffic fatalities.

I therefore encourage all those who want to get involved and help to go and meet with the Operation Red Nose volunteers this Saturday, November 19, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at 247 Larocque Road in Salaberry-de-Valleyfield.

Let us save lives together.

* * *

[English]

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as an Albertan it has been incredibly difficult to hear the stories of my friends and neighbours who have been affected by the economic downturn in our province.

Last week I held round tables throughout my Foothills constituency as part of the Alberta jobs task force, and I heard countless stories of job losses, mental health concerns, faltering businesses, and families struggling to make ends meet.

However, the resurrection of Keystone XL has brought renewed hope to thousands of unemployed energy workers in Alberta. The U.

S. president-elect supports Keystone XL and I hope our Prime Minister will also make this a top priority and work with the proponents of this pipeline to get it built. Keystone XL would create critical jobs for Canadian workers and offer a new route to get our energy resources to market. We cannot afford to let this opportunity pass us by.

Steelworkers in Saskatchewan and Ontario, welders in Nova Scotia, and engineers in Alberta are counting on the government to show leadership, abandon a job-killing carbon tax, and support a job-creating pipeline.

Get Keystone XL approved.

* * *

ANTI-SEMITISM

Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we were shocked and horrified to learn of the anti-Semitic incident targeting a local Jewish home in Ottawa just last night. Residents woke to find part of a swastika and anti-Semitic slur spray-painted on their front door. This incident clearly demonstrates that anti-Semitism still exists in Canada and that all of us must be vigilant, speak out, and actively work together to combat it. We simply cannot let this kind of discrimination go unanswered, or worse, seep into the everyday lives of Canadians.

All of us in the House and in our communities must signal that religiously motivated attacks are indeed contrary to Canadian values and principles. I ask all members to stand together, side by side, in condemning, denouncing, and most of all, repudiating this incident and any others like it.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

STATUS OF WOMEN

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today we wear purple to shine the light on violence against women. We stand in solidarity with women subject to violence, and we give them our unconditional support.

When I was health minister, I was pleased to announce a 10-year \$100 million investment to prevent, detect, and combat family violence and child abuse, with 30% of that funding going to aboriginal women, who, of course, are the most vulnerable of the victims.

Can the health minister reassure the House that this funding and investment is still ongoing?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Status of Women, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think we all stand in solidarity with women who are experiencing violence in their everyday lives. It is heartwarming to see so many people wearing purple today.

Oral Questions

I am very excited to be working on a federal gender-based violence strategy that is going to take into account the tremendous work that needs to be done in this country to address this issue. I am very much looking forward to reporting to this House in 2017 how our strategy will unfold.

* * *

• (1420)

TAXATION

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the new reality Canada faces is simple. The president elect in the United States has promised major personal and business tax cuts. The current Prime Minister has raised income taxes, business taxes, and is implementing a carbon tax. His approach will drive new investment away from Canada to the United States. This means less jobs for Canadians and less growth.

Faced with this new reality, will the Prime Minister cancel his tax hikes so Canada can compete?

Hon. Scott Brison (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we inherited a slow growth economy, and our government has invested in jobs and growth. It is why we reduced taxes for the middle class. It is why we introduced a Canada child benefit, which will raise 300,000 Canadian kids out of poverty. It is why we are investing in infrastructure to build more livable communities, a more competitive economy, and to create jobs and growth.

When the member talks about taxes, why did she vote against a tax cut for the middle class, one that really helps generate economic activity in communities across Canada?

* * *

NATURAL RESOURCES

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the reality is that it has been a year and the current government has not created one new, additional full-time job.

One year ago, the Prime Minister claimed that he was disappointed with President Obama's decision to reject the Keystone pipeline, but now that the new president elect has expressed his support, will the Prime Minister do the right thing and move quickly to lend his personal and public support to the Keystone XL pipeline?

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government had indicated its support for Keystone XL, and it also said that it was disappointed when President Obama saw it a different way.

All of the necessary approvals in Canada are in place. They have not timed out. If the company decides that it wants to introduce it once again, the government will, as it was before, be supportive of the application.

* * *

[Translation]

INFRASTRUCTURE

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's infrastructure bank should offer his billionaire buddies a return on their investment. This means user fees

and tolls. The Prime Minister eliminated the toll from the Champlain Bridge. Is he now saying that he supports tolls?

Who will make these decisions, the Prime Minister, mayors, the provinces, or investment firms?

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are very proud of the unprecedented investments our government is making. Some \$180 billion will be invested over the next 12 years in green infrastructure, social infrastructure, public transit, and transportation corridors to enhance trade.

We also created an infrastructure bank so that investors can contribute and we can do even more to enhance our infrastructure. That is what Canadians want.

[English]

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if foreign billionaires loan the Canadian government money for bridges, hospitals, and schools, they are not doing it out of the goodness of their hearts. They are looking for a return. Jobs will be a cost that is kept to a minimum, and taxpayer dollars will come second to their profits whenever a project goes over budget.

Can the Prime Minister explain what safeguards he will put in place to ensure that taxpayer dollars are treated with respect, and do not simply become a backstop for the margins of billionaire investors?

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we always treat our tax dollars with great respect in this government.

We have decided to make unprecedented investments in infrastructure, something that was never done by the previous government. We will invest \$180 billion during the next 12 years in green infrastructure, social infrastructure, public transit, and transportation corridors. This is a good thing for Canada, and we have created an infrastructure bank so we can get even more money to put into our infrastructure.

Canadians want this. It creates jobs. It is good for the economy.

* * *

PENSIONS

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal bill on pensions will penalize women who take time out of the workforce to raise kids, a protection that has existed since 1977.

The Liberal government insists that it is proud of the new Canada pension plan. How can it be proud of a plan that penalizes women? My question is simple. Was this an oversight in the drafting of this legislation, and if so, when will the government fix it?

Oral Questions

● (1425)

[Translation]

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to hear our hon. colleague talking about how proud everyone in the House is of the improvements to the Canada pension plan. These improvements will lift 300,000 families out of income insecurity in a few years. Most of these families consist of women. Beginning in 2019, this will lift 6,000 low-income workers out of insecurity, again, most of them women, all thanks to an increase in the working income tax benefit. This is very good news for all Canadians, and especially for women.

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the minister dodged the question, and he knows it. I guess he must not really be that proud after all, which is why he imposed time allocation.

In 1977, the government reformed the Canada pension plan to ensure that women would no longer be penalized. The prime minister of the day was Pierre Elliott Trudeau.

Forty years later, the current Prime Minister is refusing to admit to the mistake and is using closure to shut down debate.

Trampling on women's rights like that is not very feminist, is it?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, I appreciate this opportunity to go into more detail about how important the Canada pension plan enhancement is for women.

We know that, unfortunately, many of them live alone once they reach retirement age. In recent months, we lowered the age of eligibility for old age security to 65, which will lift 100,000 Canadian seniors out of poverty or prevent them from becoming poor. Many of those seniors are women, and 80% of the seniors living in poverty are single women.

This is important. We are working very hard—

The Speaker: The member for Outremont.

* * *

*[English]***NATURAL RESOURCES**

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals' bill removes rights from women. How can they be proud of that?

[Translation]

In the wake of Stephen Harper's decade-long reign, Canadians have lost faith in our pipeline review process.

The Liberals set up a panel to fix the review process, but most of the members of that panel are from the oil and gas industry.

Would the minister like to share with us his definition of "conflict of interest"?

[English]

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have to say I am surprised at the hon. member's response

to a panel of five distinguished Canadians who represent many interests. There are two indigenous leaders as part of this five-person panel. There are those who have long experience with the regulatory process. Would the member have us appoint people who have no experience with the process?

We are proud of the five. They will do great work for Canada.

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, that is the choice? Industry hacks or nobody?

Stephen Harper broke Canadians' trust in the pipeline review process, because he completely dismantled it. Instead of fulfilling their promise to fix the broken system, the Liberals have appointed a panel dominated by people with close ties to the oil industry to rewrite the rules for the oil industry. Hmm, I really wonder if the minister has even thought about the notion of conflict of interest.

How can Canadians have any faith that the government is fixing the Harper mistakes when it keeps repeating them?

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member perhaps may want to reflect on what he just said about distinguished Canadians, including grand chiefs, both in Saskatchewan and in British Columbia, that he is accusing of being corporate hacks.

That is not the kind of respectful discourse that will create some credibility for the regulator trying to do a good job for Canadians. These are very unfortunate accusations.

* * *

*[Translation]***FINANCE**

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, members will recall that we asked the Minister of Finance five times when he will balance the budget. The minister was never able to tell us when there will be a zero deficit in Canada.

Today, the parliamentary budget officer took the government to task. In his report, the parliamentary budget officer stated that the government does not have a timeline for balancing the budget.

Can the minister answer a very simple question? When will Canada again have a balanced budget?

● (1430)

Mr. François-Philippe Champagne (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Louis-Saint-Laurent for his question.

Our objective is to invest in Canadian middle-class families and create jobs in Canada. That is why we are very proud of what we have done. The fall economic statement announced historic investments in public transit infrastructure, green infrastructure for water and air quality, and social infrastructure. We have also invested in our trade corridors, and our rural and northern communities. We have created Investing in Canada and brought in a number of skills—

Oral Questions

The Speaker: The hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

[English]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in French or in English, zero deficit.

[Translation]

Zero deficit, it is the same thing.

[English]

However, the Liberals are unable to say that here in French or in English.

This government has been elected on the platform that it will have a balanced budget in 2019, but today it is no longer the case.

My question is quite simple, in French or in English: Give Canadians a date when Canada will get back to zero deficit.

Mr. François-Philippe Champagne (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to answer in English what we have done for Canadians, and in the fall economic statement, we invested in Canadian families. We invested in infrastructure. We invested in our economy to create jobs.

The world gets it and Canadians get it. Even the IMF managing director said she hopes the Canadian plan goes viral. I just hope that our friends on the other side will understand.

That is the plan for Canadians. That is a plan for Canadian jobs. That is a plan for Canadian families and we will continue with that.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I remind hon. members that the rules members of the House have made provide that we do not interrupt. I will ask the members to listen to the questions and to the answers.

The hon. member for Richmond—Arthabaska.

* * *

[Translation]

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Prime Minister was in Toronto pitching his new bank and claiming that the provinces and municipalities are happy with the idea of having access to additional funding.

However, what the Prime Minister did not say is that the municipalities in the regions, the rural municipalities, will not see a penny of that money. The \$15 billion that was earmarked for them will go into the infrastructure bank, and only projects of \$100 million and over will be approved.

Will the Prime Minister at least be honest with Canadians and tell the regions of Canada that, as a result of this bank, they will not see a single penny of infrastructure funding?

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we were elected on the promise of creating the largest infrastructure program in Canada's history. That is exactly what we are doing with \$180 billion in investments: \$81 billion in new funding, \$25 billion

for public transit, \$22 billion for green infrastructure, and \$22 billion for social infrastructure.

The infrastructure bank is an additional tool that will allow us to build more infrastructure. We want more, not less.

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there is no mention of the regions in the Speech from the Throne. There are no longer any ministers for the regional economic development of Canada. Now the Liberals have the nerve to take the \$15 billion that was allocated to the regions and put it into this future bank that will fund projects of only \$100 million or more and will not be accessible to Canada's rural municipalities and regions.

In short, the government is saying goodbye to small and medium-sized municipalities and hello to Liberal Party cronies.

Is that how the Liberal Party plans to create jobs?

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, allow me to say again that we are delivering the most ambitious infrastructure program in the history of Canada. I am talking about \$81 billion in new funding. I talked about green and social infrastructure and public transit. Perhaps my colleague overlooked this part of the document, but there is also \$2 billion going directly to small rural communities. We are investing not only in our cities, but also in all of our regions. It is time the hon. member understood that.

[English]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, privatization works. CN Rail, Air Canada, and Petro-Canada have gone from costly wards of the state to profitable private sector employers, because investors got both profit and the risk.

By contrast, the Liberals will force taxpayers to take on the financial risk of infrastructure megaprojects while allowing billionaire bankers, like the ones the Prime Minister was schmoozing yesterday, to enjoy all the profit. Why should taxpayers get all of the risk while billionaire insiders get all of the profit?

• (1435)

Mr. François-Philippe Champagne (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am sure my colleague on the other side would be happy to hear about our clear action plan to grow the middle class and Canadian jobs. We are very proud that our Prime Minister was in Toronto yesterday to speak with investors, and we had a number of ministers. Let me remind this chamber what one of the members said, and I hope the member is going to listen. The chief executive of the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan said, "I believe that they have a vision to put together a model which is pretty ground-breaking. ...In terms of the details of how it will actually be executed, I think they are correctly looking to the expertise that exists in the country for input and advice on how to move this agenda forward." That is the—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Carleton.

Oral Questions

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if pension funds want to invest in infrastructure, they can. They do not need a \$35-billion backstop from taxpayers. The question is who is actually going to run this. The Liberals say it will not be elected officials or public servants. Will investment bankers have the use of \$35 billion in tax dollars to guarantee the profits of other investment bankers? Self-serving insiders get the reward, taxpayers get the risk. How will the government ensure that this scheme does not become a \$35-billion, taxpayer-backed, self-licking ice cream cone?

[Translation]

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the infrastructure bank is far too serious a matter to joke about. As I said, we are delivering the largest infrastructure program in the history of Canada. We are investing in green infrastructure, social infrastructure, and public transit. The infrastructure bank is a fundamental tool for even more investment.

The minister is currently holding consultations with cities, municipalities, the provinces, and the private sector. We will have the opportunity to announce the details later. This is a good thing for Canada.

[English]

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Prime Minister and eight ministers were in Toronto for a meeting hosted by the powerful, private equity firm BlackRock to discuss what the Canadian government can do to help these investors get a piece of our public infrastructure. Of course, private investors will not invest out of the goodness of their hearts; they will want a big return. The only way they will get that is through tolls and user fees for Canadians. Why did the Liberals hide their privatization scheme from Canadians during the campaign? This is not what Canadians voted for.

Mr. Pablo Rodriguez (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I do not think we hide anything. I would invite my colleague to read page 8 of the platform. If she is not satisfied, she can read page 15 of the platform. If that is not enough, maybe she could read page 40 of the platform. That is three times.

[Translation]

We are investing in the largest infrastructure program in the history of Canada. The infrastructure bank is an additional tool that will allow us to have more infrastructure: not less infrastructure, but more infrastructure.

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals' Wall Street and Bay Street cronies are being ushered up to the trough.

The government is putting BlackRock in charge of infrastructure privatization and infrastructure revenue. The government also asked Crédit Suisse, an investment firm that buys infrastructure, to advise it on whether it should privatize our airports. Now we know that Morgan Stanley, which was involved in the 2008 financial crisis, is advising the Canadian government on whether it should privatize ports. Not even Stephen Harper went that far.

Where in the Liberals' platform is their promise to privatize infrastructure?

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, two weeks ago, I was very pleased to present my Transportation 2030 strategy. When it comes to transportation, the government is working for Canadians.

With respect to ports, the important thing is to make sure that it is good for Canada's economy. Ports are where our goods are imported and exported.

As for airports, the traveller comes first. Travellers' interests will always be top of mind as we make decisions.

* * *

ETHICS

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, no one seems surprised to see the old Liberal culture resurfacing when it comes to political financing. That being said, it does not make this dishonest and dubious practice any more acceptable, less offensive, or more ethical.

Is this privileged access to Liberal ministers for a select few wealthy Canadians somehow advantageous to the ministers themselves, and if so, for what purpose? Is this to guarantee that they will hold on to their ministerial portfolios?

• (1440)

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to be here to answer this question.

I would like to tell the House that the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner has confirmed that the Minister of Finance followed all the rules when he attended both the Halifax fundraiser and the Toronto fundraiser.

As I have repeated many times, federal fundraising rules are some of the strongest in the country, and we will continue to follow the rules.

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, protecting the integrity of cabinet positions should go without saying.

The exception, however, seems to be during fundraising galas, where everyone has fun and \$1,500 is the price for privileged access, so that the Liberal Party can raise some cash.

Can the ministers reassure this House, show some backbone, and say no to this dubious and dishonest Liberal fundraising practice by voting in favour of today's motion?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have said repeatedly in this House, federal fundraising rules are among the strictest in the country, and we will continue to follow the rules

It is very important to listen to what the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner said. She confirmed that the Minister of Finance followed all the rules when he took part in fundraising events in Toronto and Halifax.

[English]

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, she also said that the activities that the Liberal Party is currently engaged in are quite unsavoury, right in front of the ethics committee.

Later today, the Liberals will have a chance to show Canadians they believe in the words of the Prime Minister. The House will vote on our Conservative motion to empower the Ethics Commissioner to enforce the Prime Minister's own open and accountable government rules. Those are the rules we are talking about. The Ethics Commissioner has called for this authority, so it seems the Liberals are going to vote against the motion, at any rate.

If the Prime Minister believes in his own words and wants to be transparent, will he lead by example and direct his caucus to vote in favour of the Conservative motion today?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to rise in the chamber and share with all members, as well as Canadians, that the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner has confirmed that all rules were followed with regard to the finance minister's attendance at the Halifax fundraiser and the Toronto fundraiser.

As I have said many times in the House, Canada's fundraising rules are some of the strongest and we will continue to follow the rules. The level of engagement with this government is unprecedented and we will continue to engage with Canadians.

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if the Liberals do not even believe in their rules, how can Canadians believe anything they say about anything at all?

Since the election, the Liberals have held over 80 cash-for-access events, they made California dream trips, they have taxpayer-funded nannies and limos, ministers and senior staffers charging ineligible expenses, and the Prime Minister giving over \$200,000 to his BFFs to move to Ottawa. I could on, but I only have 35 seconds. I do not have 35 minutes.

Will the Prime Minister finally put a stop to all of this unethical behaviour and give the Ethics Commissioner the power to enforce his very own rules?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have said time and time again, and I encourage the member to listen to what I am saying. In Canada, we have some of the strongest and strictest fundraising rules and this government will continue to follow the rules.

Something that this government has done, unlike the previous government, is to engage with Canadians, to consult with Canadians, to listen to Canadians, and to deliver on the commitments we made during the campaign, including lowering the taxes on middle-class families.

[Translation]

Oral Questions

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Beloeil—Chambly, NDP): Mr. Speaker, first it was journalists, now indigenous activists are under surveillance.

We have learned that indigenous peoples who exercised their rights as citizens at protests on issues ranging from environmental protection to the denunciation of the far too many cases of missing or murdered indigenous women have been under RCMP surveillance since 2014. We can all agree that Bill C-51 will only make matters worse.

Can the minister explain to us why the RCMP is spying on indigenous activists?

[English]

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the right to peaceful protest is guaranteed by the charter. The focus of this particular investigation was in keeping with the recommendations of the Ipperwash Inquiry, which highlighted the importance of handling indigenous protests with dedicated and unique resources, strategies, and knowledge. The investigation concluded, by the way, that there were no direct threats to critical infrastructure and no organized crime nexus associated with indigenous protests.

* * *

• (1445)

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, last week, the Prime Minister stood in Parliament and agreed to immediately flow the \$155-million shortfall in child welfare, but Cindy Blackstock is already saying she may have to take the government to court because it is stonewalling. Meanwhile, there are communities that are struggling with serious allegations of sexual abuse. Without the resources on the ground, there is no way to protect these children. This is money that is urgently needed. This is about the credibility of the Prime Minister's word.

Is he going to flow that money or is this going to be just another in a long line of broken promises to indigenous kids in Canada?

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we take the tribunal's ruling very seriously, and we took the vote in the House of Commons very seriously as well. As members know, we have committed \$635 million to address the funding gap and we have committed to overhauling the child welfare system.

The issue of child abuse is very serious. It is going to be increasingly important that we talk openly about this and have first nations' leadership deal with this in a way that we can share this and deal with the 80% of addictions, 80% of incarcerations attributed to child abuse. This has to stop now.

*Oral Questions***MARINE TRANSPORTATION**

Mrs. Bernadette Jordan (South Shore—St. Margarets, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my riding of South Shore—St. Margarets is home to a beautiful coastline, where a number of my constituents make their living because of our proximity to the ocean. My constituents also recognize that a clean environment and a strong economy go hand in hand.

Would the Minister of Transport please update the House as to the work he has done, and will continue to do, to improve marine safety in Canada?

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for South Shore—St. Margarets for her advocacy, particularly with respect to abandoned and derelict vessels.

Our government is committed to improving marine safety as well as the safety of shipping on all our three coasts. It is also providing economic opportunity.

We were very proud to announce a week ago the oceans protection plan, a \$1.5 billion investment over the next five years. This is good for our coasts for generations to come. We are very happy we have involved our indigenous communities, coastal nations, as well local communities on our coasts.

* * *

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, rather than honour our veterans, the Minister of Defence used Remembrance Day to campaign for his Prime Minister's seat on the UN Security Council. He told the media that Canada would be committed to a three-year UN mission, but then his press secretary contradicted him, saying it was not true.

In opposition, the Prime Minister said that the Liberal Party could not support any military mission when the arguments to support it had not been presented in an open and transparent manner.

When will the Prime Minister put an end to this hypocrisy and explain to Canadians what our troops will be doing in Africa?

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we announced back in late August our government's intention to support UN peace support operations with a three-year funding commitment with police officers, military, and development, a whole of government approach.

A lot of work has been done since then, and a lot of work is being done right now. I just came back from a recent trip to Mali and Senegal. Once I have the whole of government approach and the analysis done, then I look forward to presenting all this information to Canadians and the House.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will essentially repeat my colleague's question.

As a veteran, it was a shame to see the minister use Remembrance Day to continue his UN public relations campaign.

On the subject of Iraq, when the Prime Minister was in opposition, he said he could not support any mission as long as the arguments to support it had not been openly presented. We are still waiting for the arguments in support of the mission in Africa.

When will the Liberals finally be transparent and explain where our troops are going to be deployed, what they will be doing, and under what conditions?

[*English*]

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be presenting the plan, with my colleagues, on a whole of government approach to peace support operations. However, about Remembrance Day, we can be proud of all the Blue Berets who stood on Remembrance Day and the work they have done.

I can also assure members that my former colleagues who I have personally served with are excited by the fact that they can now make a contribution. Regardless of where our troops are deployed, we can be proud of the great work they do for peace and stability around the world.

* * *

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us use Remembrance Day to honour our veterans and not use it for political purposes.

Military commanders on the ground broke the Liberals' cone of silence because "they want the Canadian public to have a better understanding of the...mission" in Iraq. The Liberal government not only has attempted to silence our military, it continues to mislead Canadians by insisting we are in a non-combat role.

Lieutenant Colonel Steve Hunter confirmed Canadians troops had been the first ones to engage the enemy on multiple occasions. Will the Minister of Defence finally be honest, acknowledge that our troops are in combat, and apologize for misleading Canadians?

● (1450)

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, regardless of where we send our troops in the world, regardless of operations, we are going to make sure they have a robust engagement, and we can be proud of their work.

On the information the member opposite is talking about in terms of the rules of engagement, our soldiers have a duty to protect civilians at times. Our troops are fulfilling this mission within the appropriate advise and assist mandate. Our Chief of the Defence Staff was at committee today. I have a tech brief that will be presented tomorrow. Also, we have journalists right now reporting on this in theatre. That is open and transparent in what we are providing.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of National Defence is playing word games.

Oral Questions

We know full well that there are troops on the ground. Indeed, the words “assist”, “train”, “advise” and all the other possible words they can think of in French or English are being used.

What we want is for the government to tell us whether Canadian troops are engaging in combat in any way. Canadians need to truly know whether the Canadians in combat are really on the ground.

[English]

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I stated before, our troops are in the advise and assist function, but they have robust rules of engagement to protect themselves. In many cases, they need to protect not only themselves but their coalition partners and civilians. This is imperative. They have a duty to do so. I am proud of the work they are doing in fulfilling their mission in an honourable manner.

When we conduct any operations around the world, we make sure they have the right capability, the right equipment, and robust rules of engagement to carry out their mission.

* * *

[Translation]

POVERTY

Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canada's food banks are telling us that in March alone close to one million people turned to food banks to feed themselves.

Their report recommends that the government establish a poverty reduction strategy before October 1, 2017, in order to help these people. We have an opportunity to take action now because my Bill C-245, which would establish such a strategy, is currently at second reading stage.

Will the government work with the NDP and support this bill?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will begin by saying hello to my colleague and thanking her for her work. I have had many opportunities to work with and to talk to her in the past few weeks. I know how much she wants to reduce poverty, just as we do.

She also knows that we are currently putting together the first-ever poverty reduction strategy in Canada. Furthermore, she knows that we announced important measures, in the March 2016 budget, that will reduce poverty among children, seniors, indigenous people, and many other Canadians in need.

* * *

[English]

STATUS OF WOMEN

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the number of Canadians using food banks approaches one million people. That kind of hunger should not be happening in Canada. The government should take real action.

Many users of food banks are women fleeing domestic violence. So far, the Liberal government has failed to deliver a comprehensive strategy to end violence against women.

As this evening Parliament is illuminated in purple, marking Woman Abuse Prevention Month, we call on the government to turn its feminist rhetoric into real feminist action.

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Status of Women, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for giving me a chance to talk about the work we have been doing to create a comprehensive federal gender-based violence strategy.

We knew that in order to create a strategy, we needed to talk to the people on the ground. That is exactly what we did over the summer. We met with thousands of people from coast to coast. We talked about the needs of women in our communities, the front-line workers, academics, and researchers. When we were complete, we pulled all that information together. We look forward to releasing a strategy in 2017.

* * *

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Health Canada has confirmed that the use of the harmful malaria drug mefloquine can cause long-lasting psychological affects. Many of our veterans have testified about suffering life-altering side affects after using the drug, yet the defence minister continues to support the use of mefloquine, stating that it is up to the soldiers to assess the risk themselves. Really?

My question is for the defence minister. With the evidence mounting, when will he do the right thing and protect our Canadian soldiers from mefloquine?

● (1455)

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we take the health and well-being of our Canadian Armed Forces members extremely seriously. Malaria is a life-threatening disease present in many areas of the world to which our members may deploy during their career.

The type of medication members of our Canadian Forces use must be left to the medical experts. Individuals are carefully assessed and screened by health services to ensure they have all the necessary information to make an evidence-based decision for their anti-malarial medication.

*Oral Questions***INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS**

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday I asked the minister why she was forcing band members from Onion Lake to go to court to get financial transparency. She indicated that she was very happy to have a meeting with me. This is not about me. This is not about the chief. This is about empowering community members and giving them the information they deserve.

When will the minister stop this fight against band members and transparency?

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government and first nations governments are very serious about transparency and accountability. It is common practice for first nations to report to my department, as well as to their members, with their financial and program performance statements.

If members of any community are having trouble receiving that from their chief and council, they are welcome to approach my department directly, and we will work with them to achieve their goal.

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the point is that they should not have to go to the minister's office to get basic information

Band members are being forced to take their chiefs to court to get the most basic financial information that every other Canadian deserves. Does the minister not realize how nonsensical it is to say "Contact my office, if they don't post it?" It is absolutely unreasonable.

Why will the minister not start empowering band members at Onion Lake, Samson Cree, Shuswap, and others who are begging for access to basic information?

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, from coast to coast to coast, first nations governments are accountable to their members. They post it on websites, they post it on password-protected websites, they have town hall meetings, and they post the audited statements in their band office.

I will repeat this. If any member is unable to achieve that or has not been shown the data, which I think is sometimes a different interpretation by the member than others, we will be happy to facilitate that information.

However, most first nations are reporting this way, and the member should stop demonizing them.

* * *

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Raj Grewal (Brampton East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are rightly proud of the thousands of new Canadians we welcome each year into our communities, many of whom come to Canada to attend our well-respected post-secondary institutions, including my alma mater, Wilfrid Laurier University.

Could the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship please update the House on how the government is attracting some of the best and brightest international students to come to Canada?

Hon. John McCallum (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I believe that the best potential future Canadians are international students. They are educated, they are relatively young, they speak English or French, and they know something about the country. We are in competition for their services with other countries.

That is why, yesterday, I announced changes in additional points for those students so that no less than 40% of our economic immigrants will in fact be international students.

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I wish the minister had that level of rigour with the Mexican visa requirement.

Today, at a parliamentary committee, a senior immigration official, who is in charge of all of Latin America, admitted that the Liberals knew there were risks associated with their rush to lift the Mexican visa requirement. We also learned from this official that the Liberals lifted the visa requirement in spite of this advice.

Canadians deserve to know, and this is really important, what were these risks, why were the Liberals hiding them from Canadians, and why did the Liberals blatantly ignore them?

• (1500)

Hon. John McCallum (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, unlike the previous Conservative government, we do welcome Mexicans to Canada. We welcome the tourists. We welcome their expenditures. We welcome closer ties with our NATO partner, and we are aware of the risks. Of course we knew there were risks. There are risks when we do anything.

We knew there were risks. We are working with the Mexican government to minimize those risks. We are monitoring the situation. However, we are very happy to welcome more Mexican tourists to this country, and to accept the jobs that go along with that.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the residents in my riding of Cowichan—Malahat—Langford are calling on the government to stop the dumping of contaminated soil from Canadian Forces Base Esquimalt to Shawnigan Lake.

This contamination is seeping into the watershed, threatening aquatic life and drinking water for an entire community. The community was never consulted and never approved it.

Will the Minister of National Defence stop the dumping of this contaminated soil in this area and will the government protect Shawnigan Lake, which provides drinking water for thousands of local residents?

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am aware of the situation and I have asked the department for additional briefings on it. When I have additional information, I will provide it for the member.

* * *

[Translation]

SCIENCE

Mr. Yves Robillard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as a former teacher, I care a great deal about our young students' future prospects.

Can the Minister of Science tell us how the federal government is encouraging our young people to learn about new technologies in a world where technology is constantly evolving?

Hon. Kirsty Duncan (Minister of Science, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Marc-Aurèle-Fortin for his question.

[English]

Our government is working hard to equip young Canadians with the education and tools they need to succeed in an innovative economy. NSERC's technology access centres grants help engage youth in the development of new technologies. Through access to new research, cutting-edge technology, and industry professionals, students at Canada's colleges and CEGEPs are able to gain hands-on experience.

* * *

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, while the Prime Minister dithers, delays, and duplicates reviews for job-creating natural resource projects in Canada, president-elect Trump has said that he will move quickly to ramp up production of \$50 trillion worth of American energy reserves.

The United States has gone from being our biggest energy customer to our biggest competitor. Will this game-changing U.S. election finally wake the government up to the challenges facing our energy sector, and will the Liberals finally start supporting jobs in Canada that support Canadian energy workers?

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I gave an answer earlier about the attitude of the Canadian government to the Keystone XL pipeline, should the company decide to reintroduce it so that the president-elect can make a decision.

The member also knows that within the next number of weeks, there will be very important decisions made in Canada. We believe that we have followed a process that will carry the confidence of Canadians.

As the member knows, this government believes that economic development and environmental stewardship go hand in hand.

[Translation]

Mr. Louis Plamondon (Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the government is proposing to invest \$22 billion in green

Oral Questions

infrastructure, including interprovincial transmission lines that it claims will reduce our dependence on coal.

That description seems to have been written with Muskrat Falls in mind, a project that has been cobbled together to compete with Hydro-Québec.

In addition to guaranteeing loans for this project, is the government also planning to provide direct funding for the disaster that is Muskrat Falls?

[English]

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government has extended loan guarantees to the Muskrat Falls project. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is entirely responsible for the completion of this.

It is part of the government's strategy to make sure that we are producing non-emitting sources of electricity, which will very much be a part of Atlantic Canada's energy future.

[Translation]

Mr. Rhéal Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, imagine a situation where a taxpayer who was unable to make his mortgage payments went to the bank and was given a payment holiday and a generous increase on his line of credit. That would never happen. However, that is what the government is doing with Newfoundland and Labrador, which has defaulted on its \$266-million loan. The Liberals are extending deadlines and adding \$2.9 billion to the previous \$6.4-billion loan guarantee for Muskrat Falls.

Will this government finally stop using Quebecers' money to fund unfair competition against Hydro-Québec?

● (1505)

[English]

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Muskrat Falls project has been beset by difficulties, cost overruns, and delays. The project has been in trouble. The project, however, carries the potential of providing clean electricity to Newfoundland and Labrador and throughout Atlantic Canada. This is part of the national government's interest in encouraging these kinds of developments so that we will be easing the transition to a low carbon economy.

* * *

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I would like to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of Mr. Eirik Sivertsen, member of Parliament from Norway, and chair of the Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region and parliamentarians attending the standing committee meeting.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Business of Supply

[Translation]

POINTS OF ORDER

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Beloil—Chambly, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I know time is tight, so I will make this quick. I just want to draw your attention to statements made on social networks concerning an accredited Canadian parliamentary press gallery journalist being denied access to a committee.

[English]

I know that committees are masters of their own destiny, but given your responsibility toward the precinct, as well as our relationship with the parliamentary press gallery, without the ability to verify the veracity of this claim, I would certainly hope that you would take note of it and investigate further and make sure that journalists' rights have not been impeded in this particular situation.

[Translation]

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member for raising this issue. As he said, committees are masters of their own destiny, but I will look into the situation. I thank the member.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—PREFERENTIAL ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT

The House resumed from November 3 consideration of the motion.

The Speaker: It being 3:05 p.m., pursuant to an order made on Thursday, November 3, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion of the hon. member for Red Deer—Lacombe relating to the business of supply.

Call in the members.

And the bells having rung:

The question is on the motion. Shall I dispense?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

[Chair read text of motion to House]

● (1515)

Before the Clerk announced the result of the vote:

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet: Mr. Speaker, the NDP intended to vote for the motion, but when you asked all those in favour of the motion to rise, the Clerk named hon. members of the government when our leader was already on his feet. We therefore were unable to vote for the motion and we would like the House to consider that we voted for the motion.

The Speaker: I paused after what seemed to me to be the end of the votes in favour of the motion. I did not see anyone rise before I asked all those opposed to the motion to rise.

[English]

The hon. member for Cariboo—Prince George.

Mr. Todd Doherty: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. colleague from Parkdale—High Park was not in his seat during the entire time of the vote.

Hon. Andrew Leslie: Mr. Speaker, in the past, when mistakes have been made, unanimous consent has sometimes not been granted. In the spirit of today's Parliament, if you seek it, I believe you would find unanimous consent to count the NDP vote for the vote just passed as for.

The Speaker: I am more than happy to ask it, but I see the hon. member for Hochelaga rising.

[Translation]

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet: Mr. Speaker, I would just like to point out that before the end of the vote in favour of the motion, the hon. member for Outremont was already standing in his place.

The Speaker: I said what I saw and I waited.

[English]

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. government whip for the magnanimity in allowing the NDP votes to count. I was able to register my vote, but I was confused by the fact that I had not gotten to my seat yet, with the NDP votes first, as they usually would be, so I would also like my vote to count as for the motion.

The Speaker: The hon. chief government whip has asked if there is unanimous consent to allow the NDP members' votes to count in favour of the motion. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Speaker: I am told that we have to call upon those remaining members who have not voted yet in favour of the motion to please rise.

The Speaker: Order, please.

The member for Cariboo—Prince George has suggested that the hon. member for Parkdale—High Park was not in his seat during the whole vote. The hon. member for Parkdale—High Park.

● (1520)

Mr. Arif Virani: Mr. Speaker, during the course of the voting I was in my place when I voted. However, after concluding the vote, I made the mistake of inadvertently getting up and going to sit next to Minister McCallum to discuss an issue with him—

The Speaker: Order, please. I think the hon. member knows that he has made a second mistake today. We do not use members' names in the House. I think he is referring to the Minister of Immigration.

I think the hon. member for Parkdale—High Park just wants to finish.

Mr. Arif Virani: I will try to be three times lucky, Mr. Speaker.

I was in my seat during the course of voting. I apologize for having inadvertently left my seat after the act of voting. In the spirit of consent that seems to be permeating the House today in terms of what we allowed for the NDP, I would ask that my vote count today.

The Speaker: There appears to be no consent, so the record will be corrected.

Members need to remember to stay in their seats throughout the vote until they hear the results, which they will momentarily.

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

(Division No. 145)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif	Albas
Albrecht	Allison
Ambrose	Anderson
Angus	Arnold
Aubin	Barlow
Barsalou-Duval	Benson
Bergen	Bernier
Berthold	Bezan
Blaikie	Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Block	Boucher
Boulerice	Boutin-Sweet
Brassard	Brosseau
Brown	Calkins
Cannings	Caron
Carrie	Chong
Choquette	Christopherson
Clarke	Clement
Cooper	Cullen
Davies	Deltell
Diotte	Doherty
Donnelly	Dreeshen
Dubé	Dusseault
Duvall	Eglinski
Falk	Fortin
Gallant	Garrison
Généreux	Genuis
Gladu	Godin
Gourde	Hardcastle
Harder	Hoback
Hughes	Jeneroux
Johns	Julian
Kelly	Kent
Kitchen	Kmiec
Kwan	Lake
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Laverdière
Leitch	Liepert
Lobb	Lukiwski
MacGregor	MacKenzie
Maguire	Malcolmson
Masse (Windsor West)	Mathysen
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	McCauley (Edmonton West)
McColeman	McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)	Moore
Mulcair	Nantel
Nater	Nicholson
Nuttall	Obhrai
Paul-Hus	Plamondon
Poilievre	Quach
Raitt	Ramsey
Rankin	Raves
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Sansoucy
Saroya	Scheer
Schmale	Shields
Shipley	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
Stetski	Stewart
Strahl	Stubbs
Sweet	Thériault
Tilson	Trost
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Business of Supply

NAYS

Members

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Alleslev	Amos
Anandasangaree	Arseneault
Arya	Ayoub
Badawey	Bagnell
Bains	Baylis
Beech	Bennett
Bibeau	Bittle
Blair	Boissonnault
Bossio	Bratina
Breton	Brison
Caesar-Chavannes	Carr
Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)	Casey (Charlottetown)
Chagger	Champagne
Chan	Chen
Cuzner	Dabrusin
Damoff	DeCoursey
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Di Iorio	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dzerowicz	Easter
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Ellis	Erskine-Smith
Eyking	Eyolfson
Fergus	Fillmore
Finnigan	Fisher
Fonseca	Foote
Fragiskatos	Fraser (West Nova)
Fraser (Central Nova)	Fry
Fuhr	Gameau
Gerretsen	Goldsmith-Jones
Goodale	Graham
Grewal	Hajdu
Hardie	Harvey
Hehr	Holland
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
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendès	Mencicino
Mihychuk	Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Soeurs)
Soeurs)	
Monsef	Morrissey
Murray	Nassif
Nault	O'Connell
Oliphant	Oliver
O'Regan	Ouellette
Paradis	Peschisolido
Peterson	Petitpas Taylor
Philpott	Picard
Poissant	Qualtrough
Ratansi	Rioux
Robillard	Rodriguez
Romanado	Rota
Rudd	Ruimy
Rusnak	Sahota
Saini	Sajjan
Samson	Sangha
Sarai	Scarpaleggia
Schieffe	Schulte
Serré	Sgro
Shanahan	Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Sikand
Simms	Sohi

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Spengemann
 Tan
 Tootoo
 Vandenberg
 Whalen
 Wilson-Raybould
 Young

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion defeated.

• (1525)

[*Translation*]

I wish to inform the House that because of the deferred recorded division, government orders will be extended by 14 minutes.

* * *

[*English*]

BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2016, NO. 2

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-29, A second Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on March 22, 2016 and other measures, be read the second time and referred to a committee, of the amendment and of the amendment to the amendment.

Mr. Bev Shipley (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC): Mr. Speaker, indeed it is always good to stand in this place, particularly after the bit of confusion that we just went through in the voting. I can say that with Bill C-29, the budget implementation act, there is no confusion; it is actually a train wreck. It should not be called an implementation bill. It maybe should be referred to as a renovation bill, because when something is as disastrously wrong in the economy of this country as it is now, it takes not only severe renovations but also a change of culture within a government.

The riding of Lambton—Kent—Middlesex is in southwestern Ontario, and is very much a rural riding made up of small and medium-sized businesses. Quite honestly, in the riding I do not have a large business. We are made up of hard-working, middle-income folks and families who get up every day and go to work. They are strong entrepreneurs who generate wealth and employment, something that is hard to find in this budget. These folks in my riding actually stimulate jobs. That is because they have endured some hard times but have been able to buckle down and survive, up until some of these proposals in this budget.

Something that rang strong in a riding like mine and those across this country was the talk in the campaign by the Liberals about what they were going to do. Actually, the Liberals did not talk about what they were going to do, but actually made promises.

We were in the riding last week during Legion Week as we celebrated and thanked our veterans across this great country of Canada. We thanked the veterans who are alive, but we also recognized with our hearts the work and the commitment of those who gave their lives so we could be in a place like this and be able to have free discussion about topics that are important to Canadians. We celebrated Legion Week and thanked those who gave their lives for us in this great country and the veterans who were there. We always comment on and commend those who are in uniform, who

stand up for us not only in our great nation of Canada but also abroad in many countries.

However, when the government breaks that promise, as the current government has done in so many ways, it takes a bit of the heart out of people. The broken promises did not happen three or four years after the election; they happened within days and weeks of the government being sworn in. It takes away the credibility not only of the government but, quite honestly, of all of us who are elected people, because people say they just do not trust any elected people. That is very unfortunate. Let me just say a bit about what happened with the breaking of promises and why that was so detrimental to people in my riding and, I am sure, across the country.

In the election campaign, the current Prime Minister talked about a teeny-weeny modest deficit that the Liberal government was going to hand to Canadians. They said it would be a \$10 billion deficit. We have heard that time and again. Not within a year but within weeks, the \$10 billion escalated to \$30 billion.

• (1530)

That is 300% or three times what the projection was. When we talk about billions of dollars, ordinary Canadians really do not wrap their heads around what a billion dollars is, but they can wrap their head around what it actually means.

Let me give a little example of what it means, because this is what happens when the Liberals do not do what they say they will do and expect ordinary Canadians to believe them and then understand that when they break the promise, it does not mean much. That is really what the Liberals want us to think.

A small business guy goes into the bank with a proposal and a business plan that goes with it. He tells the bank or the lending institution that this is his business plan, that he needs a million dollars, that this is how he will bring it forward and this is how he will pay it back. His business plan talks about the growth. He thought about it. In six weeks he went back to the bank and tells the banker that he still has the same business plan and the sort deficit projection that I just mentioned, so that he needs not \$1 million, but \$3 million now.

I do not know if anyone on that side has ever had a business. Maybe no one on that side has had to put together a business plan and then take it to a financial institution. However, if an individual from a small business did what I just described, and it could have been any business in my riding, the banker would show them the door.

The difference is that the banker cannot show the government the door today, because the taxpayers are the lenders. Maybe in four years they will be able to show them the door. The Liberals promised they would cut taxes for small business. No, they never want to lose a revenue source from a tax.

The other promise was to make the tax plan revenue neutral, with the Liberals taking from the top earning rich and giving it to the poor, the lower income group. That was supposed to be revenue neutral. It took about three weeks to discover it was not revenue neutral. It was actually about a \$2 billion hit to the taxpayers of Canada.

Government Orders

My point is that the government right now has absolutely no credibility. It now has a debt that is escalating. The Liberals have no plan for how they will pay it back. When the Prime Minister was asked when he would balance the budget, as was the Minister of Finance in question period today, they actually did not know. The Prime Minister indicated earlier that he did not know what the deficit would be.

I say to Canadians and to small business people and their families that we have a serious concern. We have a growing deficit and a debt that has escalated to what some say will cost us another \$5 billion a year in interest payments. Where I come from, when we are in a hole, it is best to quit digging.

However, I get the sense that is not the culture of the Liberal Party. They are on a glorious trip of big deficits, thinking they will just spend their way out of debt. I do not know where that has worked. From a business perspective, it just does not work.

I see that I am at the end of my time and I will be more than glad to take questions, but I am just concerned that with this budget the Liberals have betrayed Canadians and have broken their promises to them. This budget implementation act, unfortunately, will not be supported by me or my party.

• (1535)

Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the hon. member would reflect on what the former government claimed was a balanced budget, considering that there was billions of dollars in lapsed funding that was unspent from programs the Conservatives promised but had not delivered. They sold the shares in General Motors for a loss. All of it was really to construct the appearance of a balanced budget where clearly none existed, not to mention the fact that the former government had us in deficit when times were good, after inheriting many years of surpluses.

Perhaps he can reflect on that in terms of the virtues of a balanced budget as the Conservatives saw it.

Mr. Bev Shipley: Mr. Speaker, that is a great question. I do not know if the member was here when we were in government in 2008, but we went through the greatest recession this country had seen since the Great Depression of the thirties. At the time, I walked through how we would go into that in terms of the economy, as well as an exit plan on how we would come out of it. Interestingly, the current government is not in a recession, but appears to be content with and driven to creating a recession in Canada with its spending.

Is it easy to balance a budget the way the Liberals did by cutting all the transfers to the provinces, by cutting health care transfers? Absolutely. If we download everything onto someone else, it is easy. We did not do any of that. We increased our transfers, we cut taxes on Canadians to the lowest in 50 years, and we increased transfers to the provinces. We had a great record.

On top of that, in the last year no net new jobs have been created. Coming out of a recession in 2008, some 1.2 million net new jobs were created, 80% of which were full time and 80% in the private sector.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):

Mr. Speaker, it no surprise that I disagree with what the member is saying. I believe that Canadians have reason to be very excited about the first budget presented by the Prime Minister and the Liberal government because, in many ways, one could say that many of the promises made in the last federal election have been fulfilled. We can talk about the tax increase on Canada's wealthiest, something that the Conservatives voted against. We can talk about the middle-class tax cut, which has affected nine million Canadians, such as health care workers, industrial floor workers, and the like. Nine million Canadians have benefited from that tax cut for the middle class, and the Conservatives voted against that too. We can talk about the child care benefit program, which has lifted thousands of children out of poverty. We can talk about the commitment to again increase the GIS, which has lifted thousands of seniors out of poverty. These are all commitments that were made in one form or another and have been fulfilled.

Therefore, my question for the member is this. At the very least, would he acknowledge that many of the aspects of the platform have been realized in this very budget we are voting on?

• (1540)

Mr. Bev Shipley: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member talks about how the Liberals changed things and how they put the question forward. They have a backhanded way of doing things. He listed all of the ways in which they think they may have actually helped people. Then they turn around and bring in a Canada pension plan increase, an increase in EI premiums, and a carbon tax that will increase the taxes paid by Canadians.

They will not reduce the business tax on businesses, but who is it that business people in small businesses hire? It is the people. Therefore, the little they give on the one side they then scoop from these people in another way with their backhanded ways.

Who will be most affected by the carbon tax? It is the seniors, the low and middle-class income people and, as I live in a rural riding, the farmers. Every time they fill the combine up it will cost them another \$100. That is not good for the middle-class income people or for Canadians.

Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to stand and speak on Bill C-29, a second act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on March 22, 2016, and other measures.

I am delighted to stand in this House and discuss a budget that provides much-needed help for the middle class and builds upon a strong economy. As we all know, when middle-class Canadians have more money to save, invest, and grow the economy, everyone in this country will benefit.

A strengthened middle class means that hard-working Canadians can look forward to a good standard of living and better prospects for their kids. When we have an economy that works for the middle class, we have a country that works for everyone.

Government Orders

We must do for our kids and grandkids what our parents and grandparents did for us. For example, we are giving Canadian families more help with the high cost of raising children. Our government has introduced a new Canada child benefit that is simpler, tax free, and more generous. The Canada child benefit will replace existing federal child benefits. With the CCB, nine out of 10 Canadian families will receive higher monthly benefits, and hundreds of thousands of children will be lifted out of poverty.

In my home province of Newfoundland and Labrador, families will receive, over a two-year investment, some \$112 million under the new CCB. This new investment will enable families and single parents to better provide for the day-to-day needs of their children.

After a decade of being abandoned by the former federal government and the administrative neglect of a provincial Conservative government, I am pleased to now work on behalf of all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to deliver huge benefits for our province.

For example, we were able to assist Newfoundland and Labrador with a \$31-million stabilization fund, \$68.2 million for small craft harbours, almost \$110 million to Memorial University, and an additional \$2.9-billion loan guarantee for Muskrat Falls. This does not include over \$235 million for municipal infrastructure projects, and a further \$78 million of Parks Canada investment in Newfoundland and Labrador.

With the new co-operative approach between the federal and provincial government, we are delivering more solid investments to our province. In addition, we are also looking after those working Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, and all working Canadians, to better prepare them now for a much more secure retirement in the future.

As such, I am delighted that as a government we are proposing strategic and innovative changes to the Canada pension plan. Some of the things we are doing that will provide a more secure and stable retirement for hard-working Canadians include: increasing the amount of retirement pension, and also, very important to me, increasing survivor and disability pensions, and the post-retirement benefit, subject to the amount of additional contributions made and the number of years over which those contributions are made; increasing the maximum level of pensionable earnings by 14% as of 2025; providing for the making of additional contributions beginning in 2019; providing for the creation of the additional Canada pension plan account, and the accounting of funds in relation to it; including the additional contributions and increasing benefits in the financial review provisions of the act; and authorizing the Governor in Council to make regulations in relation to those provisions.

I am very proud to be working on behalf of my constituents, in the great riding of Avalon and to be part of a government that believes every Canadian deserves a secure and dignified retirement after a lifetime of hard work. In addition, I am pleased to speak from a very personal perspective regarding the current benefits of the Canada pension plan.

In early 2000, I lost my wife after a lengthy and courageous battle with cancer. At the age of 40 years, I accepted the responsibility of raising my young son to ensure his well-being and provide for an

education that would help secure his future. After sitting here and listening to some of the hon. members opposite, it perturbs me that they use information that distorts the unfounded negativities of the real and true benefits of the Canada pension plan.

We have heard members opposite negligently throw out numbers and facts and state that 20% of Canadians do not benefit from their investments in the Canada pension plan because there is no one left to receive the survivor benefit. I do not believe this represents the true facts, and I do not think it is useful to this debate.

● (1545)

Furthermore, members opposite have stated that individuals are investing hundreds of thousands of dollars in the Canada pension plan and receiving a mere \$2,500 payout. Once again, these statements by members are unfortunate and do nothing to provide an informative and factual debate in the House. The Canada pension plan and retirement is important to so many Canadians and we need to make strategic decisions that will provide enhanced future benefits.

From my personal experience, while the benefit is not large, as my wife died at the young age of 37, I have been receiving survivor benefits since my wife's passing in 2000. In addition, my son was receiving a monthly contribution from Canada pension during his high school and post-secondary education. Unlike what members opposite would want us to believe, the benefit was certainly a financial help to my son and me.

We all know that today middle-class Canadians are working harder than ever, but many are worried that they will not have put enough money away for their retirement. Each year fewer and fewer Canadians have workplace pensions to fall back on. As a responsible government with a commitment to strengthen and grow the middle class, we made a commitment to Canadians to strengthen the CPP in order to help them achieve their goal for a strong, secure, and stable retirement. Now we are making meaningful changes to the CPP that will allow Canadians to retire with more money in their pockets.

Every Canadian deserves a secure and dignified retirement after a lifetime of hard work and we have taken a powerful step to make that happen. When our finance minister and his provincial counterparts first started to discuss the future of pensions, it was a real opportunity for them to seize on a renewed spirit of collaboration and to get things done. The deal would boost how much each Canadian will get from their pension from one-quarter of their earnings now to fully one-third. Simply put, there will be more money waiting for Canadians when they retire. To make sure these changes are affordable, we will phase them in slowly over seven years from 2019 to 2025, so that the impact is small and gradual. The revisions are designed to help Canadians in every step of their lives, our grandparents, parents, and children.

Government Orders

Retired Canadians deserve to enjoy their freedom. No retired Canadian should have to worry about selling their home or getting a part-time job. The increases to CPP contribution rates are being gradually phased in starting in 2019. This is the responsible thing to do to make sure business and workers have time to adjust to the additional contributions associated with the enhanced program. The Government of Canada will enhance the working income tax benefit to offset the incremental CPP contributions of eligible low-income workers and provide tax deductibility for the enhanced portion of employee CPP contributions.

As stated earlier, the government has already taken action to support families by introducing the Canada child benefit to help families with the high cost of raising their kids. We cut taxes for the middle class, and now we have expanded the retirement benefits through a strengthened CPP. We have also helped our seniors by increasing the guaranteed income supplement top-up benefit by up to \$947 annually for the most vulnerable single seniors. We know this will improve the financial security of about 900,000 single seniors across Canada. We also restored the eligibility age for old age security and guaranteed income supplement benefits to age 65.

As I conclude my remarks on Bill C-29, I believe it is more important than ever that we be responsible to the needs of our constituents, that we do what we can to continue growing the middle class, enhance family benefits, and secure an enhanced retirement program for working Canadians.

• (1550)

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to my hon. colleague. He is from Newfoundland and I do not think that is anywhere close to Mississauga, the last time I checked on a map. Newfoundland, like northern Ontario, relies on regional economic development, but the Liberals are telling us we do not need our own voice in northern Ontario, they will just get rid of that and replace our northern Ontario voice with a guy from Mississauga and then take the funds that are supposed to be for northern economic development and put them into a business in guess where? Mississauga.

I do not know if my hon. colleague has spoken in defence of ACOA for his region, but I have not heard any of my Liberal colleagues from northern Ontario talk about the cuts to broadband. They have said nothing about economic development and they seem to think it is perfectly fine that money from our region is going to Mississauga to help something that is right there in the minister's backyard.

Is my hon. colleague going to stand with us and fight for regional economic development and have our stand-alone agencies with our ministers from our own region and not some fiefdom in Mississauga?

Mr. Ken McDonald: Mr. Speaker, I will stand proudly with the minister responsible for ACOA from Mississauga, because under his rule as minister, Newfoundland has benefited more than it has in the past 10 or 12 years, in total probably in just one year. My riding alone has received millions of dollars from ACOA through the help of the minister and I certainly do not ask for any apologies from him for being from Mississauga.

Hon. Alice Wong (Richmond Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we all understand that small businesses are job creators and the Liberals broke their promise and increased small business taxes. That is the first question. Why did they break their promise?

The second question I would like to ask is this. They will not help seniors at all by putting a carbon tax on everything. Seniors have to pay for their heating and groceries, and that is most important. The Liberal government has also cut the TFSA. Statistics have shown that it is seniors who save money for their retirement days, and yet the Liberal government took that away.

I would ask why the government has broken all of its promises.

Mr. Ken McDonald: Mr. Speaker, to answer the first part of her question, as a former small business owner, what I found most important was that my customers had the money to avail themselves of my services. We have done that. Through tax cuts to the middle class and the new Canada child benefit, we have put more money into the pockets of people who use small businesses each and every day. That makes small businesses better off, a lot longer than a 1% or 0.5% cut in the income tax rate.

On the issue of seniors, we are working to make the lives of seniors better. As I mentioned in my speech, over \$900 will go to single seniors and the most vulnerable with low incomes, as well as the affordable housing program for seniors. In Newfoundland alone, I believe \$200 million is allocated for that.

We do care about seniors, we care about the middle class, and we care about small businesses.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am wondering if my colleague could comment on the reduction from 67 to 65 of the age of retirement. I would ask him to provide his thoughts on that.

Mr. Ken McDonald: Mr. Speaker, I was a resident when that was brought in by the former government. I was not in favour of it then and when I became part of the Liberal government here today, I was certainly glad to see it reduced back to 65. A lot of people plan for retirement. To increase it from 65 to 67 with no consultation and no consideration of people not being prepared for it was totally irresponsible of the former government.

Mr. Michael Levitt (York Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak on Bill C-29, an act to implement provisions of budget 2016.

I would like to focus on my riding of York Centre, the wonderful and diverse community I represent, and how measures in the budget implemented by this bill are helping the middle class in my riding.

Government Orders

I am a firm believer in engaging with constituents, not just at election time but between elections, and hearing about what matters to them so I can bring their priorities and concerns to this House and represent them fully. Just this past weekend, I held what I call “coffee with your MP” in my riding. The idea is that I sit in four coffee shops for an hour each and invite members of the community to come and meet with me to talk about their concerns. It is a wonderful way to directly engage with my constituents and to also support local small businesses.

Each day I meet and talk to people from York Centre and beyond, and they tell me how positive they are feeling about this government's actions so far. I talk to parents of young children who now have the support they need to make ends meet. The Canada child benefit introduced in this budget, the benefits that would be indexed to inflation by this bill, is a revolutionary program to help the middle class and those working hard to join it.

I have met far too many families who constantly struggle to keep up with expenses. These are single mothers who face the challenge of supporting their children on a single income, and parents who face stagnant wages as the cost of raising their families increases. This is why the government introduced the new Canada child benefit. It is to give Canadian families more help with the high cost of raising children.

The Canada child benefit is simpler. Most families receive a single payment every month, tax free. Families do not have to pay taxes on payments. It is better targeted to those who need it most. Low and middle-income families get higher payments, and those with the highest incomes receive less than under the previous system.

It is also much more generous. Families benefiting will see an average increase of almost \$2,300 in the 2016-17 benefit year. With the Canada child benefit, nine out of 10 Canadian families are receiving higher monthly benefits, and hundreds of thousands of children are being lifted out of poverty. To ensure that benefits match the cost of living, these benefits will be indexed. I cannot stress enough how important this investment is for the middle class of Canada and particularly for my riding of York Centre.

An incredible number of young families make York Centre their home and raise their children there, but as our community grows, our infrastructure has to grow and adapt with it. As I talk to my constituents, many of the concerns they raise relate to how their neighbourhoods are affected by aging infrastructure and how to adapt to growing density in their area. They are concerned about transit, about being able to get to work on time and about getting home at a reasonable hour.

It is unreasonable for someone who lives in York Centre and works in downtown Toronto to have a two-hour commute, when it should take less than 45 minutes. It is unreasonable to wait in traffic for an hour to move half a kilometre. This is not hyperbole. It is the daily reality faced by too many of my constituents.

On Dufferin Street at Finch Avenue, thoroughfares in York Centre, there is near constant gridlock. Residents in my riding waiting for a bus can wait for almost an hour to find one they can board. Residents suffer, businesses suffer, and our economy suffers because of these harsh realities. This intersection is also listed every

year near the top in the annual CAA worst road for driving survey, another manifestation of our crumbling infrastructure.

There is a consensus that investing in infrastructure is the right thing to do, which is yet another reason I am proud of this government's investment in our country's infrastructure.

● (1555)

When we invest in our country and our communities, we are not just helping Canadians now but are investing in greater economic growth for the long term. The benefits will be felt by our children and by our children's children.

Budget 2016 is committed to doubling infrastructure investments over the next 10 years, including dedicated funding for public transit. We are working in partnership with all three levels of government to build rapid transit that will benefit communities for years to come.

What does this look like? In York Centre, we are seeing investments in transit across the board. The Spadina subway, which ends in my riding at Downsview, is being extended with federal funding, and we can expect it to open next year. This is just the beginning. The ambitious 10-year infrastructure investment presented by the government is a bold plan that will spur growth and help this country and York Centre get moving again.

It is not just transit. Community infrastructure and investments in affordable housing will help make our cities and communities more livable and more affordable.

York Centre has an aging stock of affordable housing, and families are deeply affected by the lack of availability. There is a 97,000-family wait list for Toronto community housing. As our population ages, we are facing shortages of affordable housing that meets seniors' needs as well.

I hear these concerns nearly every day from constituents concerned about being able to afford retirement, both those looking to retire and those who are currently retired. They worry about being able to stay in their homes. That is why I am pleased that budget 2016 is investing \$2.3 billion over two years to give Canadians greater access to more affordable housing.

Far more than just bricks and mortar, infrastructure is a key driver of any community's social development. That is why the government recognizes that investing in infrastructure is essential to equipping municipalities with the building blocks they need to support a high standard of living for all Canadians.

Government Orders

Investing in public infrastructure is about creating good, well-paying jobs. It is about protecting the environment and improving public health. It is about developing recreational and cultural centres where people can enrich their lives and strengthen community ties.

I was privileged to announce back in June funding for the Jewish community centre's new campus in York Centre. This investment will lead to an incredible number of community resources being made available to young families, students, and seniors: fitness and recreation programs and facilities, health and wellness programs, arts and culture, and early child education. Healthy, active, well-connected communities are happier communities, and this investment will make a real difference in the lives of those who live and work in York Centre and North Toronto.

On a personal note, when I first moved here from Scotland as a teenager, my mother and I frequented the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre where this expansion is taking place. It was an essential resource for us when we felt like strangers in a big city, a feeling I know is shared by so many new immigrants today, many of whom call York Centre home. I remember the fun I had taking drama classes and doing sports programs in the gym. My own kids shared that positive experience there as well.

As MPs, we know the significant needs that exist among young families, new immigrants, and seniors, to name just few of the groups that will immediately benefit from the investment in our community infrastructure.

I think I have made clear the benefits of this government's economic plan as laid out in budget 2016 that would be implemented by Bill C-29. I am proud of the investments we are making and will continue to make in strengthening and growing our economy.

• (1600)

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have been asked this question again and again. If they wanted to help middle-class Canadians, why did they choose income tax changes to help wealthy Canadians?

More than half the people in the member's riding make less than \$45,000, so they are not going to benefit at all from this so-called middle-class tax benefit. The child benefit the Liberals like to talk about will not help those families get the child care they need.

How is this budget going to help middle-class and lower-income families in the member's riding?

• (1605)

Mr. Michael Levitt: Mr. Speaker, as I said at the start of my speech, I am spending a lot of time in my community listening to people's reactions to our budget and to the plan we promised and are putting into action now. I have to say that I am hearing from the middle-class families in my riding, I am hearing from the seniors, and I am hearing from the people on the front lines. Contrary to the member's position, I am hearing that they are happy with the plan this government has put in place and are happy with the plan we are actioning and will continue to action.

Mr. Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member spoke at length about how he is listening to his constituents and to those in his community. I am curious to know if

he has had many people come up to him and say that a carbon tax is a positive thing.

Mr. Michael Levitt: Mr. Speaker, I can answer the member's question unequivocally. I have heard from people from across my riding and across my city. In fact, I have heard input from Canadians across the country who understand that in today's world, economic growth and environmental protection must go together. It is not an option anymore. Yes, the residents of York Centre, the people I speak to on the front lines, understand the need to protect our environment, and they understand that it is something that is going to be good for us, for our children, and for our children's children. In response to the member's question, the answer is yes.

Mr. James Maloney (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as a fellow Toronto-area member of Parliament, the member's comments on affordable housing resonate with me, because living in my riding of Etobicoke—Lakeshore, I see the need for improvements in affordable housing. It is one of the reasons I ran in this last election, and it is one of the reasons I am so proud to be part of this government that is making such great strides in that area.

I am wondering if my friend from York Centre could elaborate a bit more and share some specifics with respect to the impact this government is having on affordable housing in York Centre.

Mr. Michael Levitt: Mr. Speaker, this is a huge priority, not just for our government but for me as a front-line MP. I see the problems associated with the decline in affordable housing stock, particularly in the city of Toronto. This is an enormous problem. As I mentioned, 97,000 families, not individuals but families, are waiting for affordable housing. There is a real lack of affordable housing that has been built over the last decade-plus.

We are committed to working with different strategies to achieve the expansion of affordable housing. In my own riding, we have private groups and charities that have also contributed to affordable housing for seniors. We have non-profits that are teaming up with different levels of government to increase the affordable housing stock.

This must be a priority. The needs are so great. The existing housing stock is crumbling. I am proud that we are investing not just in new affordable housing but in the repair of existing housing. It is a priority, and it will continue to be.

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when we are faced with 200 pages of legislation, sometimes it is very difficult for us to put a human face on the implications of the legislation. I am here today to do just that.

Government Orders

My constituents elected me to be a strong voice for them here in Ottawa. Guess what? Today, I am going to do that. I want to give the people in this House a little lesson on what it is like to be in Alberta right now, and what this means for the people in my riding. In 2014, 20% of Canada's GDP was produced by Alberta, which represents only 12% of the Canadian population. We have always punched above our weight. We have always done our part. We have always supported the concept of Canada as a greater whole. We have never complained about it.

Other people in other parts of the country have looked at us, derided us, and derided our industries, but we always contribute to Canada. We have always been there for Canada. We contribute billions of dollars of equalization payments to prop up failed governments, like the Ontario Liberals, which spend billions of dollars on wasteful projects, and still we do not complain.

Alberta and the people in my riding are not just these numbers; they are people. Right now, thousands of them are out of work, thousands of them. In just about a year's period, Alberta and especially Calgary, especially my riding, went from the national rate of unemployment to nearly 10% unemployment. Let us think about that for a second. Let us think about what it means for a region to have such a dramatic, significant decrease in employment in such a short period of time.

It means that everybody is affected. Albertans do not know anybody who does not have somebody out of work. It is their mom, their dad, their spouse, their kid, their neighbour, their babysitter, their teacher; it is everybody. Do we know what that does to a community? It devastates a community. It takes the soul out of a community.

When I go home and talk to people, they are furious because they want to work. We are a proud people. We do not want lip service from the government. We want action. The very soul of our province depends upon it.

There is a 30% vacancy rate in downtown Calgary. That means that swaths, whole floors of buildings, in downtown Calgary are vacant right now. When we visualize that, we can think about all the people who are sitting at home right now who just want to work. They just want to contribute to the Canadian economy, but they cannot.

Every once in a while, I will hold a job or a career services fair in my riding, and usually a few dozen people show up. This is a service fair where we have educational institutions and different employers come in. More than 500 people showed up on a Saturday morning. There was a wait list to get into this event at a church. That is how bad it is.

These are people who cannot pay their child support payments and their vehicles are being repossessed, and we are coming into the Christmas season. Their credit cards are maxed out, their severance has run out, and they are trying to figure out how they are going to make ends meet for their families. They are not even looking at Christmas presents right now. Our food bank usage is going up. In our local newspaper, there was a giant front-page story about how women in Calgary are having to go into prostitution to make ends

meet. Do members know what it is like to come home to a spouse who has not worked for a year? Do members know what that is like?

I hope no one in this place has to feel that. That is what is happening in my riding right now, and yet we have this—this, right here. Do members know what this has? It has sweet fudge all for my riding, nothing.

Albertans look at this and they ask, “Where is our government? Why are we not in here?” There is nothing here for them, except this. There is something all right. I am sorry, constituents; there is something. There is a giant increase in their taxes. They are down, they are out, they have paid their dues, but the government wants to take more of their hard-earned money to waste on its ineffective and inefficient government.

Let us talk about that. How is the government going to take more of their money? First of all, it is implementing a carbon tax. There is no space to have a pragmatic debate about climate change, with the government, and there is no space to have a pragmatic debate about the people in my riding who are unemployed in the energy sector right now. They have been called dirty. The government uses terms like “clean jobs” or “dirty jobs”. It is a moral statement on the lives of the people in my riding.

• (1610)

When the government introduces or implements a \$50-a-tonne price on carbon, what does that do? Is that actually going to reduce greenhouse gas emissions? No. Can the government produce any data on price elasticity of carbon that shows that demand is actually going to decrease at that price? No, it cannot.

What does that mean? It means that it is essentially implementing a GST, an increase in the GST at a time when our province is in dire straits. That is a big fallacy and it is a big problem, and it is all right here. Here is a gift for Alberta.

The other thing that the government is trying to do right now is cripple small business. The government made a big song and dance around small businesses a year ago. It tried to court them, but it is a time when—and this survey came out today—94% of the small businesses in Alberta have no faith in our provincial government. There is a great indicator to show that we should invest in business in Alberta: 94% of small businesses do not have faith in the provincial government. The present government is doing what?

An hon. member: A carbon tax.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: A carbon tax, Mr. Speaker, yes; of course it is doing that. That is very helpful at this point in time.

The government is increasing CPP premiums. That amounts to a payroll tax. That, in this business climate, is a small business choice between saying, “Should I keep two employees or one employee?” That is what that is code for.

It is raising EI premiums.

This is what the government is doing with this. This is not a plan. This is a 200-page road map on how to waste my constituents' money. I cannot support that.

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Why is the government not talking about how to retain skilled labour? Why is the infrastructure minister not talking about how to implement infrastructure funds and get construction workers back to work in Alberta? Why does the government treat Alberta like a fart in the room that nobody wants to talk about or acknowledge? That is where my constituents have been with the present government for over a year. We are tired of it.

I watched what happened in Brexit—oh, and by the way, constituents, as I am giving this speech, there are Liberals members across the aisle who are laughing at me, and they are laughing at my constituents.

I watched what happened in Brexit, and I know that, if we do not have a space to talk about where all people can prosper and where we do not make value judgements on the efficacy of an industry or what its role is, if we do not have a pragmatic conversation, if it is just a talked-down, dictated policy from elite academics who do not humanize what is happening, then we have failed in our role as legislators. I am not going to let that happen. I really hope the government will rethink this carbon tax in light of what is happening in the U.S. I absolutely support a smart climate change policy that does not negatively impact our province and our country.

The other thing I hope this government will do, as it rolls out this tax increase mess, is stop denigrating my constituents and start standing up for all regions of the country, including Alberta. When members stand here and say it is just commodity prices and it will rebound, that is not the case. When they ask how we can support their carbon tax, they should realize that industry is not CEOs; it is the workers, the people who are sitting out of work at home right now. That is who we need to help.

The reality is that we are a proud people. We will do our part. We will stand up for what is right. We will stand up for the country. However, our voices will be heard. We will not be silent. I encourage all of my constituents, who want their voices to be heard, to participate in the Alberta jobs task force, which my Conservative colleagues in Alberta have implemented. I encourage them to come out, write these MPs from downtown Toronto who stand up here and say that it is okay, that they are dirty jobs and we do not need to worry about them. This is about Canada, and if we do not stand up for Alberta, if we do not have a strong Alberta, we do not have a strong Canada.

• (1615)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): On a point of order, the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I hate to interrupt my friend in her speech, but I heard her say a word that I know is distinctly unparliamentary, and I think she may want to withdraw it. The word was f-a-r-t.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Are you serious, Mr. Speaker? Is my colleague actually serious? I just gave an impassioned speech about supporting Alberta jobs, and that is what the leader of a political party stands and says? No, I do not withdraw it.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, I have a lot to say about the content of my friend's speech. I am deeply concerned, as are all people in this place, for Canadians who are hurting from the economic downturn.

Mr. Ron Liepert: Sure, sure, you are.

Ms. Elizabeth May: I would like to speak to that, but the first important—

Mr. Charlie Angus: Speech, speech.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Excuse me.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Does the hon. member for Calgary Nose Hill want to respond to that?

• (1620)

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Mr. Speaker, the leader of the Green Party has been probably one of the most vocal opponents of every part of the Alberta economy for the last 10 years, so I will take no lessons from her on this matter.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I believe we are getting into debate, but I will go to the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, the reason I feel it is important to make something of the member's choice of words is that she then accused people opposite her for reacting. In that context, decorum and respect are important in this place.

Mr. Ron Liepert: There's no point of order; sit down.

Mr. Kyle Peterson: Don't be a bully.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, I remind those who are now heckling me that they are breaking the rules of this place when they do so.

Mr. Charlie Angus: Come on, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, I have never heckled in this place, not once, and I have never used language that was unparliamentary, not once. I recognize my friend's passion, but I do not forgive, nor do I accept—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I will read what is on page 619 of O'Brien and Bosc. It states:

In dealing with unparliamentary language, the Speaker takes into account the tone, manner and intention of the Member speaking; the person to whom the words at issue were directed...

—and it goes on.

There are times in the chamber when passion takes over, things get heated, and sometimes we say things that are out of order or that may not be parliamentary. The hon. member said a couple of things that were borderline, but it is up to her to decide whether they were unparliamentary. Someone took offence. I will take it under advisement and bring it back to the table, and we will go from there.

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

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Mr. François-Philippe Champagne (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would first like to thank the member for her passionate speech. I think everyone in the House today and those listening at home understand how much she cares about Albertans and what is going on in the energy sector. I am one of those Canadians who goes from coast to coast to coast to listen to Canadians to see what they are going through and how we can improve things.

When she talked about Alberta, I can relate, because I come from Shawinigan and can say that, if there is a place in this country that has been hurting over the years, it is my own riding. Therefore, I understand her passion when she asked what the government has done for Canadians.

Let me set the record straight for people watching. The first thing we did as a government was reduce taxes. This is helping people in Alberta, it is helping people in Shawinigan, and it is helping people in Newfoundland and Labrador. It is helping every Canadian.

She asked what we have done for people in Alberta.

I am sure my colleagues would like to listen to this, because it does matter.

I went from Moncton to Yellowknife to listen to people and, trust me, people asked the government to help them and their families and to grow the economy. What have we done to help families? We introduced the Canada child benefit. Nine families out of 10 are receiving more money than they were under the previous government. Then we improved aid for seniors and for students.

What I would like to ask the member for Calgary Nose Hill is why she could not support measures that are helping the families that she herself is trying to help.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Before the member responds, I would like to remind members that I am trying to hear what members are saying, and I was struggling to hear the hon. parliamentary secretary.

The hon. member for Calgary Nose Hill.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Mr. Speaker, I am going to respond by recounting a conversation I had with one of my constituents. He said that he listens to the Liberals every day when I ask about the carbon tax or why they are not supporting Keystone XL or why they are doing nothing for the Alberta energy sector, nothing. They always say they are helping the middle class. He said that the next time they give me that answer, I should tell them for him that he cannot take advantage of a tax break if he does not have a job.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, our economy is based on our regions. In the region I represent, families leave home all the time to go to work, because there is no work back home. Therefore, building regional economic development in a region that has been a have-not for a long time is really important.

I was shocked that the first decision the government made for northern Ontario was to cut all the broadband projects right across the north, as though we did not need to compete. Then it took our

voice away from cabinet. I guess the Liberals think we are dummies. They think we do not need a voice in cabinet, that someone from Mississauga is fine. Then they took the resources that were meant to be spent on northern economic development and spent it in the minister's riding. If that is not the most egregious case of pork barrelling, or an example of the government's idea of the map extending around the little boroughs in the central areas it has members, we have a big problem.

I would like to ask my hon. colleague about the importance of speaking for regions that are outside the Liberal bubble.

• (1625)

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Mr. Speaker, I could not agree more with my colleague. Canada is greater than the sum of its parts. The only way that happens is when we sit around the cabinet table and people from different parts of the country look around and ask if it makes sense for everyone. This document does not make sense for all parts of the country, at all. Frankly, I do not know who it makes sense for, but it certainly does not make sense for my riding.

I had one person come up to me and say that if this were a ketchup plant in Southwestern Ontario, there would be a national outcry. Why is the government not standing up for Alberta? A strong Alberta is a strong Canada.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey—Newton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak in favour of Bill C-29, a second act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on March 22, 2016 and other measures.

I will begin my remarks by speaking about my riding of Surrey—Newton, which is a community that will benefit directly from the measures outlined in the government's budget.

Much like the rest of Surrey, my riding of Surrey—Newton is experiencing the pressure of growth caused by the migration of 1,200 people moving into Surrey every month.

Surrey—Newton has a strong middle class, a range of different compositions of families with children and seniors. Because of the great interest from the residents regarding many of the budgetary issues and measures introduced last spring, I want to highlight a few of the items that will benefit my constituents the most.

The new Canada child benefit is a significant step forward in recognizing the financial pressures of the middle-class families with children. The new consolidated benefit is easier to account for, indexed according to income levels, and overall more generous than the previous system.

Today, families can receive up to \$6,400 per year for each of their children under the age of six. For each child aged six to 17 years, families can receive up to \$5,400 per year. This is significant because statistics show that nine out of 10 families have seen their benefits increase under the new plan that was rolled out as of July 1, 2016, with an average bump totalling approximately \$2,300.

From the personal impacts I am hearing regarding such an increase, this is a windfall that is really extending the household budgets in Surrey—Newton.

Similarly, seniors are overwhelmingly appreciative of the changes to the Old Age Security Act, which returns the age of eligibility to 65, while at the same time increasing the amount of guaranteed income supplement up to \$947.

Vulnerable seniors on fixed incomes are a group that every member of the House is encountering, given their respective constituencies. This budget would fulfill a promise to address those who are most at risk of financial uncertainty, both in terms of seniors as well as young families trying to get a foothold.

In fact, it is what classify as a people's first budget, meaning that this government is committed to improving the situations of middle-class families and seniors with tangible and targeted actions.

This does not mean, however, that it fails to recognize the broader picture when it comes to measures that will continue to build the nation's economic climate.

I want to touch on two specific areas of focus.

First is the number of changes that will allow for greater control over taxation. The budget does this by closing many of the loopholes and policies that allow for billions of dollars of unpaid tax dollars to escape scrutiny. This government believes that multinational corporations should never be able to accrue tax benefits that put them on a different level of consideration than the average, hard-working Canadian taxpayer.

By working with the G20 and the OECD, and ensuring that the provisions attached to both that addresses tax evasion are utilized, it disallows these mega business entities from operating in isolation within Canada.

● (1630)

There must be consequences for avoiding paying their fair share while operating in our country because the lost revenues that this government is currently encountering are dollars that can be invested in Canadian citizens.

Speaking of investment, this government is also looking at the infrastructure needs of the country and investing to build for our future.

For example, in the city of Surrey, residents and businesses alike are struggling with a public transit system that cannot keep up with the demand. As I mentioned earlier, 1,200 people are moving into Surrey every month. To deal with this demand, the Surrey LRT line is one of the most important and pressing projects in metro Vancouver at the moment. It is absolutely essential to keep up with the growth the city of Surrey is experiencing.

The fact is that with Canada having the lowest debt-to-GDP ratio of any G7 country, now is the time for Canada to build and invest for the future. These are not simply the opinions of the government, but one that is voiced by economists from across the country.

In fact, recently the Bank of Canada governor, Stephen Poloz, urged this government to spend more on infrastructure to boost sluggish and long-term growth. Let me provide a direct quote from Mr. Poloz. He said:

In the case of a targeted investment by government, which is identified in such a way that it will be growth enabling, is very likely to pay off very well. That is, it

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creates more economic growth for all those who use that infrastructure, and that of course creates tax revenues and the system keeps turning.

To address the fearmongering from the other side of the House, this is what Mr. Poloz said about the deficit. He said, "Canada is in a very good fiscal situation so we shouldn't be worrying about that at this time".

This government is going to transform the empty announcements of the previous administration that often did not deliver on the funds. Instead it will make concrete investments that will energize our economy now and for decades to come by investing in Canadians who need consideration the most and for those whose spending serves as a spark for economic growth. By investing in infrastructure for our cities across the country, this government understands that a budget that does not deliver for people is a budget not worth delivering.

We recognize that impacting an individual or a family's daily life takes strong measures that clearly lay out a plan that is actionable and not just used for political purposes.

I am very proud to support this second budgetary implementation bill. I can see the difference being made in the lives of my constituents in Surrey—Newton and all Canadians. That is one of the most satisfying things I take away from being a member of Parliament and something I never take for granted.

● (1635)

Hon. Alice Wong (Richmond Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have been listening to seniors and their families in my riding of Richmond Centre and this is what I have heard.

First, there is nothing in the budget about family caregivers who have to look after their aging parents and grandparents as well as their own children while working. They can then choose to work only part-time, or stay home. That is a loss of productivity. That is bad for economic growth.

Second, there is nothing in the budget to protect seniors from all forms of abuse.

Why is the government not doing anything for seniors and for this specific group of families that has to look after seniors?

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Mr. Speaker, I can certainly tell the member for Richmond Centre that all the members from British Columbia, and I can vouch for the member for Steveston—Richmond East, are fighting hard for those seniors and those families in Richmond.

As I mentioned earlier, it was the Conservative government that wanted to raise the retirement age from 65 to 67. The government that kept the age at 65 is this Liberal government, and I am very proud to be part of it. I am certain that the member will also be proud when she goes back to British Columbia and talks to those citizens who need the help the most.

As I mentioned in my speech, we also increased the guaranteed income supplement by \$947. I am sure that my colleague from Steveston—Richmond East will agree that this is going to benefit all seniors living in Richmond and in my riding of Surrey—Newton and across Canada.

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Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will ask the member the same question I asked his colleague for York Centre regarding the fact that this budget does not do anything for the middle class. We have a so-called middle-class tax break that only kicks in for people making more than \$45,000 a year.

I have looked up the data for Surrey, and 75% to 80% of the people in Surrey make less than \$45,000 a year. It is not going to help anyone there. It is not going to help families who need to have both parents working, because they cannot afford child care.

There is no affordable child care in this budget. The child benefit will not come anywhere near to paying for that kind of child care. I do not know if the member is waiting for a new NDP government to be elected in British Columbia next year that has promised to bring that in, but I think it behooves the current federal government to help Canadians.

If the Liberals want to help the middle class, what have they done in this budget if they are not bringing in tax benefits for them and are only helping the wealthy?

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to thank the hon. member for his passion for helping middle-class families. There is only one leader in Canada who talked about the middle class many years ago, and that is the hon. member for Papineau, who is now the Prime Minister.

The first thing we did when we took power was reduce taxes for low- and middle-class families, and we increased taxes for those people who are multi-millionaires, the 1%. On the other hand, we can look at the \$125 billion over the next 10 years for infrastructure. Who is that going to help? Directly or indirectly, it is going to create high-paying jobs. Who will benefit most? It is middle-class Canadians.

The member mentioned child care. I remember when a Liberal government brought in universal child care across Canada. Ken Dryden was the minister. Who was the party that brought the government down? It was the member's party that brought down the government, and universal child care was abolished at that time. I can say that we are bringing back child care—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

• (1640)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I will remind hon. members that normally everybody quiets down when the Speaker is speaking. It is in that book I quoted earlier.

[*Translation*]

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 Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, Foreign Affairs; the hon. member for Port Moody—Coquitlam, Fisheries and Oceans.

[*English*]

Mr. Vance Badawey (Niagara Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to stand in the House this evening to speak to Bill C-29. On behalf of the people of Niagara Centre, I rise today to speak about what this budget will mean for my community, our region, and the

people and businesses that call Welland, Thorold, St. Catharines, Port Colborne, and all of the Niagara region home.

Since first being elected last year, I have participated in three federal budget consultations in my riding and throughout the Niagara region. The first was last January to ensure that the concerns and aspirations of my constituents were included in budget 2016. At this meeting, I met with over 15 social service groups, immigration groups, environmental groups, poverty groups, business associations, chambers of commerce, unions, and many other community leaders.

The second consultation last winter was with the parliamentary secretary for finance, the member for Saint-Maurice—Champlain, who joined me and 12 mayors from the Niagara region, the Niagara regional chair, various council members, and a number of economic development officers from the area who were all looking to re-engage with the federal government.

At both of these meetings, the message was very clear. The citizens of Niagara Centre and Niagara wanted to ensure that the federal government was helping Canadians by doing what we promised to do: first, create a business-friendly environment that keeps us competitive in a changing global economy; second, provide support for Canadians to learn new skills and knowledge to succeed in a changing world; third, partner with our provinces and municipal governments to build the core infrastructure people and businesses need to be healthy and secure and that will provide a springboard for success in the years to come; and fourth, provide returns that meet the requirements of a triple bottom-line mindset, that being economic, environmental, and social.

Last week, the member for St. Catharines and I held a pre-budget consultation for budget 2017. Much of the conversation reflected on the successes of budget 2016 and the long-term vision of the programs put forward last March. The regional chair, the mayors, business groups, social service providers, Brock University and Niagara College, and other community leaders once again came forward with their desire to build on budget 2016 and to continue to build partnerships between the federal government and the people of my riding of Niagara Centre, and, equally important, the people of the entire Niagara region.

These three formal consultations allowed me, as well as members of our community, to meet in partnership with municipal governments, social service providers, business groups, and educational institutions to discuss in an open forum how to strengthen the partnerships between these groups and the federal government while meeting the needs of hundreds of residents in my riding, middle-class Canadians and those working hard to join the middle class.

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What I have been hearing from the people of Niagara Centre is how budget 2016 helps them. In my riding we have created a seniors council, a group of passionate individuals within our seniors community who meet with me and my staff throughout the year to discuss how governments and service providers can help seniors live healthy, independent, full lives. The Niagara Centre Seniors' Council supports the Old Age Security Act, which ensures that, in the case of low-income couples who have to live apart for reasons not attributable to either of them, the amount of the allowance is to be based on the income of the allowance recipient only.

In my riding we have also created a youth council, a group of engaged and inspirational young people from high school, university, and college as well as young business owners. These are the leaders of today. When this group comes together throughout the year, I am excited about Niagara Centre and the Niagara region's future. The youth council is motivated by this government's increased investments in Canadian colleges and universities, such as Brock University and Niagara College, both of which are in my riding of Niagara Centre.

• (1645)

They are also very supportive of the increased support for middle-class families and those working hard to join the middle class.

By increasing the amount of federal support for college tuition, they are now moving forward with more support for mental health services. They are in fact prioritizing, on behalf of all Canadians, moving forward on enhanced mental health services.

In my riding, many families are working hard to provide for their children so their kids can be successful. The Canada child benefit does just that. In early September, when so many of us were getting our kids ready to go back to school, I heard from mothers and fathers in my riding about how helpful the Canada child benefit was to them. For example, a family with an income of \$65,000 a year, with two school-aged children, received a \$500 tax-free cheque in September, money that was used to help pay for back-to-school supplies, clothes, registration for sports teams, cultural and theatre registrations, and nutritious foods for lunches.

My constituency office in the city of Welland had many hard-working parents from Port Colborne, Thorold, Welland, and south St. Catharines and from outside the riding come in to learn about the CCB. I have had many conversations with parents who have stopped in to thank us and tell me how the CCB has been a great help to them. As a father myself, it was incredible to see the effect this particular program had on families who want to ensure that their children have every opportunity to be successful.

Budget 2016 is an example of how the federal government can create partnerships with municipal governments, social service providers, the business community, and, equally important, hard-working Canadians to help grow our economy, support our next generation of business and innovation, and ensure that Canadians have the support they need to succeed today as well as tomorrow.

Budget 2016 focuses on partnerships that build sound infrastructure while creating good jobs with a strong focus on supporting hard-working Canadians. After three budget consultations to date, several youth and senior advisory committee meetings,

and consultations with business groups, universities, colleges, anti-poverty groups, immigration groups, and various other community organizations, this is what the people of Niagara Centre have asked of their government.

Once again, it is establishing triple bottom-line results, including economic, social, and environmental. The result is that hard-working Canadians, middle-class families in Niagara and beyond, see in budget 2016 that the Government of Canada is working with them and listening to their needs and concerns to bring success today while ensuring the success of future generations. It is responsive government and responsible government.

• (1650)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, there is a question I have been wanting to put to a government representative today. I know that the hon. member did not touch on it in his speech, but my question does directly relate to Bill C-29 in that we had a series of commitments from the Liberal government when it was campaigning in the election.

There is one piece, which I have to say I have been very disappointed has not been in budget 2016. I am not sure I have heard the finance minister commit to it for budget 2017.

The Liberal platform committed that all fossil fuel subsidies would be terminated, but budget 2016 includes fossil fuel subsidies for liquefied natural gas continuing until at least 2025. I do not want to put the hon. member on the spot, but perhaps he has some indication of whether that Liberal promise relating to fossil fuel subsidies will be brought in in 2017.

Mr. Vance Badawey: Mr. Speaker, that is something we are discussing at the moment. With all due respect, I can get back to you on the information we have to date as well on the direction we may be taking in 2017.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Before proceeding, I want to remind hon. members to speak through the Speaker and not directly across the aisle.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Abitibi—Témiscamingue.

[Translation]

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in his speech, the member spoke about the Canada child benefit.

On that topic, the bill did not provide for the indexing of that benefit, which represents a loss for Canadian families.

Did the government fail to index this benefit because of a lack of attention or a lack of planning?

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[English]

Mr. Vance Badawey: Mr. Speaker, that was brought up by members of this caucus most recently this past week, me included, and is something that we will be looking at for 2017.

Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member sits on the transportation committee and I know from our conversations that he is interested in transportation. The minister has indicated his interest in a national transportation strategy and the region that the member comes from is an important region in Ontario. I would like to hear some comments regarding the transportation strategy.

Mr. Vance Badawey: Mr. Speaker, transportation is something that I have been working on for quite some time here in the House, as well as in my previous life as a mayor for the past 14 years. It is near and dear to my heart and those of many Canadians, with respect not only to a transportation strategy but also an overall economic strategy that would work in tandem and align itself well with an overall national transportation strategy.

We in Niagara are Ontario's first designated gateway, the first ever in the province of Ontario. Just recently, the federal government designated Niagara as Ontario's only designated foreign trade zone, the intention being that local planning and economic development activities include considering how to promote increased opportunities for cross-border trade, the movement of goods, and tourism in Niagara.

Because they are international in scale, such hubs require a significant associated transport infrastructure to facilitate the fast and efficient movement of goods and people. There is no better time to start looking at those strategies not only to promote and encourage a better economy, but also more appropriate infrastructure investments.

The result is the establishment of an economic cluster, clusters of complementary businesses, skills, professions, research facilities, arts and entertainment entities, educational institutions, and other factors combining to make cities across this nation, not just Niagara, conduits for growth and innovation.

Indeed, as the Canada Transportation Act review notes, "Transportation and communication logistics systems lend cohesion to the urban mix and provide the critical intercity and international linkages so essential to economic success." The review also indicates that an integrated transportation system will lead to an overall enhanced and better economic global performance by this nation.

•(1655)

Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak to Bill C-29, A second Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on March 22, 2016 and other measures.

I would like to use this opportunity to address a number of concerns about this legislation. In particular, I would like to discuss the implications of the new infrastructure bank for rural ridings like Essex, and for the Canadian economy as a whole.

The potential privatization of our public infrastructure is extremely worrisome. When the government opens our country to private investors who control pools of capital worth trillions of

dollars, it undermines the government's ability to provide effective infrastructure for Canadian communities. Private investors do not invest in Canada out of the goodness of their heart, but expect a return on their investment.

That return will come at a cost. For example, it could come at the cost of a working family's ability to put their children into hockey school. It could come at the cost of a senior's ability to pay for their already expensive prescription drugs. We need to ask ourselves if tolled highways and user fees are the best way to finance our infrastructure. What effect will privatized infrastructure projects have on the economies of smaller communities, small business owners, and the cost of living for hard-working Canadians?

The Liberals propose to raise public capital for this new infrastructure bank by selling off public assets. It then plans to raise private capital through privatizing the newly built bridges, roads, and trains. Higher fees for public transit lead directly to higher expenses for Canadians. Giving control of these new projects to private investors is outside the Liberal government's mandate. This grand plan has been termed "asset recycling", but what it really is is "asset privatizing".

The Liberal platform argued that the Canadian government's high credit rating would be leveraged to encourage municipalities and provinces to invest in infrastructure through low-cost financing, but this is not what the government has put forward. Instead, the Liberals want to sell off newly built infrastructure to private investors so they can finance the high rates of return for private investors.

What I am deeply concerned about is that at no time during the last election did the Liberal Party talk about introducing privatization of our infrastructure. Members may recall that the last election took place over several months, giving the Liberals ample opportunity to mention their plan. Their plan, which has now been revealed, exposes the real motive behind the proposed infrastructure bank, which is further privatization of our public infrastructure.

In my role as the member of Parliament for the people of Essex, I need to ask what this means for average working people in my community. It means tolls and user fees. Toll roads do not make life more affordable for Canadians. It means expensive bills every month.

The people in my community already know what headaches can come from private infrastructure projects. The Ambassador Bridge is privately owned and belongs to an 89-year-old billionaire who controls and holds this vital American-Canadian trade link hostage. The bridge is falling apart and is jeopardizing public safety. We desperately need the new Gordie Howe bridge to be built.

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Every day, between 8,000 and 10,000 trucks cross our border. This bridge represents \$700 billion in annual trade between our two nations. Last week, I met with representatives of a fish processing plant in Kingsville. They told me they were experiencing extreme backups when their delivery trucks return from Michigan. This is costing their plant time and money.

Tolls are not the way to go. As we saw with the building of Highway 407 in Toronto, one of the many failed public-private partnerships, tolls have increased so much that most people do not use the highway. How has this become a model to be replicated?

I was just speaking with my mom earlier today about this, and she said she never uses the 407 because it is so expensive. She simply cannot afford it. It costs my parents \$30 for a one-way trip. They are seniors. This is an added expense that they simply cannot afford.

In my riding of Essex, small businesses create good local jobs and play an integral role in our communities. The Liberals' broken campaign pledge on the small business tax rate will cost business owners money and hurt their bottom lines. Instead of hiring that additional worker, they now have to set that money aside for taxes. Similarly, building highways that people will not be able to afford to use hurts rural communities and employers.

● (1700)

Employers in my riding are already struggling with attracting potential employees from the city to come to work in the county. We have no public transit, so people have to use their own vehicles to get around. I have spoken with many of these employers and they have told me about their struggles to maintain their workforces. Additional road tolls will hurt employers in rural ridings across Canada.

I am so proud of my community and its world-class production of wine. The Canadian wine industry provides an estimated annual economic benefit of \$8 billion, which is a fraction of its potential value. Companies, such as Colio Estates, Cooper's Hawk, Mastronardi Estates, Oxley Estates, Colchester Ridge Estates, Muscedere, North 42 Degrees, Sprucewood Shores Estates, and Viewpointe Estates are only a few of the wineries in my region that operate incredible businesses and attract tourism dollars to our area. These wineries are local employers that look to the federal government to support their innovation. They need the government to present a budget that effectively directs public investment to high-growth industries, such as our agricultural sector. This budget does nothing for these small business owners.

Another infrastructure priority in my riding is broadband Internet. As an MP who represents rural communities across Essex, I welcome the government's commitment to improving access to broadband Internet. In my riding, we are expecting significant upgrades over the next year that will expand wireless coverage. This is welcome news.

However, if we are talking about support for farmers, the commitments in the budget fall short of the support farmers have asked for. The budget makes no provisions for promised compensation for farmers who will be hurt by trade deals like the TPP and CETA, even as the government continues to push to ratify these deals. Last week, the government finally announced a plan to

compensate farmers, but it falls far short of compensating them for the losses they are expected to incur. These trade deals chip away at Canada's supply managed sectors at a time when we should be strengthening family farms and ensuring that they have the tools they need to remain viable.

There is a lot missing in the Liberals' budget. Where are the commitments to seniors who are struggling to make ends meet and plan for their retirement? Where are the commitments to invest in home care? Where are the commitments to make child care more affordable? In my constituency office, we have been helping people access the Canada child tax benefit. Just the other week, my office assisted a single mom who is struggling to access this benefit because of the onerous requirements to prove that she's estranged from her husband. We also hear regularly from parents who cannot find affordable child care, and the increased CCTB simply does not address these challenges.

We have also heard from people in my riding who have been impacted by the Phoenix pay system debacle. I have heard from students who were never properly paid this summer, and women coming back from maternity leave whose pay is interrupted. It is extremely stressful, given that most people live paycheque to paycheque and simply do not have the cash reserves to miss months of paycheques. These are the types of issues that matter to my constituents.

The Liberal Party ran on a platform of so-called real change. The budget would leave one questioning what real change means, or more ominously, who it benefits.

On October 20, we learned that the Liberals gave Credit Suisse, an investment firm specializing in privatization, the mandate to advise the Liberals on the benefits of privatizing Canadian airports. It seems like a foregone conclusion that Credit Suisse will recommend privatization. Along with concerns over increased fees for Canadians, the privatization of airports also raises concerns about security matters. There could be significant implications for travellers, and for public safety more broadly. What is next, the privatization of our border crossings?

I would like to speak more about some of my riding's infrastructure priorities. My riding of Essex is home to a short-line rail service called the Essex Terminal Railway. It is critical to the infrastructure necessary in my community. The short line rail industry made several requests of budget 2016, all of which fell on deaf ears. Clearly, investing in short-line rail would help create new opportunities to expand service and increase regional economic opportunities. We do not see that in this budget.

Government Orders

I urge the government to seriously rethink its infrastructure bank scheme. Privatization has many negative impacts and I am deeply concerned that this proposed bank will serve neither the interests of my constituents, nor the needs of my riding. For these reasons, I will be voting no to Bill C-29.

• (1705)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I find it amazing that New Democrats are so critical of so many progressive announcements that have been made by this government. They committed to balancing the budget for this fiscal year. I suspect they are having a difficult time justifying how they are going to be voting.

We are lifting tens of thousands of children out of poverty; we are lifting tens of thousands of seniors out of poverty; we have reduced the age of retirement from 67 to 65; we are investing record billions of dollars into Canada's infrastructure; we are giving a tax increase to Canada's wealthiest; we are giving a tax decrease to Canada's middle class; and we are doing so much more. That is not even making reference to the Canada child benefit, which is giving out literally hundreds of millions of dollars.

How does the member justify this in her own mind? We know the limitations from the last election. The NDP said that it would balance the budget. Given that its attitude was to balance the budget, how could it not support this vote?

I could appreciate if the only thing the NDP was saying was there is too much debt in this particular budget, which there is not, because then at least I could understand why it would be in opposition to it.

How does the NDP justify voting against all those positive social policy decisions that are going to affect the lives of millions of Canadians in every region of our country?

Ms. Tracey Ramsey: Mr. Speaker, I find it amazing that the member opposite can stand and not speak to the fact that they are privatizing public infrastructure. This is not something that they campaigned on. This is not something that they were up front with Canadians about. This is something that they are bringing forward, as though this is the answer to all of our problems.

This will drastically hurt the middle class, whom we hear constantly from the other side of this House that they are attempting to help. Tolls and fees will hurt working-class people in Canada.

I also have a difficult time understanding why the Liberals have not raised the corporate tax rate. I also find it amazing that they have not cut taxes for small business. They have left out so many people in this budget and budget update that the list goes on and on. We can talk about seniors. Where on Earth is there some help for seniors in our communities? There are so many things that could be done in this budget that, unfortunately, we do not see; and what we do see coming forward are things that the Liberal government certainly did not campaign on.

Mr. Ben Lobb (Huron—Bruce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I know the member has a similar riding to mine, hers is probably a little less rural than mine.

Specifically around the issues that hard-working Canadians face, such as filling their prescriptions and day care costs that are

astronomical, this budget does not address, at all, seniors' issues dealing with a senior member of the family who may have dementia or Alzheimer's or some other issue when it involves a caregiver, even issues around palliative care that the budget does not really address at all. Would she comment on any one of those issues that this budget fails to address for average hard-working Canadian families?

Ms. Tracey Ramsey: Mr. Speaker, I have to agree, my riding is largely rural. It consists of five municipalities. Seniors are struggling in my communities. They are in my office every day, many of them crying, which is heartbreaking, because they simply cannot afford their housing or their medication. They are having to make really difficult choices about whether they take a full dose of medication or whether they pay their hydro bill. This is unacceptable.

We often hear the government mentioning that it has increased GIS. We welcome any increase, but to think that \$900 a year is going to elevate any senior in this country out of poverty, who is already living below the poverty line, is simply not the case. Unfortunately, in my riding, many of the seniors who did receive this income support had their rent increased. We saw increases in the grocery stores, things that were reflected in that increase. Seniors really have been completely left out of this budget.

When we talk about home care, there is no commitment for home care in this budget. Where is the home care that was promised in the budget, and now in this update, that we simply do not see?

There is going to be a health care cut next year by the present government that is going to drastically hurt seniors in our communities and all Canadians.

• (1710)

Mr. Kyle Peterson (Newmarket—Aurora, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, just one year ago today, Canadians asked us to do two things: help them and their families, and grow our economy.

While the economy has grown over the past decade, we know that the growth has been too slow and its benefits have not been shared widely enough. Middle-class families see the economy growing, but they have not felt like they are getting ahead. That is why we ran on a platform to support the middle class while growing the economy.

We were among the first countries in the world to pursue an approach to growth that strengthens the middle class, and people are listening. Our approach to supporting the middle class while growing our economy is one that is garnering praise and positive attention around the world.

The *Financial Times* called Canada "a glimmer of light". *The Wall Street Journal* called Canada "the poster child" for the International Monetary Fund's global growth strategy. Christine Lagarde, head of the IMF, praised our approach and said that she hoped it would "go viral".

Government Orders

The Economist magazine has put Canada's approach on its cover with a story in a recent issue. "Liberty moves north" was the headline. It stated that "the world owes Canada gratitude for reminding it of what many people are in danger of forgetting: that tolerance and openness are wellsprings of security and prosperity, not threats to them".

Our budget and the government's approach earned these endorsements because, I firmly believe, we are focused on exactly the right things.

As the government, we are particularly proud of our first budget. This is a budget that puts people and families first. It introduces investments that take an essential step to grow the middle class. It is the first step of a long-term plan to restore hope and revitalize the economy for the benefit of all Canadians. It is focused on people. It is focused on growing the economy for the long term in ways that will benefit every Canadian.

The legislation we are debating today, the budget implementation act, 2016, no. 2, will complete the measures we introduced in budget 2016. This is a budget that offers a fresh boost to the core of our economy: Canada's middle class.

Since being elected, we have lowered taxes for nine million Canadians and introduced the Canada child benefit, which will help nine in 10 Canadians to be better off. Since last July, Canadians have been receiving the new Canada child benefit, which will lift 300,000 children out of poverty. It is no small feat.

Families have been seeing more money in their pockets to spend on sports programs, music lessons, and on other activities for their children this year. Better yet, the Canada child benefit is simpler, it is fairer, and it is tax free, unlike the confusing and unfair system of child benefits it replaced.

To elaborate, since July 1, families can receive up to \$6,400 each year per child under six, and \$5,400 for a child between six and 17 years of age. The second budget implementation act indexes this benefit to inflation to ensure that it will serve Canadians now and well into the future.

An ambitious public policy like this requires a reliable tax base, and we must remain vigilant in the face of growing problems of international tax evasion and tax avoidance. All around the world, governments are coming together to fight tax evasion and avoidance. In budget 2016, we took an important step in this fight by devoting \$444 million in new funding to the Canada Revenue Agency to crack down on tax evaders.

● (1715)

The second budget implementation act would implement key provisions of the international fight. Under the common reporting standard, Canadian financial institutions would be expected to have procedures in place to identify accounts held by non-residents and report information on those accounts to the Canada Revenue Agency. Tax administrations in foreign jurisdictions would likewise collect information from their financial institutions about accounts held by residents of other countries including Canada. The CRA would formalize exchange arrangements with foreign jurisdictions, having verified that each jurisdiction has appropriate capacity and safeguards in place. Then the financial account information would

begin to be exchanged on a reciprocal bilateral basis. The introduction of the common reporting standard is an important global development that would help enhance tax compliance and eliminate opportunities for tax evasion, a goal all members in this House share. Going forward, Canada will continue to work with the international community to ensure a coherent and consistent response to tax avoidance.

As all members of this House know, budget 2016 would also commit considerable investments to infrastructure, an important step in growing Canada's economy and in strengthening our middle class. Investments in affordable housing; investments in broadband; and investments in roads, public transit, and waste water are all investments that are important to the people of Newmarket—Aurora and, I suggest, to people across this land. This is an important facet of this budget and it is one that would help grow our economy for years to come.

Canada's debt-to-GDP ratio is the best in the G7 right now. Now is the time to borrow money. Now is the time to invest in Canadians. Now is the time to invest in long-term growth. These investments are sorely needed. I can think of no better time. I can think of no better policy that would grow the economy in the short term, in the mid-term, and in the long term than these significant and important commitments to infrastructure investments. That is why I am so proud of that component of budget 2016.

Recently in my riding of Newmarket—Aurora, we had a pre-budget 2017 town hall. I spoke with members of my regional council there and asked them to prioritize what they saw as their infrastructure priorities. I think it will shock no one in this House that things such as waste-water treatment, roads, public transportation, and, importantly, affordable housing were on the top of their list. I live in a growing part of the country. The growth has put municipal and regional governments under some strain. As their member of Parliament, I am happy to offer some support to their priorities in the form of considerable investment in infrastructure that will help my regional government and my municipal partners deliver on what is important to the great people of Newmarket and Aurora. How they play out in our own ridings is something that we all bear in mind when we consider the important policies. I for one can say that they are playing out nicely in Newmarket—Aurora. They are much needed and appreciated.

Another important component that is found in budget 2016, and of course in the implementation act here, is that we are helping young Canadians to succeed. Now more than ever it is important that post-secondary education remain affordable and accessible. Young Canadians must have access to meaningful work at the beginning of their careers, and must not be burdened by increasing student debt. Budget 2016 would make post-secondary education more affordable for students from low- and middle-income families and it would make it easier to repay student debt. Budget 2016 would also help young Canadians to gain experience and extra income and to find good jobs after graduation.

Government Orders

Budget 2016 represents a strong first step in our plan to put people first and to deliver the help they need now while investing for the years and decades to come. With these investments, and inspired by a sense of fairness, we are ensuring that Canada's best days lie ahead. I therefore encourage all members in this House to support this bill.

• (1720)

Mr. Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, CPC): Mr. Speaker, despite the obvious hilarity at the beginning of the member's speech on the direction that he planned to take the economy, I would like to ask him if his constituents support the proposed changes to the CPP, particularly small businesses, and also the looming carbon tax. He has obviously consulted with them at length. People in Alberta really feel there is not a positive thing in the budget, yet I did not hear him say anything negative about it.

I am curious if there is anything on those two fronts about which he feels comfortable talking to his constituents.

Mr. Kyle Peterson: Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague from Edmonton Riverbend has the best interests of his constituents at heart. He works hard for his constituents, as he should, and as we all do.

To be frank, people I speak to in my riding are impressed with what we are doing to grow the economy. They are hopeful that we are investing in the future. They also see the importance of ensuring the CPP remains robust and well-funded well into the long term. They appreciate those parts of the budget and the part of our policy that is being implemented.

In regard to hearing negative things from me in my budget speech, it should not surprise the member that I support the budget. I will highlight its positive components and how those positive components will play out in my riding.

As the member may know, the price on pollution that our government is going to put on is only a framework that will be in place if the provincial government does not have an adequate system in place. I am from Ontario, and the system that will be in place there will exceed the federal standards. The federal price on pollution will not apply in Ontario because its system will be robust enough to meet all of the federal standards. People in my riding think that people who pollute should pay for their pollution.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have a question about one of the policies that was maybe a surprise for some Canadians because it was not talked about a lot in the last election. It is the notion of either full or semi-privatization of some public assets. We are talking about airports, port authorities, or ports themselves. The concern that would be raised is a valid one. We have had some experience in Canada with this.

My friend would well know that the Mike Harris government in Ontario helped to construct a major toll highway across the north of the city, which ended up costing Ontario taxpayers like my friend millions of dollars. I forget the final price tag. Yet the asset was not a public asset. The tolls can be quite high and they go toward a private entity.

Foreign venture capitalists or other investors will require a return on their investments. They will not do this out of any charitable notion. They are not into public infrastructure for the public's sake. It

is the nature of their business. Has the government done any economic analysis on what benefits may or may not accrue through private partnerships and the selling of airports, or ports or any of the other assets that it is considering? What limitations would be placed on any of those investors in terms of recouping some of their investment through an increase in tolls to Canadians, which would impact the middle class, about which the current government enthusiastically talks?

• (1725)

Mr. Kyle Peterson: Mr. Speaker, my friend opposite works hard for the people of his riding and he serves them well.

With respect to the point on infrastructure, anything we can do to get adequate infrastructure built will help in the short term, the mid term, and in the long term. We are investing considerable amounts of money in infrastructure. If we can leverage that money by involving the private sector, then it is incumbent upon any responsible government to consider that.

There will be economic modelling about what will work, what will be better, what will improve and expedite the investments in infrastructure that are so sorely needed. Anything that a responsible government could do to get investment moneys flowing, to get infrastructure projects under way, is important and it must be done in any reasonable manner possible. This government intends to do that.

Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to speak to Bill C-29, the government's fall budget update.

Nearly two weeks ago, the Minister of Finance rose in the House to deliver a fall economic update to reassure Canadians that no matter what issue they faced, it was a Liberal top priority and it would be taken very seriously.

Unfortunately, it is very cold comfort to the tens of thousands of Canadians who have lost their jobs, have seen their wages fall, and their savings depleted. It is funny that the Liberals, who will say just about anything to win an election and have taken promise breaking to new levels in the past year, are once again asking the House and Canadians to simply trust them, that they know what they are doing.

Government Orders

As an adult, I have learned that people will say anything to get what they want, and this seems like more empty rhetoric. The government is asking us to give it more billions, that it will work out and not worry. It is starting to rank right up there with, “Don’t worry, the cheque is in the mail”, and “Dad, get us that new dog. We will walk it and we will pick up after it”. “Fool me once, shame on me; fool me twice, shame on you”. Fool me thrice, now things are just getting silly.

Our world is filled with uncertainty. We live in a time where we simply cannot predict where we will be in five years. However, when faced with high uncertainty, the solution is not to throw cash at various ideas on the off-chance that maybe, just maybe, it might create a job.

Let us look at where we are right now. Since coming to power, the Liberals have turned a comfortable surplus into a bottomless deficit. They have raised taxes, promised to raise more taxes, and misdirected question about raising other taxes. Projects get announced, then delayed, postponed, ignored, swept under the rug. The money gets promised, trumpets are sounded, press releases are sent in a flurry of self-praise, but the shovel does not hit the ground. So far only one project has actually been started. It is like a press release to project ratio of about 100:1 right now. All the while there has not been a single, net, full-time job created in the past year.

When the Minister of Finance delivered his economic update, I was looking for three basic things: how many jobs would be created; what was the plan to return the budget to surplus and pay down the debt; and what was the Liberal plan to increase economic growth? The Minister of Finance did not provide answers. Rather, he simply told Canadians to relax, trust him, he knew what he was doing.

Perhaps members will forgive me for being a tiny bit uneasy about our country’s future, given what the government has and has not done in the time it has held its majority, such as ignoring economic data and experts, manipulating data to fit its failed narrative and refusing to back down when it is shown that its strategy is not working.

We live in the best country in the world, and Canadians put their trust in a government that told them to look forward to sunny ways. We are still waiting for the sun to appear, and the horizon does not look much brighter.

Let us look at what the government presented.

First, the Minister of Finance acknowledged how much his government had spent so far, and then laid out how much more he needed to spend, because the first bout of billions had no return. Therefore, let us spend billions more.

He talked about high-minded ideals such as establishing an infrastructure bank, spending money on public transit, and made honourable mention to getting Canadian products to market. These are nice ideas, but they are not new. The government has had the same talking points since day one, and Canadians have not seen a return for the billions of taxpayers dollars spent.

What we actually get are economic growth forecasts downgraded and downgraded some more. We have seen a drop in full-time

employment. We have received yet another promise, and been told, yet again, to wait, trust them, they know what they are doing.

The government says that conditions are out of its control, but is it not a little puzzling that a more competitive Canadian dollar, higher oil prices, and a massive jump in government spending has produced such anemic growth? The first plan is not working, and we can probably guess that more of the same will not have a different outcome.

Next, the government talks about “delivering a more open and transparent government” by, among other things, improving “clarity on government spending”. We approve this in theory, but the plan to increase clarity on government spending so far involves limiting debate on government estimates and making it harder for parliamentarians to adequately scrutinize spending by limiting the amount of time for parliamentary review.

In order to cement this clarity, the government wants to change the long-held rules of our Parliament to accommodate its work load, but we are told it is only for a couple of years then it will be changed back. The most basic purpose of our Westminster parliamentary system is the oversight of spending, and the government wants to change the laws to limit this oversight, then asks us to trust it, that it will be okay.

• (1730)

After a while repeated assurances, promises, and demands for trust wear thin when report after report shows its plan is not working. More and more Canadians are losing that trust. After reading this document, it is for good reason.

The finance minister gave lip service to global economic conditions. He mentioned them, then ignored them and indicated that the government was committed to carrying out policies that flew in the face of these conditions, policies such as its much loved carbon tax, despite the lack of multilateral co-operation with our largest trading partner and major competitor, and the push back of provinces under which it was imposing this scheme.

We as Canadians often fall over ourselves to assert our independence from our American cousins and friends, but the government is planning to go the extra mile.

The best strategy to differentiate two geographically and economically similar countries in order to attract new talent in global investment is not the Liberal strategy of higher taxes, more regulations, and a more overbearing government. That is not the formula for success.

The Liberals are not backing down. They are ignoring global conditions, common sense, and the basic economic principles of competition. No, they are not backing down. It is truly disappointing because no one benefits from this posturing, not the vulnerable, not the seniors, and certainly not the middle class, the Liberals’ favourite talking point.

Government Orders

The Liberals love talking about the middle class. They love saying that the middle class is a top priority for their government, speaking like they actually understand the plight of the average Canadian. They patronizingly tell Canadians how to live their lives and control what they save, how much they save, and where they save, all the while pretending they are blazing new trails for the middle class, when neither the Prime Minister nor the Minister of Finance has ever actually been a member of the middle class.

It is extremely easy for the government to raise taxes by just a small amount, or increase the debt by a small amount, or make things harder for Canadians by just a small amount, because it has never seen the impact these small amounts have on a Canadian family.

When parents hand children a path forward on a silver platter, they are not like the vast majority of taxpayers. Every time the government institutes new taxes or takes on more debt, it further indicates that it does not understand the impact of these policies.

When the Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister defend their tax policies by saying that Canadians and small businesses can afford another \$1,100 a year in CPP payroll taxes, or another 10¢, 15¢, or 20¢ per litre in new gas taxes to pay for their carbon tax, they are truly disconnected from the rest of the country.

Yesterday, *The Globe and Mail* published a study suggesting that nearly one-quarter of Canadians were worried about how to pay for groceries. Food banks today reported record increase in usage. Canadians are struggling. Food bank usage across the country is increasing, especially in Alberta, but the Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister are not listening.

However, we have been listening. Canadians tell us that they do not want to pay higher taxes, not while they are dealing with such uncertainty; not when they do not know if their job will be there for them in the next five years, two years, or even one year; not when their federal government abandons all reason and common sense to satisfy the desires of its backroom high-minded donor class; and especially not when we receive talking points, promises, and demands for trust, without seeing any meaningful results.

I want to reiterate what I had hoped to see from the economic update. I had hoped the finance minister would acknowledge that times were tough and Canadians could not afford to pay higher taxes. I had hoped he would acknowledge that the time to institute punishing, unilateral carbon taxes was not when we had not created a single full-time job in a year. I had hoped he would acknowledge that deficits in the tens of billions actually had to be paid back. Above all, I had hoped the finance minister would reassure the House and Canadians that his plan was an actual plan.

Plans have targets, objectives, goals, and real tangible methods of achieving those targets. This update is more like a casualty report, another few billion packed on to the deficit, another few billion in new debt each year, no realistic plan to create jobs, no tangible results from the pain already endured.

I am worried about our future, and rightly so. There is enormous uncertainty in the world and we need an actual plan. What do we tell our children in 30 years when they are out of work in a stumbling economy, burdened by billions in debt, deficits, and interest payments, unable to see the path forward? Canadians deserve better.

● (1735)

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last week in Guelph we had a pre-budget town hall where the CPP was discussed. We talked about supporting retired people as needed, which is a greater need every year, and the concerns around affordable housing.

While I was knocking on doors on Saturday, I heard many of the same concerns in the Brant neighbourhood in Guelph. A funeral director visited my office and said that we needed to look at survivor's benefits on the CPP, something at which we are looking.

Earlier this year, Canada's finance ministers reached a historic agreement when they came together as a federation and decided that they had to move forward on CPP.

I wonder if the member for Edmonton West has heard any similar concerns around retirement and the need to help our retired people in the years ahead.

Mr. Kelly McCauley: Mr. Speaker, yes, I have spoken to a lot with seniors. In fact, in one of my past lives, I was head of a hospital foundation that looked after six hospitals for the elderly. We need to look after seniors, but the CPP is not headed where the need is. Seniors living in poverty are mostly single women, and adding more CPP would not help them one bit. Increasing the GIS and other benefits, sure, but directing money to CPP is not benefiting those who have not been in the workforce, whether because of disability or staying home to raise children. It would not help them one bit. It is adding money where it is not needed. This plan would not help the poor or seniors living in poverty one bit. It would add taxes and not help anyone.

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, one thing that emerged during the budgetary process is the collective agreement that was struck between Unifor and three major automotive companies, General Motors, Ford, and Fiat Chrysler. I congratulate the union. What is important to recognize is that negotiating and securing that agreement was not so much to benefit themselves, but the primary negotiating element in the final agreement was, to the credit of the companies and the union, investment of nearly \$1 billion in our country.

I would ask the member what his party's position is on advancing those funds to create good jobs for Canadians and what role the government should have in that element.

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Mr. Kelly McCauley: Mr. Speaker, I will be honest and say that I am not aware of the exact contract that Unifor worked out. I will say, though, that the government is doing its best to counteract any good work being done by Unifor and the big three in creating new jobs, by imposing a punishing carbon tax that would make our jobs uncompetitive with Michigan, Mexico, and countries that we deal with. It is the same for the CPP increases. Adding payroll taxes would not help employment one bit.

● (1740)

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): What worries me, Mr. Speaker, about the member's remarks is that there were a lot of exaggerations and misinformation. For the member to get up in the House and say the increase to the CPP is going to be \$1,100 per year to invest in the pension for the future is absolutely wrong. The finance officials were before committee yesterday and said there would be very few cases where it would hit \$1,000. It may be in the range of \$700.

The member talked about the use of food banks. Does he look at who is using those food banks in Edmonton? Is it not seniors? Yes, they have needs now, but this government is looking to the future and trying to find ways to ensure that future seniors do not have to attend food banks. I just do not like that misrepresentation by a member in the House.

I would ask the member where the data is that shows \$1,100. It does not exist. Does he not think governments have a responsibility to invest in the future?

Mr. Kelly McCauley: Mr. Speaker, the fact is that, yes, I have spoken to people at the food bank. They actually joined us at the Alberta jobs task force round table. Their number one concern is the carbon tax, because they do not have a way to pass it on to customers. An extra 5,000 people use food banks every month in the city of Edmonton. They are people driven out of work in the energy industry, which the government has done nothing to assist. There are 100,000 Albertans out of work, and all the member can do is stand and scream rhetoric. Shame on him and on the government.

Mr. Dan Ruimy (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today on behalf of my constituents of Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge to speak to a bill that takes us one step closer to a more fair, progressive, and inclusive society.

I want to take a moment to speak to the importance of Bill C-29, not only for its direct, positive impact on thousands of families in my community, but for how it reflects our nation's desire to see our collective interests as part of a brighter future for us all.

I would like to begin by briefly telling a story about a constituent in my riding. On the first day the Canada child benefit cheques were sent out, this constituent called my office to thank our government for this new fairer way of helping families get ahead and lifting hundreds of thousands of children out of poverty.

However, it is important to note that this constituent did not qualify for the CCB because his income was too high. This constituent explained that he had lived his childhood in poverty and, while he no longer needed the help, was so incredibly proud that this government was ensuring that hundreds of thousands of children would not have to live as he did.

This constituent is not alone. These constituents represent a belief that when we lend a hand to our neighbour, we are all lifted together. They represent a way of thinking that our collective good is in the best interests of all Canadians, now and for generations to come. The economics are clear. When our families are given a boost, it is not just a handout. These are transfers that are not only going to improve the life and standard of living for nine out of 10 families across Canada, but these are real dollars that are being re-introduced to the economy to help stimulate growth.

A successful, progressive fiscal agenda is one that, through addressing short-term challenges, produces long-term results. For families in Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, this budget means that Stephen's parents can afford to register him for this season of Knights football, or Allison can go to camp at Timberline Ranch, and that makes the economy a little better.

When middle-class families have money in their pockets, they have more money to spend on their families and more money with which to stimulate the economy. Families benefit; the economy benefits.

Under the previous Conservative government, what was lacking—amongst many things—was an understanding that cheques to the wealthiest of Canadians do not produce economic growth, nor do they produce a more prosperous and fair nation. We know the realities.

The CCB is tax free, targeted, and simplified. Over the last few months, I have spoken to families in my riding, and I have heard how this new measure has helped put healthier food on their tables, buy their kids school supplies, or replace worn-out running shoes. These are real families in my riding. This is what they are experiencing.

Let us just call it what it is: real change for those families in my riding. It is also important to note that this vision for investing in our future is one that our government is proudly carrying out across ministries, and one that I know will benefit the constituents in my riding of Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge in many different ways.

Investments do not just happen overnight. The word “investment” means there is time involved. It takes time. We invest in our children. We invest in our families. We invest in our home. That is a long-term strategy. Bill C-29 follows suit with a vision for Canada that is being driven by Canadians themselves.

When I speak with folks in my community and I hear their hopes and concerns, their perspectives are not falling on empty ears. Canadians have and continue to be at the heart of our policy decisions.

Government Orders

It is not just about the direct needs of families, either. It is about what our communities value. For folks in coastal and watershed communities like my own, our government has listened and responded with a \$1.5 billion investment in funding for an oceans protection plan. This was sorely needed. This has never been done in the past. The previous government did not invest that kind of money. We need this. For young people in my community who are struggling to finance their post-secondary education, we have heard them, and we have answered with an increase in Canada student grants.

• (1745)

It is about the future. Let us talk about that. I have met many young people in my community, and they are incredibly driven and optimistic. I recently started my constituency youth council. We have had a couple of meetings, and from age 14 to 24, these young leaders of today are bringing the tough issues to the table. They want to tackle issues such as transportation, youth mental health, climate change, education, and immigration. It just shows that these young people in our communities have brilliant, critical minds that we need to invest in. Studies say that this generation of young people are our most intellectually advanced, and yet, when we talk to Canadian youth, they and their families are still facing barriers to tap into their potential.

We are investing in our youth. We are doubling Canada student loans. We are supporting low-income students and helping them to pay off their student debts by waiting for them to actually have a salary of \$25,000 a year or more. Until then, they will not have to pay that back. They will not have to worry about interest payments. That is what is going to help them.

We are also increasing funding for Canada summer jobs. This summer, I went on a mission and spoke with 80 of 100 students who got Canada summer jobs. I went to every single business, church, and organization and met those young people of today. I was proud to see the potential they bring to our country. It just tells me that we need to invest more into the future of our country, into our youth.

We are responding to real problems now with eyes on the future. These are not just policies that are checking off a wish list or untargeted boutique tax credits that help families, regardless of whether they need it or not. Our policies are rooted in the needs and the values of Canadians and are a response to hundreds of thousands of ongoing conversations with members of my community and our communities. I have done town halls. We have done multiple round tables. The people I am meeting are open and frank with me.

Part of our responsibility as a government is matching the needs and desires of Canadians with programs and services. We are doing just that. In our government, Canadians, not personal agendas, are at the heart of everything we do.

Bill C-29 is important. To be frank, fulfilling our commitment to a fairer economic system is one I am incredibly passionate about. While members opposite may scoff at the many times our government talks about fairness and investing in our economy, I think it is incredibly important to continue to talk about them. Therefore, today, I will continue to share the importance of fairness, investment, and a brighter future for all Canadians. I will continue to

share my enthusiasm for the policies outlined in Bill C-29 and the effect they would have in my riding of Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge.

Families in my riding have been struggling to get ahead far too long, and the measures in Bill C-29, and the measures that continue to be introduced by our government, are working toward a society Canadians can believe in.

• (1750)

Mr. Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am still a little confused. The member was a small business owner before this, and everything in the budget is against small business owners. I hope he did not forget where his roots are from because going back and trying to explain to the folks in Pitt Meadows about the CPP or the carbon tax has to be a tough road ahead for him.

Perhaps the member could enlighten this side of the House as to when he thinks the budget will be balanced. He talked a lot about youth, their future, and how optimistic they are. However, we do not have any indication of a date that the budget will be balanced, and this generation and generations after this will have to pay for it, so we would love to hear his comments on that.

Mr. Dan Ruimy: Mr. Speaker, I thank my esteemed colleague on the other side of the House for bringing up that I am a small businessman. In fact, I do believe in the budget because if we want our small businesses to succeed we need people to actually have money to go out and spend. The effort we are making with the CCB for instance is one of those examples. If people are going out to the businesses and the restaurants because they have a little more money in their pockets, that is one of the ways we help our small businesses. It is not the other way, that of choking everyone so there is no money in their pockets. That does not help small businesses.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech.

Since we work together on a committee that studies poverty, my question will not surprise him. I want to ask him about the indexing of the Canada child benefit, or rather the fact that it will not be indexed until 2020. That decreases the value of the benefit for families until 2020. For low-income families, it could mean the loss of \$500. The Liberal government is giving low-income families \$6.50 more a month in child benefit money than the Conservatives did.

How do the Liberals expect to lift low-income families out of poverty with \$6.50 a month? In my opinion, this real change is not helping low-income families at all.

When my colleague talks about the families in his riding, which families is he talking about?

Mr. Dan Ruimy: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question.

Government Orders

[English]

When we talk about the CCB, there is a tendency to focus on the small thing. What we need to be focusing on is what it is actually impacting. I have middle-class constituents in my riding who in pre-budget consultations did not think that the CCB would benefit them. When they call me and say that they are getting \$2,500 more, to me that is real change. That is the direction we want to be going in with this government and with our country. Putting money in their pockets is the important message that we have to keep sending.

• (1755)

Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I just want to give the member a chance to comment a bit. He talked about how higher taxes in the form of a carbon tax and increased CPP payroll taxes would put more money into people's pockets. How is this possible? There will be no benefit from the CPP changes for 25 or 35 years down the road. How would a carbon tax and a CPP tax put money in people's pockets?

Mr. Dan Ruimy: Mr. Speaker, I come from British Columbia where we have had carbon pricing for some years now. The province has chosen to give that money back through income tax cuts.

The member mentioned CPP as a tax, but the CPP is not a tax. It is an investment in which people can put that money and then get it back down the line.

I am going to come back to saying the same thing. When we talk about investments, these are long-term strategies, and when we really look at it, the child benefit is all about putting more money in pockets. It is not misdirecting anyone. It is not saying, "Take this tax credit, take that tax credit and, by the way, we are going to tax people on the money that they are getting". No, this is a tax-free, easy benefit directed into people's pockets. That is what Canadians are looking for and that is what would help them the most.

The Deputy Speaker: Before we resume debate, I will let the hon. member for Windsor West know that there are only about four minutes remaining in the time for government orders this afternoon, but I will recognize him just the same. He will have four minutes for his remarks.

The hon. member for Windsor West.

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise here today to contribute to a very important debate about taxpayers' money and where this country is going.

One of the interesting things about the budget allocation process is the government's move to move toward public-private partnerships with respect to infrastructure, something that it did not campaign on in the past election but that is driving its actions right now because of the fire sale required to pay for some of its promises and its budgetary practices that are way out of hand. In fact, we have gone from a promised \$10-billion deficit to a deficit of upwards of \$40 billion. I would suggest that by the end, it will be higher than that.

Here is a situation that is interesting. On Monday, the Prime Minister and his assembled cabinet spent an afternoon at the Ritz-Carlton in Toronto to basically showcase and sell off parts of Canada, especially infrastructure, to the private sector. The private sector on that day included not only private equity firms whose investors we do not know, but also non-democratic countries who

have their own infrastructure banks and monetary allotments to buy Canadian companies.

I remember one of my first notations in the House of Commons was when China Minmetals was wanting to buy Canadian natural resources and the Investment Canada Act had no national security screen on that. I worked hard to get an amendment to have such a screen as part of the Investment Canada Act because, at that time, we had a non-democratic Communist government that was using its financial resources to purchase Canadian natural resources. The ironic thing is that at that time, it was the Paul Martin administration that was selling Petro-Canada. So it was okay for the Communist government of China to purchase gas assets and resources and companies in Canada, but it was not good for Canadians to own a stake in their own company and their own natural resources, which they had already invested in in the past and were being dividends.

In fact, when we look at the books, we will find out, because we had a fire sale on, that the government lost hundreds of millions of dollars in the months after that because prices spiked after it had its fire sale. It was an interesting thing that took place and now, to this date, we have less.

When we look at the economics of this, we are looking at P3s being done in a country like Canada, which has one of the lower debt levels and some quite significant infrastructure assets. We are showcasing the strength of our capacity in that regard. We also have some of the lowest borrowing rates out there, which is important to note because those lower rates create these opportunities. Yet, the government still wants to go outside our country to bring in resources from other countries and from other private equity firms for them to make a profit over what Canadians have already paid for.

It is bizarre. When we think about the future for our children, we are sandbagging them, just like we did on the Highway 401 system that allowed these companies to get their assets and then pay for their profits at the expense of our children in the future.

I know I have to conclude, but it is a bizarre way of passing on a legacy to our kids that is supposed to be about economic and fiscal responsibility.

• (1800)

The Deputy Speaker: It being 5:59 p.m., pursuant to order made earlier today, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill now before the House.

The question is as follows. Shall I dispense?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

[Chair read text of amendment to the amendment to House]

Government Orders

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the amendment to the amendment?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the amendment to the amendment will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Deputy Speaker: Call in the members.

• (1840)

[*Translation*]

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

(*Division No. 146*)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif	Albas
Albrecht	Allison
Ambrose	Anderson
Angus	Arnold
Ashton	Aubin
Barlow	Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu	Benson
Bergen	Bernier
Berthold	Bezan
Blaikie	Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Block	Boucher
Boudrias	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brassard
Brosseau	Brown
Calkins	Cannings
Caron	Carrie
Chong	Choquette
Christopherson	Clarke
Clement	Cooper
Cullen	Davies
Deltell	Diotte
Donnelly	Dreeshen
Dubé	Dusseault
Duvall	Eglinski
Falk	Fortin
Gallant	Garrison
Généreux	Genuis
Gill	Gladu
Godin	Gourde
Harder	Hoback
Hughes	Jeneroux
Johns	Julian
Kelly	Kent
Kitchen	Kmiec
Kwan	Lake
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Laverdière
Leitch	Liepert
Lobb	Lukiwski
MacGregor	MacKenzie
Maguire	Malcolmson
Masse (Windsor West)	Mathyszen
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McColeman
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)	Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)
Moore	Mulcair
Nantel	Nater

Nicholson
Obhrai
Plamondon
Quach
Ramsey
Rayes
Rempel
Sansoucy
Scheer
Shields
Sopuck
Stanton
Stewart
Stubbs
Thériault
Trost
Van Kesteren
Vecchio
Wagantall
Warkentin
Webber
Wong
Zimmer — 135

Nuttall
Paul-Hus
Poilievre
Raiitt
Rankin
Reid
Richards
Saroya
Schmale
Shiple
Sorenson
Stetski
Strahl
Sweet
Tilson
Trudel
Van Loan
Viersen
Warawa
Waugh
Weir
Yurdiga

NAYS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Alleslev	Amos
Anandasangaree	Arseneault
Arya	Ayoub
Badawey	Bagnell
Bains	Baylis
Beech	Bennett
Bibeau	Bittle
Blair	Boissonnault
Bossio	Bratina
Breton	Brisson
Caesar-Chavannes	Carr
Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)	Casey (Charlottetown)
Chagger	Champagne
Chan	Chen
Cuzner	Dabrusin
Damoff	DeCoursey
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Di Iorio	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dzerowicz	Easter
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Ellis	Erskine-Smith
Eyking	Eyolfson
Fergus	Fillmore
Finnigan	Fisher
Fonseca	Foote
Fragiskatos	Fraser (West Nova)
Fraser (Central Nova)	Fry
Fuhr	Gameau
Gerretsen	Goldsmith-Jones
Goodale	Graham
Grewal	Hajdu
Hardie	Harvey
Hehr	Holland
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)	May (Saenich—Gulf Islands)
McCallum	McCrimmon
McDonald	McGuinty
McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod (Northwest Territories)	Mendès

Government Orders

(Division No. 147)

Mendicino
Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Sœurs)
Monsef
Morrisey
Nassif
O'Connell
Oliver
Ouellette
Peschisolido
Petitpas Taylor
Picard
Qualtrough
Rioux
Rodriguez
Rota
Ruimy
Sahota
Sajjan
Sangha
Scarpaleggia
Schulte
Sgro
Sheehan
Sikand
Sohi
Spengemann
Tan
Tootoo
Vandenbeld
Virani
Wilkinson
Wrzesnewskyj
Zahid— 175

Mihychuk
Murray
Nault
Oliphant
O'Regan
Paradis
Peterson
Philpott
Poissant
Ratansi
Robillard
Romanado
Rudd
Rusnak
Saini
Samson
Sarai
Schiefke
Serré
Shanahan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Simms
Sorbara
Tabbara
Tassi
Vandal
Vaughan
Whalen
Wilson-Raybould
Young

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the amendment to the amendment defeated.

The next question is on the amendment. The question is as follows.

[*English*]

Shall I dispense?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

[*Chair read text of amendment to House*]

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

• (1850)

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

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif
Albrecht
Ambrose
Angus
Ashton
Barlow
Beaulieu
Bergen
Berthold
Blaikie
Block
Boudrias
Boutin-Sweet
Brosseau
Calkins
Caron
Chong
Christopherson
Clement
Cullen
Deltell
Donnelly
Dubé
Duvall
Falk
Gallant
Généreux
Gill
Godin
Harder
Hughes
Johns
Kelly
Kitchen
Kwan
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Leitch
Lobb
MacGregor
Maguire
Masse (Windsor West)
McCauley (Edmonton West)
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
Moore
Nantel
Nicholson
Obhrai
Plamondon
Quach
Ramsey
Rayes
Rempel
Sansoucy
Scheer
Shields
Sopuck
Stanton
Stewart
Stubbs
Thériault
Trost
Van Kesteren
Vecchio
Wagantall
Warkentin
Webber
Wong
Zimmer— 135

Albas
Allison
Anderson
Arnold
Aubin
Barsalou-Duval
Benson
Bernier
Bezan
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Boucher
Boulerice
Brassard
Brown
Cannings
Carrie
Choquette
Clarke
Cooper
Davies
Diotte
Dreeshen
Dusseau
Eglinski
Fortin
Garrison
Genius
Gladu
Gourde
Hoback
Jeneroux
Julian
Kent
Kmiec
Lake
Laverdière
Liepert
Lukiwski
MacKenzie
Malcolmson
Mathysen
McColeman
Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)
Mulcair
Nater
Nuttall
Paul-Hus
Poilievre
Raiitt
Rankin
Reid
Richards
Saroya
Schmale
Shipley
Sorenson
Stetski
Strahl
Sweet
Tilson
Trudel
Van Loan
Viersen
Warawa
Waugh
Weir
Yurdiga

NAYS

Members

Aldag
Alleslev
Anandasangaree
Arya
Badawey
Alghabra
Amos
Arseneault
Ayoub
Bagnell

Government Orders

Bains	Baylis
Beech	Bennett
Bibeau	Bittle
Blair	Boissonnault
Bossio	Bratina
Breton	Brison
Caesar-Chavannes	Carr
Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)	Casey (Charlottetown)
Chagger	Champagne
Chan	Chen
Cuzner	Dabrusin
Damoff	DeCoursey
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Di Iorio	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dzerowicz	Easter
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Ellis	Erskine-Smith
Eyking	Eyolfson
Fergus	Fillmore
Finnigan	Fisher
Fonseca	Footé
Fragiskatos	Fraser (West Nova)
Fraser (Central Nova)	Fry
Fuhr	Gameau
Gerretsen	Goldsmith-Jones
Goodale	Graham
Grewal	Hajdu
Hardie	Harvey
Hehr	Holland
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)	May (Saarich—Gulf Islands)
McCallum	McCrimmon
McDonald	McGuinty
McKay	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod (Northwest Territories)	Mendès
Medicino	Mihychuk
Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Soeurs)	
Monsef	
Morrissey	Murray
Nassif	Nault
O'Connell	Oliphant
Oliver	O'Regan
Ouellette	Paradis
Peschisolido	Peterson
Petitpas Taylor	Philpott
Picard	Poissant
Qualtrough	Ratansi
Rioux	Robillard
Rodriguez	Romanado
Rota	Rudd
Ruimy	Rusnak
Sahota	Saini
Sajjan	Samson
Sangha	Sarai
Scarpaleggia	Schiefke
Schulte	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sikand	Simms
Sohi	Sorbara
Spengemann	Tabbara
Tan	Tassi
Tootoo	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Vaughan
Virani	Whalen
Wilkinson	Wilson-Raybould
Wrzesnewskyj	Young
Zahid — 175	

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the amendment defeated.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.**Some hon. members:** No.**The Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.**Some hon. members:** Yea.**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please say nay.**Some hon. members:** Nay.**The Speaker:** In my opinion the yeas have it.*And five or more members having risen:*

● (1900)

[Translation]

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

(Division No. 148)

YEAS

Members

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

Government Orders

Lamoureux
Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
Lebouthillier
Lemieux
Levitt
Lockhart
Longfield
MacAulay (Cardigan)
Maloney
May (Cambridge)
McCrimmon
McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
Mendès
Mihychuk
Soeurs)
Monsef
Murray
Nault
Oliphant
O'Regan
Paradis
Peterson
Philpott
Poissant
Ratansi
Robillard
Romanado
Rudd
Rusnak
Saini
Samson
Sarai
Schiefke
Serré
Shanahan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Simms
Sorbara
Tabbara
Tassi
Vandal
Vaughan
Whalen
Wilson-Raybould
Young

Lapointe
LeBlanc
Lefebvre
Leslie
Lightbound
Long
Ludwig
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)
McCallum
McDonald
McKay
McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendicino
Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-
Morrissey
Nassif
O'Connell
Oliver
Ouellette
Peschisolido
Petipas Taylor
Picard
Qualtrough
Rioux
Rodríguez
Rota
Ruimy
Sahota
Sajjan
Sangha
Scarpaleggia
Schulte
Sgro
Sheehan
Sikand
Sohi
Spengemann
Tan
Tootoo
Vandenbeld
Virani
Wilkinson
Wrzesnewskyj
Zahid— 174

Kitchen
Kwan
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Leitch
Lobb
MacGregor
Maguire
Masse (Windsor West)
May (Saenich—Gulf Islands)
McColeman
Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)
Mulcair
Nater
Nuttall
Paul-Hus
Poilievre
Raitt
Rankin
Reid
Richards
Saroya
Schmale
Shipley
Sorenson
Stetski
Strahl
Sweet
Tilson
Trudel
Van Loan
Viersen
Warawa
Waugh
Weir
Yurdiga
Kmiec
Lake
Laverdière
Liepert
Lukiwski
MacKenzie
Malcolmson
Mathysen
McCauley (Edmonton West)
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
Moore
Nantel
Nicholson
Obhrai
Plamondon
Quach
Ramsey
Rayes
Rempel
Sansoucy
Scheer
Shields
Sopuck
Stanton
Stewart
Stubbs
Thériault
Trost
Van Kesteren
Vecchio
Wagantall
Warkentin
Webber
Wong
Zimmer— 136

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Consequently, this bill is referred to the Standing Committee on Finance.

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

* * *

[English]

CANADA PENSION PLAN

The House resumed from November 14 consideration of the motion that Bill C-26, An Act to amend the Canada Pension Plan, the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board Act and the Income Tax Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee, of the amendment and of the amendment to the amendment.

The Speaker: The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the amendment to the amendment.

● (1905)

[Translation]

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

(Division No. 149)

YEAS

Members

Aboultouf
Albrecht
Ambrose
Angus
Ashton
Barlow
Beaulieu
Bergen
Berthold
Blaikie
Block
Boudrias
Boutin-Sweet
Brosseau
Calkins
Caron
Chong
Christopherson
Clement
Cullen
Deltell
Donnelly
Dubé
Duvall
Falk
Gallant
Généreux
Gill
Godin
Harder
Hughes
Johns
Kelly

Albas
Allison
Anderson
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Aubin
Barsalou-Duval
Benson
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Boucher
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Brassard
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Cannings
Carrie
Choquette
Clarke
Cooper
Davies
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Eglinski
Fortin
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Genuis
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Gourde
Hoback
Jeneroux
Julian
Kent

Aboultouf
Albrecht
Ambrose
Arnold
Bergen
Berthold
Block
Brassard
Calkins
Chong

Albas
Allison
Anderson
Barlow
Bernier
Bezan
Boucher
Brown
Carrie
Clarke

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Deltell	Diotte	Housefather	Hughes
Dreeshen	Eglinski	Hussen	Hutchings
Falk	Gallant	Iacono	Johns
Généreux	Genuis	Joly	Jones
Gladu	Godin	Jordan	Jowhari
Gourde	Harder	Julian	Kang
Hoback	Jeneroux	Khalid	Khera
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Lobb	Lukiwski	Lefebvre	Lemieux
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Nuttall	Obhrai	MacGregor	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Paul-Hus	Poilievre	Malcolmson	Maloney
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Richards	Saroya	May (Saenich—Gulf Islands)	McCallum
Scheer	Schmale	McCrimmon	McDonald
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Alleslev	Amos	Petitpas Taylor	Philpott
Anandasangaree	Angus	Picard	Poissant
Arseneault	Arya	Quach	Qualtrough
Ashton	Aubin	Ramsey	Rankin
Ayoub	Badawey	Ratansi	Rioux
Bagnell	Bains	Robillard	Rodriguez
Baylis	Beech	Romanado	Rota
Bennett	Benson	Rudd	Ruimy
Bibeau	Bittle	Rusnak	Sahota
Blaikie	Blair	Saini	Sajjan
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Bossio	Boulerice	Sansoucy	Sarai
Boutin-Sweet	Bratina	Scarpaleggia	Schiefke
Breton	Brisson	Schulte	Serré
Brosseau	Caesar-Chavannes	Sgro	Shanahan
Cannings	Caron	Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Carr	Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)	Sikand	Simms
Casey (Charlottetown)	Chagger	Sohi	Sorbara
Champagne	Chan	Spengemann	Stetski
Chen	Choquette	Stewart	Tabbara
Christopherson	Cullen	Tan	Tassi
Cuzner	Dabrusin	Tootoo	Trudel
Damoff	Davies	Vandal	Vandenbeld
DeCoursey	Dhaliwal	Vaughan	Virani
Dhillon	Di Iorio	Weir	Whalen
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Fillmore	Finnigan		
Fisher	Fonseca		
Foote	Fragiskatos		
Fraser (West Nova)	Fraser (Central Nova)		
Fry	Fuhr		
Garneau	Garrison		
Gerretsen	Goldsmith-Jones		
Goodale	Graham		
Grewal	Hajdu		
Hardie	Harvey		

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the amendment to the amendment defeated.

[*English*]

I wish to inform the House that, because of the delay, there will be no private members' business hour today. Accordingly, the order will be rescheduled for another sitting.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

• (1910)

[*English*]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be able to rise to redress the question I raised on November 4, not even two short weeks ago, in which I asked the Minister of Defence where we are sending our soldiers in the UN mission in Africa; especially, on the basis that they are talking about root causes of the terrorist movement and why things are melting down in Africa. Essentially, we are dealing with radicalized terrorism. We are dealing with individuals who have a warped sense of ideology, a very twisted idea of what religion is; and of course, they are wanting to commit jihad and use peacekeepers as targets.

We know for a fact that in Mali, which is one of the countries to which the government wants to send our troops, al Qaeda in the Maghreb, which is the main terrorist organization in Mali, has already declared that it wants to use UN peacekeepers, blue helmets, for target practice. In just a couple of short years since the UN mission started in Mali, more than 106 peacekeepers have been killed, largely by terrorists.

The thing that we need to keep in mind—and everybody wants to talk about the root causes of this evil—is that these organizations, these gangs, these thugs, these terrorists, have been very successful in recruiting and retaining those individuals. We have to remember that the main groups that we are going to be fighting, that our forces are going to be encountering, are part of the major terrorist organizations. Even al Qaeda in the Maghreb, which is working out of Mali, has splintered off and part of the group under the leadership of al-Zawahiri has proclaimed allegiance to ISIS.

So, the same organization we are fighting with in Iraq, the same organization that has created all the havoc and death and atrocities in Syria, is now also the same organization we are dealing with in Mali.

We sent our troops to Afghanistan to fight the Taliban and al Qaeda, and al Qaeda is still out there, still exists, is still committing terrorist acts, is still committing all sorts of atrocities against innocent civilians, and is not playing by what we would consider the rules of war. However, it is losing ground. Even though it still has the allegiance of al-Shabaab in Somalia and Kenya, it has lost its control of Boko Haram, which has now pledged allegiance to ISIS. Also, it is important to know that Boko Haram is functioning in Nigeria, Niger, Chad, and north Cameroon, places where our troops can go.

Instead of looking at root causes, instead of sending us over there on a UN mission and being underneath the layers of bureaucracy dealing with the terrorist organizations that are there, why does the government not send us over on a NATO mission, or on a UN-led mission, to actually root out this evil, rather than deal with root causes, and allow us to get rid of these terrorists and bring true civility and protection to the civilian populations in North Africa?

Adjournment Proceedings

Our big concern here is that the UN is not the proper organization to conduct a war effort. When we are fighting terrorism, it is a war. Even the government has quit using the term “peacekeeping” because there is no peace to keep.

I look forward to hearing the parliamentary secretary's response.

• (1915)

Hon. John McKay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is the first time my hon. colleague has looked forward to hearing what I might have to say on these matters.

The question is about root causes. The hon. member mentioned a couple of times that to look for and search out root causes is essentially a waste of time. I am not surprised. We have a huge divergence of philosophy in our approach to global affairs.

Knowing what the root causes are is important. God forbid that we should ask a protagonist what the root causes of the conflict are. The other approach is to shoot first and ask questions later. Part of that approach is to climb into one's hidey-hole and lecture all the bad guys, and there is no end of bad guys. Iran is the world's foremost exporter of state terrorism. The Russians are being very aggressive, destabilizing the eastern side of Europe, all of the Baltic countries, Ukraine, et cetera. Jihadists are in multiple countries. President Assad has just gone to new levels of brutality. Frankly, sitting in some hidey-hole and lecturing all these bad guys about all the bad things they are doing is not particularly useful.

Our approach has been to try to figure out what the causes are. The minister, in his exploration of whether we will participate in peace operations, and I emphasize that no decision has been made, has been to Africa twice. He has visited seven countries. He has visited with NGOs, government officials, and opposition officials. He has taken two of Canada's most knowledgeable people on conflict resolution with him on one of his trips, namely Justice Arbour and General Dallaire. These people are specialists in conflict and conflict reduction.

I know that it is naive to think that if we have some understanding of the root causes, we might actually be able to contribute to the resolution of some of these conflicts. It may be that some of the root causes involve climate change, where climate change forces the migration of people. When people migrate, conflict occurs. It may be some perverted interpretation of some of the world's great religions. It may be a conflict that is as old as time itself. It may be an ancient tribal feud. The Middle East has been in conflict for 4,000 years. It is an ethnic conflict. It is a religious conflict. It is a tribal conflict. It is a conflict over resources.

Maybe if we understand some of these root causes, we will not have to shoot quite so often.

I would note that the Minister of Foreign Affairs has gone. The Minister of International Development has gone. The approach is a whole-of-government approach. We just cannot continue to shoot at people and expect the conflicts to be resolved. If we understand the root of conflicts, maybe we could achieve an approach that would contribute to peace operations.

Adjournment Proceedings

● (1920)

Mr. James Bezan: Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, the parliamentary secretary has missed the point that what is going on in theatre today has already been ratified. For what our troops are going to be facing, it is too late to start talking about root causes.

Conflict prevention down the road is an admirable goal, but we know that we have to eliminate those terrorists now. For whatever reason, people from all different walks of life have been attracted to the jihadist movement. They have been radicalized by religion, by philosophy, and by their hatred of the west. For that very reason, we need to go in there properly equipped and properly commanded.

General Vance, the Chief of the Defence Staff, was at committee today. General Vance quite clearly said that he is going to make sure that the troops have rules of engagement and a command he has control of.

We are also dealing with the United Nations, which brought us the mess in Bosnia. It brought us the mess in Rwanda. People like General Roméo Dallaire came back with incredible operational stress injuries and PTSD.

We have to address this head on. We have to make sure that our troops are properly equipped so they can eliminate the terrorists, protect the civilians, and ultimately be under the command of someone other than the United Nations.

Hon. John McKay: I will reply, Mr. Speaker, by, in effect, misquoting my minister, who yesterday, in reply to my hon. colleague, talked about his trips, the latest being to Mali and Senegal, and looking at them the way a soldier looked at a conflict zone, in fact, taking quite a number of tours of conflict zones. Therefore, he actually knows what he is talking about. He, along with the Chief of the Defence Staff, will never put our people in harm's way.

The hon. member talked about General Vance, Chief of the Defence Staff, who said at committee today, "As for our ability to protect ourselves we have learned a lot from Rwanda...I will make certain that the troops have the rules of engagement they need to be able to defend themselves and those who they work with", By extension, I would say civilians. He continued, "They will have the rules of engagement they need in a Chapter 7 operation...to effectively contribute to that mission".

I am sure that this does not necessarily answers my colleague's question.

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Mr. Fin Donnelly (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am following up on my question about the Liberal government's decision to extend the licences for open net salmon farms, from one year to six years, with no public input, no first nations consultation, and no environmental assessment.

The minister said that the government would be making decisions based on "scientific advice and the rigorous scientific standards that are required". The government is not. The science is clear and the government is choosing to ignore it. Open net salmon farms pose a serious threat to wild salmon, and increasing the licence regime to six years contradicts the department's mandate to protect wild salmon. I do not understand how the government can claim that it is

committed to implementing Cohen, seeking a nation-to-nation relationship with first nations, making evidence-based decisions, then turning around to issue six-year licences for open net salmon farms. The government is choosing to simply disregard the science and first nation concerns.

I would like to remind the government of one of Justice Cohen's key findings related to open net salmon farms. He stated:

...the potential harm posed to Fraser River sockeye from salmon farms is serious or irreversible. Disease transfer occurs between wild and farmed fish, and I am satisfied that salmon farms along the sockeye migration route have the potential to introduce exotic diseases and to exacerbate endemic diseases that could have a negative impact.

I would also like to remind the government that recommendations 18 and 19 state that if salmon farms in the Discovery Islands pose more than a minimal risk of serious harm, those farms should cease operations, and no new farms should be created. It is completely inconsistent to maintain one-year licences in the Discovery Islands, while moving to a six-year licence regime elsewhere, especially when this year has provided even more evidence of the increased dangers of disease from salmon farms.

Confirmation of the presence of heart and skeletal muscle inflammation, or HSMI, by DFO scientist Dr. Kristi Miller, in Atlantic salmon samples collected from a B.C. salmon farm prove that action must be taken to prevent the spread of this deadly salmon disease. This disease has the potential to spread to wild Pacific salmon, with a devastating result.

Much research has been published on the negative impacts on wild salmon from sea lice associated with salmon farms. There is absolutely no proof or evidence that demonstrates these risks have been addressed or eliminated. Allowing the open net salmon farming industry to unofficially expand their operations through six-year licences, despite a lack of scientific support, is absolutely inconsistent with following the precautionary approach. Does the government deny the evidence confirming open net salmon farms pose more than a minimal risk to wild salmon? What evidence does it have to support such a claim?

Further, the Cohen Commission asked the government to stop promoting open net salmon farms as an industry and farmed salmon as a product and return to the primary objective of preserving wild salmon. This licensing decision demonstrates the department's conflicted mandate. It appears that promoting the open net salmon farming industry is held above the department's constitutional mandate to protect wild fish and the fishery.

The parliamentary secretary needs to explain why the government has chosen to go in this misguided direction.

Adjournment Proceedings

• (1925)

Mr. Sean Casey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to say that I am confident in the regulatory management of the aquaculture industry in all of Canada, but most particularly in British Columbia. Measures are in place through regulations and conditions of licence to apply evidence-based thresholds and standards to manage environmental impacts. Moreover, the industry is required to report to Fisheries and Oceans Canada on all of its activities.

The effect of all these regulations and reporting requirements makes finfish aquaculture in British Columbia the most heavily regulated and transparent aquaculture sector in Canada. As a result, we are able to know a great deal about how finfish aquaculture is managed and practised in British Columbia, including its outcomes according to reporting, audit, and surveillance activities and other management measures.

What does all the data, which has now been collected over the last five years, tell us? Are there indications of any significant problems with finfish aquaculture in British Columbia? In fact, the evidence shows an industry that has steadily reduced its environmental impact, mitigated the impacts it has had, and minimized its interactions with wild populations and their habitat.

We are a country and a government that rely on the best scientific advice to inform our regulatory regimes. We use evidence as a basis for making decisions and we see no evidence that the environment is being sacrificed to further the economic development of the aquaculture industry in British Columbia. Canada's aquaculture industry, as a whole, has an exemplary record. The compliance rate of aquaculture operations with the Fisheries Act regulations was over 99% each year.

Based on this evidence, Fisheries and Oceans Canada agreed to enable multi-year licensing for aquaculture operators in British Columbia. Multi-year licensing is the standard in other countries and employing it in British Columbia gives our industry more of a level playing field with its competitors. This initiative was undertaken in full consultation with the aquaculture industry and other stakeholders, as well as indigenous peoples.

The point to emphasize is that the government maintains the ability to change licensing conditions at any time for the conservation and protection of fish, regardless of the licence duration. This change reduces the administrative burden on both industry and on Fisheries and Oceans Canada, but it does not affect our ability to manage the industry.

Based on all the evidence, we believe that the regulatory regime is sufficiently robust and strong to be able to ensure well-paying and stable jobs for thousands of people living in rural, remote, and coastal communities, support an innovative and world-leading aquaculture industry, and protect wild populations and the aquatic environment.

Therefore, I stand here in the House in full support of British Columbia's aquaculture industry as well as the aquaculture industry across the country, in support of our robust regulatory regime, in support of good jobs, and in support of healthy and nutritious farmed seafood products that feed Canadians as well as people around the world.

• (1930)

Mr. Fin Donnelly: Mr. Speaker, the government should do the right thing: immediately return to the one year licence regime; respect Justice Cohen's recommendations; and commit to protecting wild salmon by supporting my private member's bill, Bill C-228 to transition west coast open net salmon farms to safe closed containment systems within five years.

Instead, the government is choosing to simply disregard science and first nations concerns. There was no first nations consultation or agreement to extend these salmon farm licences. Of particular note was the lack of consultation with the Musgamagw Dzawada'enuxw Tribal Council, who have approximately one-third of B.C.'s salmon farms in their territory.

Will the government commit to immediately consult with the Musgamagw Dzawada'enuxw Tribal Council and other first nations whose right to a wild salmon fishery is being threatened by open net salmon farms?

Mr. Sean Casey: Mr. Speaker, I repeat that I am confident that in the regulatory management of the aquaculture industry in all of Canada, but most particularly in British Columbia, the effect of all regulations and reporting requirements in place makes finfish aquaculture in British Columbia the most heavily regulated and most transparent aquaculture sector in Canada.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada agreed to enable multi-year licensing for aquaculture operators in British Columbia, however, the government maintains the ability to change licensing conditions at any time for the conservation and protection of fish, regardless of the licence duration. This initiative was undertaken in full consultation with the aquaculture industry and other stakeholders, as well as indigenous peoples.

We believe that the regulatory regime is sufficiently robust and strong to be able to ensure well-paying and stable jobs for thousands of people living in rural, remote, and coastal communities, and protect wild fish populations.

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7:32 p.m.)

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