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Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, December 13, 2016

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1005)

[English]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

FINANCE

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 12th report of the Standing Committee on Finance in relation to Bill S-4, an act to implement a convention and an arrangement for the avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income and to amend an act in respect of a similar agreement. The committee has studied the bill and has decided to report the bill back to the House without amendment.

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AND ESTIMATES

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if you will indulge me, I just have a few words to say before I table this report. Several months ago, the Minister of Public Services and Procurement and I had a conversation, at which time she indicated her desire to have a widespread consultation with Canadians about the future of Canada Post. Although, as members know, ministers cannot direct committees to undertake any study, I thought it was a very legitimate observation that the government needed to consult on one of our most iconic government institutions. Therefore, I took the suggestion back to our committee, who agreed that a widespread consultation would be appropriate. From there, we decided to conduct our study. It was an extensive study, and we travelled to 22 communities across Canada—communities both urban and rural, large and small, remote and first nations communities—in fact, 22 communities in all 10 provinces plus the Northwest Territories, in a three-week period.

It was an exhausting time for all of us on the committee, so I would like to offer my very sincere thanks to all of those who assisted: our clerk, our analysts, the PVO officials, the translators, the logisticians, and most particularly the committee members themselves. We found out, as you would know, Mr. Speaker, having been a parliamentarian for several years, that one way we can determine the true character of people is to put them in cramped

quarters for three weeks and force them to interact with one another. We had a prime example of how parliamentarians of all different political backgrounds were able to come together. Yes, there were disagreements at times, but they were respectful and at all times professional. I want to offer my very sincere thanks to all of those who assisted me in this undertaking.

With those brief words, I would like to say that I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the following report from the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates: the fourth report, entitled “The Way Forward for Canada Post”. Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table the opposition's dissenting report on the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates' Canada Post study, in both official languages.

I, like the member for Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan, thank the committee clerk, translators, analysts, and my fellow committee members who spent so many days on the road hearing from Canadians.

The Conservative members on the committee cannot, in good conscience, endorse the vast majority of the recommendations contained in the Liberals' report. The report does not address the serious financial shortfall that Canada Post faces, and it rejects several initiatives that would tangibly improve Canada Post's financial stability.

After ignoring the evidence-based findings of many experts, the majority recommendations veer off the road of reality and on to a highway of jargon and nonsensical recommendations, such as having taxpayers subsidize international mail into Canada, subsidizing Canada Post through other government departments, changing pension rules for independent crown corporations, and my personal favourite, turning Canada Post into an Internet and telecom provider.

Routine Proceedings

These are out of touch with reality, as they are not concrete proposals to improve Canada Post's financial situation. Rather, they demonstrate that the Liberals are intent on going out of their way to ignore the findings of the task force discussion paper and the vast amount of Canadians surveyed, the committee's consultations, and public opinion, just for the sake of putting taxpayers on the hook yet again for an ill-conceived Liberal campaign promise.

The reality-defying majority report also includes value statements, repetitious buzzwords, and recommendations that Canada Post ignore the changing reality of the digital world and simply maintain the status quo. In fact, less than half of the majority's recommendations are actual calls for action for Canada Post, with the rest being examples of feel-good statements that cannot help Canada Post improve.

This dissenting report lists five recommendations: first, that we should recognize Canada Post as an independent crown corporation, and the Government of Canada ought to refrain from limiting Canada Post's autonomy; second, that Canada Post focus on its traditional purpose, which is to provide high-quality, affordable postal services to all Canadians; third, that Canada Post find innovative and yet reliable ways to remain sustainable, while staying true to its traditional core mandate; fourth, that Canada Post consider implementing the sustainable operation measures proposed in the task force report; and fifth and finally, that Canada Post ensure that any steps taken to modernize its operations remain revenue neutral for the sake of taxpayers.

Our recommendations are simple, evidence-based ones that respect the ability for Canada Post to continue operating as an independent organization while accounting for the concerns and comments we heard throughout the various recommendations and consultations. In contrast to the Liberal fantasy report, our recommendations recognize that Canada Post faces significant financial challenges in the short and long term.

While the Liberals are intent on covering up poorly chosen campaign promises using rhetoric and uncostered ideas, our recommendations focus on solutions rooted in what Canadians want. While the Liberals seem content putting forward a report that ultimately puts taxpayers on the hook for hundreds of millions of dollars, our recommendations are good first steps to put Canada Post back on track, while focusing on its core mandate.

The overwhelming consensus we heard from financial experts, task force members, and Canada Post itself is that Canada Post cannot continue without substantial changes. Conservatives members, always happy to table sound, evidence-based ideas, submit this dissenting report today.

* * *

● (1010)

PETITIONS

JUSTICE

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree (Scarborough—Rouge Park, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present petition e-482, a petition organized by my friend, who is now a senator, Kim Pate, of the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies, in both official languages. This petition calls upon the Government of Canada to

review and remedy all cases of women prisoners held in administrative segregation over the past five years.

I believe this is a very important petition to bring forward because of some undeniable facts: first, women with mental health issues are still being held in administrative segregation at alarming rates, despite the findings of the 2007 Ashley Smith inquest; second, indigenous women and women with debilitating mental health issues are the fastest growing prison population and the groups most affected with being harmed or dying in segregation; third, many international and national organizations, including the United Nations, have called upon the government to remedy the excessive use of solitary confinement in our prisons; and finally, in a 2011 report, Juan Mendez, a UN special rapporteur on torture, concluded that solitary confinement can constitute torture. In his opinion, prolonged solitary confinement in excess of 15 days should be subject to an absolute prohibition.

It is in this context that I present this important petition this morning.

The Speaker: I remind hon. members that petitions is a time to present the petition and maybe refer to what it says, but not to indicate their views about the petition. It is not a time for debate.

FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition signed by several thousand Canadians, including dozens of my constituents, calling on the government to amend section 241 of the Criminal Code, as well as the Civil Marriage Act, to ensure that persons of faith and faith-based institutions are protected from the provisions to which they object on the basis of freedom of religion and freedom of conscience.

The petitioners further call upon the government to establish a policy to review any new legislation to ensure that it does not impinge upon the freedoms of religion and conscience guaranteed under the Canadian Bill of Rights and the Charter of Rights of Freedoms.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Wayne Stetski (Kootenay—Columbia, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to present three petitions today on behalf of my constituents from Kootenay—Columbia, and I thank them for caring about Canada.

The first petition is in relation to climate change. The petitioners are calling upon the Government of Canada to adopt a carbon policy that applies a fee to greenhouse gas emissions at their source of production in Canada or port of entry into Canada, increase the fee over time, and distribute 100% of the money raised from the fee equally amongst all Canadians.

●(1015)

FOOD WASTE

Mr. Wayne Stetski (Kootenay—Columbia, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my second petition concerns food waste. Approximately \$27 billion a year is wasted.

The petitioners are calling on the Government of Canada to declare October 20 of each year as national food waste awareness day; determine solutions to food waste through a national awareness campaign; make it easier for businesses to donate unsold food products, which are safe for consumption, to community organizations and food banks; and to reduce the environmental impact of producing food that is not consumed by encouraging more sustainable food production methods.

DEMOCRATIC REFORM

Mr. Wayne Stetski (Kootenay—Columbia, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my third petition is related to democratic reform.

The petitioners are calling upon the Government of Canada to adopt a fairer proportional voting system so that the Parliament of Canada can actually reflect how voters voted.

TAXATION

Ms. Pam Damoff (Oakville North—Burlington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present this petition regarding access to the disability tax credit for people with hearing loss.

The petition calls upon the Government of Canada to amend the Income Tax Act to change the requirements for a person with hearing loss, so they can qualify for the disability tax credit in the same manner as other persons with disabilities do.

I was pleased to sponsor this petition after meeting with families in my riding of Oakville North—Burlington who brought this issue to my attention. More than 2,200 Canadians have lent their names to this petition. As the Minister of Finance works on budget 2017, I hope he keeps this petition in mind.

MEDICAL MARIJUANA

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today I present a petition signed by constituents from Nanaimo—Ladysmith and across Canada.

The petitioners, in the spirit of continuing to support the care, treatment, and re-establishment in life of Canadian veterans, point out that veterans throughout Canada are now legally accessing medical marijuana to treat PTSD—post-traumatic stress disorder—chronic pain, and other health issues.

However, they say that oral ingestion of cannabis, although it poses certain advantages over smoking marijuana—less bronchial irritation and less impact on the lungs—is not covered. Veterans Affairs Canada does not cover the cost of marijuana extracts, but only cannabis flowers. The petitioners are urging the government to make that change.

In testament to the power of petitions and the engagement of citizens, two weeks ago the government made this exact change. I salute these petitioners. They are already successful.

S. O. 52

[Translation]

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.

* * *

[English]

REQUEST FOR EMERGENCY DEBATE

EMPLOYMENT IN ALBERTA

The Speaker: I have a notice of a request for an emergency debate from the hon. member for Calgary Rocky Ridge.

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise to seek leave for the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing an important matter, the economic crisis in Alberta, requiring urgent consideration pursuant to Standing Order 52.

Alberta's unemployment rate has just reached a 25-year high and continues to rise. On December 2, Statistics Canada reported that Alberta lost another 13,000 jobs in November, increasing the unemployment rate by half a per cent in that month alone, for a total of 9%. Since November last year, unemployment has increased by 52,000 Albertans.

However, the 9% of Albertans who are out of work are not the only ones affected by this jobs crisis. It has serious effects on families. The sharp and relatively rapid loss of employment has driven up food bank use across Alberta by 60%, has increased the divorce rate, has increased substance abuse rates, and has led to reports of unemployed workers turning to prostitution.

The rapid rise in unemployment has also increased the commercial vacancy rate to 30%, has collapsed or driven out over 11,000 businesses, and has diminished employment prospects for thousands of new graduates.

Furthermore, Alberta's jobs crisis is a national problem with national consequences. A crash in the energy sector lowers demand for heavy equipment manufacturing in Ontario. It lowers demand for skilled workers from Newfoundland and Labrador and the Maritimes. It lowers demand for financial services for energy projects.

Government Orders

In light of the precedents that have been recently raised in the House of Commons, the hardships facing residents of Calgary Rocky Ridge and all Albertans, and the national effects of a crash in Alberta's energy sector, I respectfully request that the House of Commons hold an emergency debate concerning Alberta's jobs crisis.

• (1020)

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member for Calgary Rocky Ridge for having raised his request. As he knows, the Standing Order has very strict requirements, and I do not find that the request meets the requirements. As the Deputy Speaker said yesterday, I encourage members to consider alternative means to raise these matters.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

CANADA-UKRAINE FREE TRADE AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of International Trade, Lib.) moved that Bill C-31, an act to implement the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and Ukraine, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I hope today you will permit me to say:

[*Member spoke in Ukrainian*]

[*English*]

I am absolutely delighted to rise in the House today in support of legislation to implement the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement. This is a historic agreement for Canadians and Ukrainians alike. I know that many hon. members, including those across the aisle, have worked hard on this agreement.

Two weeks ago, I had the distinct honour of speaking at an all-party Holodomor memorial service here in our House of Commons. It was a moving reminder for me of the broad all-party support in Canada for the people of Ukraine.

The people of Ukraine have always had very close ties to Canada. Many families, like my own, trace their ancestry to Ukraine. In fact, our countries have enjoyed a close relationship dating back more than 125 years.

It is particularly appropriate to be talking about the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement this year, because this is the 125th anniversary of the first immigration of Ukrainians to Canada. I must say that as the weather has been turning colder this year, I have thought a lot about what those Ukrainian pioneers endured in their first winter on our Prairies. I think this agreement is a very powerful way, among many other things, to honour the tremendous work they did and the tremendous sacrifices they made, particularly in settling our prairie provinces. Today there are more than 1.2 million Canadians with Ukrainian heritage, and many have been integral to Canadian progress and history.

Multiculturalism is a core Canadian value. It is one to which Ukrainian Canadians are very proud to have contributed. They have contributed to its development as an idea and live it in their lives as

Ukrainian Canadians. That multiculturalism is increasingly a value that Canada and Ukraine, as countries, share. I think the Canadian experience is very valuable for Ukraine as it develops as an independent state.

Another value that Canada and Ukraine share is our belief that government's role is to work hard for the prosperity of our people, for the middle class, and for jobs for our middle class. Both of our countries understand how essential trade is to delivering that prosperity and those jobs to our people.

That is why my mandate letter specifically instructs me to complete our free trade agreement with Ukraine, a significant milestone in the relationship between our two countries.

This free trade agreement is rooted in the connections between our people. I am so proud that this agreement will contribute to economic growth and will create more jobs, both in Canada and in Ukraine.

[*Translation*]

Despite its highly publicized and very real economic problems, Ukraine is a promising emerging market with many similarities to the largest European economies. The country has rich farmland, a well-developed industrial base, a highly skilled labour force, and an educated population. Ukraine also has abundant mineral resources, including iron ore and nickel.

The country also has dynamic agricultural and aerospace sectors and has long been known for its technological achievements thanks to its well-developed science and education capacities. Ukraine offers investment and trade partnership opportunities in these and many other sectors.

The Ukrainian economy is once again growing, and the International Monetary Fund projects that its gross domestic product will increase by 1.5% this year and 2.5% next year. That is a remarkable achievement for the peoples of Ukraine in a time of war.

Ukraine's trade climate is improving, as is the ease of doing business there. While much remains to be done, things are getting better.

• (1025)

This country offers many opportunities for Canadian businesses in areas such as aerospace, agricultural equipment, mining equipment, information and communication technologies, agriculture and agrifood, and fish and seafood. Canada has the necessary experience and expertise in all of these sectors, leaving it perfectly positioned to become a leading partner for Ukraine.

Our economy has a great deal to offer Ukrainian businesses. Indeed, Canada survived the global economic crisis very well. The future looks bright for Canada thanks to impressive prospects for growth, a low corporate tax rate, and a talented, educated, and multicultural workforce, including Ukrainian Canadians who have an advantage with respect to Canada-Ukraine trade.

Government Orders

In light of this vast potential and the many opportunities our two countries offer one another, of course we must work closely to strengthen our partnership. The Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement will help Canadian businesses take better advantage of a deeper relationship between the two countries and the opportunities afforded by this relationship.

By eliminating tariffs on virtually all goods currently traded between Canada and Ukraine and dealing with other types of barriers to trade, this agreement will open new doors and make Canadian goods more competitive on Ukrainian markets.

The rules of the agreement are drafted in such a way as to address non-tariff barriers, contribute to facilitating trade, make trade more predictable, and help reduce some of the administrative costs currently imposed on businesses.

Whether we are talking about seafood products from Atlantic Canada, maple products and goods manufactured in central Canada, or even pulses, pork, and wine from western Canada, this agreement could benefit a wide range of sectors in every region of Canada.

With good trade relations come good job opportunities and with one in six Canadian jobs directly tied to exports, our government is determined to expand Canada's access to foreign markets and help grow our economy for all Canadians.

The government is also working hard to promote the agreement and ensure that Canadian businesses can reap the full benefit of it. The government is currently developing communications products in order to ensure that the private sector is aware of the opportunities that are available in the free trade agreements, as well as the various support programs.

Canada's talented team of trade commissioners, of which I am very proud, will also receive training and the tools it needs to identify business opportunities created by the free trade agreement on the ground and communicate those to its clients. We are also determined to ensure that trade is inclusive and that the benefits are distributed better. Our progressive approach to trade seeks to ensure that trade growth helps strengthen the middle class, but not at the expense of the environment, labour rights, or the rights of governments to make regulations in the public interest.

Like our free trade agreement with the European Union, our agreement with Ukraine reflects strong Canadian values.

● (1030)

Today's world is full of challenges and immense possibilities due to the opening of new markets, the growth of developing countries, the emergence of new technologies, and progress in attaining the United Nations' sustainable development goals.

That is one of the reasons why our government opted for a progressive trade approach. It is also the reason why the Prime Minister has made the implementation of the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement one of the priorities of my mandate as the Minister of International Trade.

[English]

Canada is deeply committed to working with the people of Ukraine to help Ukraine rebuild its economy in these very difficult

political circumstances and to deepen the economic ties between our two countries in the years ahead.

Canada stands firmly beside Ukraine in defending its borders and its sovereignty against illegal and unwarranted acts of aggression. Canada has led other G7 countries in condemning Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea, and we will continue to take action to help the people of Ukraine rebuild their economy and country.

This free trade agreement is a very important part of Canada's solidarity with Ukraine. I would like the people of Ukraine, who I hope are listening to us today, to know that Canada stands today squarely alongside Ukraine. Canada has long supported the establishment of Ukraine as a stable, prosperous, and democratic country. Since Ukraine's independence in 1991, Canada has committed more than \$1.2 billion in technical and financial assistance to Ukraine. In fact, Canada was the first western country to recognize independent Ukraine at that time.

When I met with the Canadian and Ukrainian business community last June at the Canada-Ukraine business forum in Toronto, I heard optimism and hope from both Canadian and Ukrainian business leaders that this agreement would strengthen the ties between our two countries and create new opportunities for our businesses and our people to work together. Also, it is a strategic agreement as well as an economic one.

On July 11, 2016, I had the very great and very personal honour of signing this agreement alongside my Ukrainian counterpart, the minister of economic development and trade, Stepan Kubiv, in Kiev during our Prime Minister's first official visit to Ukraine. Our Prime Minister, together with President Poroshenko, were there to witness that signature.

Both of our countries understand how essential trade is to delivering prosperity and jobs to our people. By improving market access and creating more predictable conditions for trade, the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement will generate new opportunities for Ukrainians. Canadians want to do more business in and, crucially, with Ukraine in the years ahead.

A free trade agreement between our countries is an important way to help make that happen. The agreement would provide improved access for goods and services and address non-tariff barriers to trade. It has the potential to facilitate stronger economic relations by making it easier to do business together. I strongly believe that the agreement will help the people of Ukraine in their very difficult work toward reforming their economy and asserting their independence.

Ukrainians see Canada as a partner in Ukraine's economic reforms, and this agreement, by facilitating trade between our countries and by helping Ukrainians to raise their standards in areas like labour, the environment, and trade facilitation, will be a very important tool and support for Ukraine.

The Ukrainian people have always had a friend in Canada, and our government, and I very much personally, are determined to help the people of Ukraine prosper and succeed in a sovereign, democratic, and free Ukraine. Our free trade agreement is a very concrete measure that reinforces this support and that has built on work done by members of all parties in the House.

Government Orders

•(1035)

I therefore urge all hon. members to support the legislative amendments contained in Bill C-31 and to enable us to do our part in bringing the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement into force.

I realize that trade agreements may be controversial in some quarters today, but I really hope that this particular agreement with a country that has such strong historic and human ties to Canada and that so needs our support today could enjoy the support of all members of the House.

[Member spoke in Ukrainian]

[English]

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Madam Speaker, I listened intently to the Minister of International Trade go on and on about her passion and her beliefs regarding her Ukrainian heritage.

Canada does stand with Ukraine. It should be no surprise that Conservative members on this side of the House stand with Ukraine. The minister acknowledged the hard work that our international trade team did in getting the trade agreement to this point. My hon. colleague is pushing it across the goal line.

The minister waxed on about her Ukrainian heritage. As a Ukrainian leader in cabinet, how can she stand by and watch her government shut down what I consider to be the Ukrainian capital of Canada, Vegreville? I would imagine there are approximately 280 families of Ukrainian descent in Vegreville. I have been there. I have family there. How could you stand by and not use your voice to stand up for such an important job-creating facility in what I consider our Ukrainian capital of Canada?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I just want to remind the member not to use the word “you”. Questions are to be directed through the chair.

The hon. Minister of International Trade.

Hon. Chrystia Freeland: Madam Speaker, I am not quite sure I would describe myself as latching on to my Ukrainian Canadian heritage, but I am a proud Ukrainian Canadian and have been all of my life.

I am a big fan of the town of Vegreville. I have been there for many festivals and I love the pysanka. I am a big fan of our Ukrainian heritage across the Prairies, as I mentioned, including in Vegreville and cities like Edmonton, where I went to high school and which is another strong and important Ukrainian Canadian city. People in places like Edmonton, Regina, Saskatchewan, Winnipeg, and even Etobicoke would all vie with Vegreville quite proudly for the crown of Canada's Ukrainian capital.

I do want to reinforce something the hon. member mentioned, which is the cross-party work done on this agreement. I want to take another opportunity to say that we are proud to have done this work in a bipartisan way.

•(1040)

Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP): Madam Speaker, Canada and Ukraine have an historically strong friendship. There are over 1.3 million Canadians of Ukrainian descent, as the hon. minister is as

well. Canada was one of the first western countries to recognize Ukraine's independence in 1991. New Democrats believe that Canada has a strong role to play in supporting Ukraine as it works toward building that lasting peace and stability the minister spoke of, and a strong democracy as well.

CUFTA is a relatively straightforward bilateral trade deal. This is the kind of trade that New Democrats support, unlike CETA, which makes significant changes to intellectual property rights, grants investors special rights not enjoyed by Canadian companies, and hurts Canadian dairy farmers.

Would the minister agree that deals like this provide a greater net benefit for Canada than controversial comprehensive, multilateral deals like the TPP and CETA?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland: Madam Speaker, I will have to agree with some of my colleague's comments and disagree with others.

I am first of all absolutely delighted to hear that New Democrats intend to support the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement. I have worked with many colleagues across the aisle on issues concerning Ukraine, including the member for Edmonton Strathcona, whose current riding I grew up in. Politically, it would be very powerful if all members of the House can stand together in support of this free trade agreement with Ukraine. I thank all members for their support.

[Member spoke in Ukraine]

[English]

I think your support and your party's support are really important. I do not mean you, personally, of course, because that would be wrong—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I just remind the members in the House to address their questions to the chair and not use the word “you” or “your”.

Hon. Chrystia Freeland: I am so sorry, Madam Speaker. The New Democratic Party's support is really significant for this agreement, and I think we, as a House, can send a very powerful message to the people of Ukraine and to the world.

[Member spoke in Ukrainian]

[English]

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank the minister for her speech. I certainly appreciate what I know is a genuine commitment to the friendship between Canada and Ukraine. Obviously our party supports free trade and we are very supportive of this free trade deal.

I know the minister is an advocate for Ukraine and that she is bound by the conventions of cabinet solidarity, but I do want to ask her about an important issue with respect to another portfolio that deals with Canada's co-operation with Ukraine, because under the previous government, Canada was sharing satellite imagery with Ukraine that was very important in their fight against Russian backed rebels.

Government Orders

I assume she knows the issue and that as of May 6 of this year, Canada stopped providing that satellite imagery to Ukrainian authorities. Having been to Ukraine and knowing about the Ukrainian people's ongoing struggle, I know that any support we can provide is critical. Something as simple as the sharing of data strikes me as a no-brainer. The pulling back from that information sharing has been interpreted by many as a powerful signal that this new government is trying in some way to recalibrate that relationship.

I suspect the minister agrees with me. I do not know if she can say so, but I want to hear her perspective for the House on why that happened, and maybe if we might see the government restore that information sharing at some point in the near future.

Hon. Chrystia Freeland: Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan for that question, and since we have been debating which town or city in Canada is the Ukrainian capital, I think Sherwood Park should be in contention. It also has a very strong Ukrainian community. I also want to thank the hon. member for his recognition of my strong personal commitment to the Canada-Ukraine relationship. I think we are hearing today that this relationship goes beyond our own partisan affiliations.

Let me say one thing very clearly. Under our government there has not been and will not be any recalibration of our relationship with Ukraine. Canada stands strongly with Ukraine, as it has done under previous governments, both Liberal and Conservative. We continue to do that. I really want the people of Ukraine and Canadians who are listening to our discussion today to hear that very clearly and very firmly.

• (1045)

Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank the minister opposite for her presentation this morning. I can obviously see she is a strong supporter of Ukraine and its culture by her attire today.

However, a colleague on my side of the House, the hon. member for Cariboo—Prince George, asked a clear question this morning and I listened intently for an answer, but did not hear even a hint of an answer.

Does the minister support the Ukrainian heritage that is obviously present in the town of Vegreville? Is she concerned, and has she addressed the 400 jobs that are being taken out of that community, or has that been a trade deal with the minister in Edmonton who will receive those jobs?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland: Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for North Okanagan—Shuswap for his strong advocacy for his constituency.

I am extremely proud of my own personal prairie heritage, and I am proud of the strong role that Ukrainian Canadians have played in the prairies, including very much my home province of Alberta.

I think it is important for the Canadians who are listening to understand that no jobs will be lost in Alberta. In fact, there will be more jobs in Alberta. That is very important.

Hon. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC): Madam Speaker, as the minister was saying, it is indeed a pleasure to stand today and start to see the finalization of the Canada-Ukraine free

trade agreement. Everyone is in agreement. I am not sure why we do not just do this on division and move on to something else after lunch. I am sure if we did put the question there would be a no from somewhere because that is the way things work around here.

It is unfortunate that there are so few issues like this that actually unite this House, in that there are so many more issues that tend to divide us. This is one where we have all come together. As the discussions have gone on over the years leading up to this point, certainly there has been growing appreciation of what this deal would represent, especially for the people of Ukraine as it would tend to draw them west as opposed to the eastern pole that we see chewing at their borders on a day-by-day basis.

I would like to congratulate the minister for getting this across the goal line. Of course it was in the red zone, if I use football vernacular. It was right there on the goal line, all she had to do was step over carrying the ball, but the minister has done it, and we welcome that. I congratulate her for that. I know the minister was a freelance writer in Ukraine over the years, and to be the person who actually signs this off is quite a kick. I felt that same thrill when we saw the end of the old monopoly of the Canadian Wheat Board on the Prairies. The minister will have to work with her colleague from Prince Edward Island to not bring that back. He will face the wrath of western farmers if and when that happens.

Of course, Ukraine is a large wheat-producing area as well. I have never had the opportunity to actually set foot on the ground, but I have seen the pictures and met with the ministers; I have done everything but set foot there. It just did not get into my schedule and that is unfortunate. I will fix that one issue on my bucket list at some point in the future. There are fantastic grasslands and farmlands all across Ukraine. I was at the world grain symposium in Sochi, Russia a couple of weeks ago, and met with a number of farmers who work that ground.

In fact, one guy I had lunch with one day, and he and his corporate entity cover some 100,000 hectares in Ukraine. He was ecstatic about the potential that this trade deal would now start to bring the agricultural technology that Canada is so famous for to those fields and those yards in Ukraine. The Ukrainians are very similar to us in that they have the potential to grow, and grow exponentially, but their constraint is logistics, very similar to what we face here in Canada. We had discussions around the handling system, the grading system, how they can continue to grow their operations, take use and make use of Canadian enterprise and expertise, and continue to show themselves as the breadbasket of Europe.

Certainly we cannot deny the minister's passion. She is dressed for success today. We welcome that. It is always good to see that passion on issues in this great country. We saw that same passion brought to bear by the folks at Global Affairs Canada. They have a fancy new title, and I am sure they all have new shirts as well. They are very proud of what they do.

Government Orders

At the end of the day, it was Marvin Hildebrand who carried this load across the line. We had the opportunity to talk to Marv at our trade committee. He is still the most gracious, unassuming gentleman one would ever want to meet, but when it comes to trade negotiations, he has a backbone of iron and a will of steel. He had that same steely-eyed glaze that our former prime minister Harper had when he took Mr. Putin to task for what he was doing on the Ukrainian frontier. Marv is certainly a class act. He worked diligently with his staff, with his communications team, and with two different governments to actually bring this to fruition. Being the professional that he is, he did not want to take any of the credit at all. He wanted the credit to go to the great people of Ukraine and the great people of Canada who embraced this.

The minister talked a bit about the Ukrainian heritage on the Prairies. Certainly that is a major part of the area that I represent. If my friend from Cariboo—Prince George talks about Vegreville being the Ukrainian capital of Canada, certainly North Battleford and that area running east is second to that if not a tie. They are very enterprising people with strong family ties and religious groups who make sure they celebrate the wealth they have enjoyed in Canada. We go back to those first few years when they were on the Prairies in sod shacks, isolated from their families and friends in Ukraine, but they have made all that work and they have built enterprises out there in my part of the world that are second to none. Certainly this helps them celebrate all the work that they have done to get us to that point.

We are seeing a second wave of pioneers coming from Ukraine into my area as the oil patch grew. It is hurting right now and we have heard different applications of why that is.

• (1050)

At the same time, we have had a number of shortages with respect to tradespeople throughout Saskatchewan. Part of the provincial nominee program was to identify the shortages. We are talking about machinists, welders, pipefitters, metalworkers, and all sorts of different trades. However, good, strong Ukrainian families have picked up that challenge and moved into the area to become part of the fabric of my constituency. These are fantastic people. They work hard, they play hard, and both their families and business expertise are growing at the same time. They continue to astound us with the work ethic they bring, and how diligent they are in making sure that their families get here as quickly as they can to reunite that strong family unit.

My friend from Selkirk—Interlake is nodding his head. He has a strong Ukrainian heritage as well. He has the tie on today, not the shirt, but we will forgive him for that. We know he has other meetings to attend.

At the end of the day, this is more than just geopolitical. I know I said this about Europe writ large, but with respect to the family reunification trade agreement, Ukraine has especially strong ties to the Canadian Prairies, and elsewhere in Canada as well, as their kids have gone on to be doctors, lawyers, and everything across Canada.

It has been a pleasure to work with former Prime Minister Harper and the trade ministers of the day, such as my good friend from Abbotsford, who carried this one across the line. That particular member is having some health issues right now. Strange things

happen to us when we get ready for a CBC interview. He is a bit under the weather, but we know he will struggle back. We know he is watching today and helping us celebrate all the hard work that came into the fulfillment of this landmark trade agreement. It is a wonderful day when all parties agree to move forward with this. I have heard the NDP members get up and say that this is one of very few that they will support. Generally, when they talk about trade, they support every agreement but the one we are talking about. However, today we can all celebrate. We are all here today and we are all smiling. I know when we had that discussion around the Korean free trade agreement, I think they mistakenly thought it was North Korea, but we welcome their support for that deal as well. Here we are again with a third one, I think it is now, and that is a wonderful thing.

There is still quite a bit of work to be done in Ukraine. There are a lot of pockets of resistance to moving into a free market economy. There is still a lot of the old Soviet-type of enterprise there where people pay me and I make this happen, then I pay them and they make that happen. We are hopeful that this new deal will give them a different geopolitical base to work from. We have had people there over the last number of election cycles watching how things progress. It is better each time. I know the member for Selkirk has been there himself and has told us stories of how things are evolving, some of which are horror stories but others that are good stories.

We are now marking 25 years of independence in Ukraine. That is a short amount of time in a country's history. The Ukrainian people go back generations and centuries and have slowly and steadily plodded toward this free market economy and democracy, and they are winning. When we start to link arms with them, as we are doing with this free trade agreement, we start to see that win become almost palpable in the streets of the cities in Ukraine, and of course across the rural countryside, as they recognize the potential they have. Now that potential has doubled and tripled when they link arms with a strong democracy like this country we call home. We are happy to work with them, to bolster them, to bring them into the 21st century. When it comes to trade agreements, democracy, the rule of law, and standards for the environment and labour practices, these are all welcomed in Ukraine, and of course we take them for granted in Canada. We really do not understand how much they look forward to that.

Agricultural exports to Ukraine have been small from Canada's perspective. We export \$60 billion and Ukraine is a \$20-million item on that ledger sheet. However, this tremendous opportunity puts a lie to just that small number at this point. There is no reason to think that cannot go up by multiples of 10 when we look at the opportunity that is there to work with them at putting biotechnology to work, and all of the technology that we have now used over the last couple of decades in Canada, with zero till, and micronutrients going into the fertilizers, and different things like that, and the ability to grow a top quality product, not just a quantity product, as we have seen Ukraine produce.

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Logistics is a major factor that Ukraine is working with as well. We do have the opportunity to step up and help it with that. We face the same criteria here. It is a long way from tidewater, just like we are, and it has to rely on other countries at some points in order to get that product to market, and of course there are costs from both a political as well as a practical sense.

• (1055)

We had EDC representatives at committee. The point I made was that Export Development Canada has identified that the lady who leads the charge in Ukraine does speak fluent Ukrainian, but she is based in London, England, which is a long way from Ukraine. She makes bi-weekly trips, or whatever it is, to make connections, which is not the same as when one is sitting there day by day, eye to eye, taking a coffee break with people and saying, "Here's how we can do it". Therefore, we put that task to the minister, if it was at all possible that we could start to see people actually anchored in central Ukraine, and work with the country as a whole with Export Development Canada.

Of course, they then quarterback that by bringing in business-to-business connections and all of the bridges that need to be built to actually take advantage of the framework agreement that we see here in this CUFTA. We are hopeful that can happen. I know it takes dollars, but there is a tremendous opportunity for our livestock genetics, our crop genetics, and a lot of the infrastructure people we have developed here in Canada handling systems, and all of those different things, and we will see a huge potential there.

We have seen a number of trade agreements come and go out of this place over the years when we were government. Of course, there was a tremendous number. We have seen CETA start to inch its way towards the finish line. We are still dealing with it at committee. Hopefully we will have a vote on it later tonight and move that forward as well.

I was really happy to see that the minister did not tinker around the edges with this one as she did with CETA, and we actually lost some pretty important clauses at the very end in the negotiation trying to make it more progressive. Somehow, it tended to go backwards as opposed to ahead.

The stability that is required for business-to-business investment is going to be shaken a little bit when we do not have an adjudication process for ISDS claims. Every country in the world has hundreds of bilateral agreements with other countries when it comes to FIPA, financial investment protection acts, ISDS-type resolutions, and other tools in the tool kit to help business-to-business make investments; and be assured and secure that in making those investments, they cannot be taken away with a change of governance and so on. Of course, we see a lot of push-back on that from certain sectors here as well, but we will have to wait and see how that is.

We also have the Magnitsky Act, which is very important when we see how these things are brought into the court system. Why Canada is a laggard in implementing that, I am not sure. I am sure that my colleague will have words to say about that when he makes his presentation later today.

This is a tremendous opportunity for Canadian industry, for the services industry as well, which is very robust and very mature.

There are a number of things that we can move forward on, and start to enhance and strengthen Ukraine's stance on the world stage working with us.

I would be remiss if I did not take a moment to thank the trade negotiation team for doing what it is doing. I thank the minister for the job that she did getting it across the final line and stepping over it.

I also want to take time to mention the great work that Prime Minister Harper did on this file. He was there in 2010, which was a very contentious time, as we all know, in Ukraine. He made three or four trips over that two-year period in order to make sure Ukraine was looking west and not east. He had met with all of the major players over there, as have I on the edges of other meetings. Of course, my good friend, the then minister of trade, the member for Abbotsford, spent a lot of political capital in bringing this one to fruition.

However, it was Stephen Harper who actually had the where-withal, at a meeting in Australia of all places, to look President Putin in the eye, and say, "I guess I'll shake your hand...but...You need to get out of Ukraine." He put the marker down that these types of incursions are not acceptable in today's geopolitical systems in the world.

I am thankful that Canada has a footprint and a presence there along those lines, but at the end of the day, we are also hearing that we pulled back on the satellite imaging that the Ukrainian forces need to know exactly what they are up against on a moment-by-moment issue. Hopefully, the government will rethink that and start to realize that underpinning this is our ability to make sure that Ukraine has a strong coastline, and a strong ability to push back the Russians should that ever happen.

Hopefully, it will, but at the end of the day, it was the great work done by Prime Minister Stephen Harper to actually start this, to push Ukraine to keep thinking about this as opposed to the incursions it was facing on several fronts. Therefore, kudos to him. He has gone on to work in the private sector, and I am sure a lot of his future work will be based on the great job that he did working on these types of trade agreements.

• (1100)

We also have other trade agreements sitting in the wings, like the trans-Pacific partnership. For some ridiculous reason, we seem to be holding back. The Japanese, the crown jewel in that whole agreement, in the 12 countries that were involved in that, have ratified it. They are good to go. They have moved it through their parliamentary system. It was finalized on December 6 or 7. They are waiting for a partner to dance with, and we are not on the floor. We are not even in the hall. It is unconscionable to me why we would walk away from that.

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We will celebrate this one today, but we could have a bigger celebration and a lot bigger win, if we started to get past the “Americans have to lead this” ideology. We know they are going to step away. They may take the full two years. There is no reason we have to. With Japan already done, they are going to find some willing partners in Australia, New Zealand, Chile, or Mexico, and they will start trading. This means we will be coming from behind, trying to get market share in that valuable market.

If anything, let us get this one done so we can bring TPP to the floor and get it moving forward expeditiously as well.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, this is my first time dealing with this issue. I want to compliment the minister who has done an incredible job on the trade file.

I know our Ukrainian community has a great sense of pride, moving forward. Over the last number of years, the Government of Canada has demonstrated so much support.

The member across the way was here when the president of Ukraine presented to the House. In a part of that speech, he talked about that important relationship between two great countries. He suggested that he wanted to see a trade agreement.

Would the member reflect on the special relationship that Canada has with Ukraine, which bridges all parties in the House? Not only have a good trade agreement, but it has far more benefit than just economics. Would the member agree?

Hon. Gerry Ritz: Madam Speaker, it is very important that Canada continue to show leadership on the world stage.

That brings me to the question of why the member will be voting tonight against the Crimean Tatar private member's bill, recognizing some of those situations that happened a few years ago. The member is saying one thing, but in actual fact he is going to stand and do the opposite tonight.

Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Battlefords—Lloydminster for his work on the trade committee. We enjoy working together. Although we may not always agree, we work very hard on that committee on many different issues. I believe his party and my party are trying to get these issues addressed, issues like steel and softwood, which are incredibly important.

The NDP has supported two of the pieces of legislation, one that received royal assent. We worked hard on Bill C-13 at the committee. It received royal assent last night, and is now in law. I believe we will continue to work together on many critical issues that are important to Canadians, and certainly to working Canadians, like softwood lumber.

The NDP and the Conservatives agree in principle with CUFTA. We agree on the need for the government to do more on the softwood lumber deal. Could the member speak to his concern about the government's failure to get a deal on softwood lumber and how this will result in job losses and mill closures?

●(1105)

Hon. Gerry Ritz: Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her great work on the trade committee. As a committee member of one, she does a tremendous job of putting forward her issues on a day-by-day, case-by-case basis. Good for you for doing that.

It is a busy committee. It is an exceptionally well-run committee and a good committee. We have a chair who understands that there will be disagreements and that we need to put them on the floor and talk them through. We have done some heavy lifting in the last little while with a number of these agreements that are coming to fruition. I will agree with the member that good debate, disagreement on points, can bring about a stronger end result. If we do them with that in mind, we will make things happen.

I am as concerned as she is with the whole Canadian-American overarching agreement to disagree now that there has been a change of governance in the United States. President-elect Trump is already saying that he will approve Keystone XL. The Conservatives welcome that. We have to do that. This is a good opportunity to move forward.

However, at the same time, when we talk about resources, we have movement on Keystone XL getting oil and gas to market, which the U.S. needs, but we also need to move softwood lumber into that market. We have a 35% market share simply because it needs 35% to fill its market. The right hand is actually slapping the left hand in the U.S. at the moment, but at the same time we have a problem in Canada. There is not the recognition on the front bench to know how hard and how tough this will be.

The Conservatives took over as government in 2006, and I will give credit to my good friend David Emerson who actually crossed the floor, which is never an easy thing to do. He did it knowing that Prime Minister Harper was going to give him the opportunity to resolve that issue, and he did it within months. We had an agreement that continued on for almost 10 years, with the two-year extension that my good friend from Abbotsford was able to renegotiate.

The Liberals had a year to get this thing fixed, a year where everything goes quiet, the lawyers talk, and everybody agrees that we have to do something. Last March, they had a solution. It was going to take 100 days. The bromance was going to fix this. We were going to have a little hug and a love-in and within 100 days we would have an answer. That was 250 days ago. We do not need even have a direction, let alone an answer.

We are very concerned. We put together a softwood lumber task force—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Unfortunately time has run out. There is still time for questions and answers.

At the beginning of the member's response, he referred to the member as “you”. I would ask him to address his answers to the Chair.

Questions and comments, the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons.

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Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, we are getting closer to the holiday season and maybe we could be a little more generous in what we do today. I believe it is a good news story in the House.

One of his colleagues, possibly even the member, indicated how nice it would be if we could push this bill through. There seems to be support from the Conservatives and the New Democrats. We have acknowledged the work of the previous government. There seems to be fairly sound support for the legislation.

Could the member reflect on what kind of statement we could make if somehow, some way, we could build the support in the House that would ultimately get this bill through the House of Commons?

Hon. Gerry Ritz: Madam Speaker, I think there is agreement on the bill moving through the House, but what the Conservatives are not going to agree on is the softwood lumber file. There will be no holiday for all of the mill workers in the small towns that rely on that one industry to keep them solid and whole throughout this season. It is going to be a pretty tough Christmas for them.

We will celebrate this deal. We will get this done. I will make that pledge to the member opposite. We put our heart and soul into designing it, working with the Ukrainian people to get this done, and they put some energy in to shoving it across the line. We welcome that. At the end of the day, we will get this done exponentially, but we also have to get our heads around the softwood lumber agreement, the steel dumping situation, some of the tougher work for which we need to roll up our sleeves and really get ourselves together.

• (1110)

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I congratulate the member for all of the work he has done on this and other trade-related issues.

I would ask him to more broadly reflect on the connection between trade and the economic benefits of it, but also the connection to our values. Members have spoken about the Canada-Ukraine free trade deal as being about something more than the economy, about deepening the strategic partnership between Canada and Ukraine. That is very important. At the same time, we see in other areas the government actually moving in the opposite direction in trade.

He mentioned the trans-Pacific partnership. We know that the trans-Pacific partnership was about strategic co-operation, as well as economic benefits. It was about strategic co-operation between like-minded countries in the Asia Pacific area. The Liberal government has not said yet, as it still has not made up its mind on TPP, but at the same time it is talking about pursuing a bilateral trade deal with China, which is a country that on many fronts does not share our values.

If the government takes seriously this idea of the connection between trade and strategic partnerships with countries that share our values, as it seems to on the issue of Ukraine, it makes its actions in the Asia Pacific with respect to trade much harder to understand.

Could the member reflect on that and on why it is important that we understand the connection between the economic benefits, but also the strategic partnerships that these trade deals represent?

Hon. Gerry Ritz: Madam Speaker, I guess the proof is in the actual numbers. One in five jobs in Canada rely on trade in order to drive the economy of our great country. Those are good, strong, middle-class jobs. However, it is also very important to have diversity in a trade portfolio, the same as we would in an investment portfolio or banking structure for that matter. By taking our time on TPP, other countries are going to have that ability to trade with Japan before we do, as I outlined a short time ago. The market will be full of certain products that we are now trying to get our market share back in because they have preferential access. It is very important that we get there as a willing partner, soon. We could be the next one to ratify it, which we could do. There is really nothing stopping us from moving that quickly.

I am a huge booster of trade with China. I have made a number of trips there. I understand the potential and, again, there is diversity in our trade portfolio in China. However, to deal with an economy the size of China, we need as many other economies backing us as we can possibly get. It is very important that we would have CETA finished, TPP done, and be starting strong work on the Asian group of countries. Some will stand alone and deal with us. Some will join the TPP and join with us that way. However, it is very important to have all of that well under way, if not completed, before we start to go head-to-head with a powerhouse like China or we will be swallowed whole.

Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak on Bill C-31, an act to implement the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and Ukraine, also known as CUFTA.

We have been speaking a lot in this place these last few days about trade deals; namely, about the Canada-EU deal. I am certainly not surprised that my Liberal and Conservative colleagues, once again, agree that CUFTA should move ahead with no questions asked.

I will note that in this case, unlike with CETA, the government fulfilled its treaty tabling obligations by tabling Bill C-31 at least 21 sitting days after tabling the treaty, tabling an explanatory memorandum, and completing a final environmental assessment. None of these three elements were done for CETA.

I would like to speak in greater detail about CUFTA.

There are certainly some positive elements of this agreement. It would provide opportunities for both Canadian exporters and for the Canadian government to strengthen our long-standing friendship with Ukraine.

I would also like to speak about some concerns with the agreement, which I hope can be addressed during Bill C-31's legislative process.

CUFTA is an important agreement, particularly for our friends in Ukraine. Their country has faced tumultuous times over the past number of years, countering Russian aggression that culminated in the annexation of Crimea. At that time, the NDP called for greater financial aid for Ukraine and tougher sanctions against Russia.

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The Canada-Ukraine friendship is an important one. In fact, Canada was the first western country to recognize Ukraine's independence, back in 1991. Today, more than 1.3 million Canadians have Ukrainian heritage. They are very proud of this heritage and their cultural traditions.

The Canada-Ukraine trade relationship is relatively small. In 2015, bilateral trade totalled \$278 million, with Canadian exports to the Ukraine accounting for approximately \$210 million and Ukrainian imports to Canada accounting for \$68 million.

Ukraine represents less than 1% of the total Canadian global exports. Of course, this should increase with the reduction of tariffs under this agreement.

CUFTA would lead to Ukraine eliminating tariffs on 86% of Canadian imports, while Canada would eliminate tariffs on 99.9% of Ukrainian imports. Many of the tariffs would be eliminated immediately, although some would be phased out over three to seven years.

Canadian exporters have largely welcomed the deal, including the Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance, the Canadian Pork Council, and the Canadian Meat Council. As they are with all trade agreements that reduce or eliminate tariffs, they are of course pleased to have new opportunities to diversify and to increase their exports.

Additional Canadian products that may benefit from CUFTA include iron and steel, industrial machinery, pulses, canola oil, and fish and seafood. I was initially concerned about the elimination of tariffs on steel, although stakeholders have not been too concerned that this would lead to a barrage of new imports.

As members in this place know, Canadian producers are already faced with a low global price for steel, which is caused by dumping, in part. There have been multiple cases brought before the Canadian International Trade Tribunal, including against Ukrainian exporters.

It is very clear that Canada needs stronger measures to tackle this very serious issue. The Canadian Steel Producers Association and the United Steelworkers have been very clear that the government needs to do more. Canada's trade remedy system needs an overhaul so it can do a better job of protecting our steel industry.

It is an issue of jobs and keeping these good-quality jobs in the communities where they are needed. The member for Hamilton Mountain has been working tirelessly on behalf of steelworkers in his riding. I commend his efforts to bring these issues to the forefront. He is fighting every day to protect good steel jobs in Hamilton.

I know we are both looking forward to the international trade committee completing its study on steel issues, like dumping, that are hurting Canadian producers' ability to compete internationally.

Coming back to CUFTA, I have spoken quite a bit about tariffs because that is largely what this agreement is about. It also includes chapters on sanitary and phytosanitary measures, government procurement, intellectual property, environment, and labour.

On the procurement chapter, in this regard CUFTA is quite different from CETA. CUFTA would open access to government procurement at the federal and provincial levels. On the other hand,

CETA would, for the first time, also open up procurement at the municipal and school board levels. This is very concerning. It is why we saw many municipalities coming out against CETA.

By and large, Canadians like to support Canadian jobs and Canadian products. We like to buy locally and procure locally, because we know the benefits are going to our neighbours and our communities.

•(1115)

There are many concerns over opening up procurement contracts to non-Canadian companies. It already happens, but do we really want to continue expanding that practice? I am glad CUFTA does not follow the same route as CETA.

I have spoken about what is in the agreement, but it is also important to discuss what is not in the agreement. CUFTA does not include chapters on cross-border trade in services, investment, financial services, telecommunications, or temporary entry. However, there is a review that would happen two years after CUFTA comes into force, and the government has been quite clear that it would like to extend the agreement to additional areas, such as services.

I ask that the government be forthcoming with these negotiations when they happen. I also note that Canada is currently in negotiations with several dozen other countries for a trade in services agreement, or TISA. The Liberals have been quite silent on this, but this agreement could be quite significant. It would liberalize international trade in services and set binding international rules on how countries can regulate services. It could cover a wide range of services, including banking, telecommunications, health, and energy.

I hope the government will be forthcoming with this agreement and set a different tone from how the Conservatives like to negotiate trade agreements. There is absolutely no reason why a government cannot tell its citizens about what is on the table before a deal is finalized. I think Canadians have been very clear that they do not like the way their government negotiated TPP or CETA. Canadians were kept in the dark about what was being negotiated. When we finally learned what was on the table, the deal was already finalized, and the government said there was absolutely no way to change anything at that point.

I reject the notion that Canadians who want to know about negotiations can simply sign a confidentiality agreement and jump right in. It is obviously an exclusive process that is not designed to inform average Canadians on trade negotiations. The government must do a better job of updating all Canadians on the status and scope of negotiations, not just those who are well connected.

I would like to speak about another aspect of CUFTA. While the agreement includes a state-to-state dispute settlement mechanism, it does not include ISDS, investor-state, provisions. However, it is important to note that these provisions actually existed before CUFTA came to be. Back in 1995, Canada and Ukraine signed a foreign investment promotion and protection agreement, which includes these investor-state provisions.

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New Democrats have gone to great lengths these past few days to draw attention to the ISDS provisions in CETA. These provisions do not belong in trade agreements, yet so many of Canada's agreements include them. We have long maintained that foreign companies should not be granted special privileges above and beyond those enjoyed by domestic companies. Foreign investors should be obligated to go through domestic courts before being granted access to a special court where they can sue our governments.

New Democrats analyze trade deals as a whole. We have supported deals in the past, including the South Korea deal. This is because we are able to step back and examine all parts of a deal and draw our conclusions based on the sum of its parts. New Democrats support trade. We always have and always will. That does not mean we are going to go blindly into every trade and investment deal. Our approach is similar to how we have approached omnibus budget bills. There are many aspects that we support, but there can also be egregious aspects that are worth standing up against.

Yesterday, my colleague from Elmwood—Transcona gave a great analogy about how other parties tend to talk about trade and their blind support for any and all trade agreements, no matter who the partner, no matter the provisions the agreement contains. He compared this to a large company looking to merge with another company. Imagine them sitting down in the boardroom and saying, “We don't have the time to study this. We don't need the numbers to analyze the deal, because obviously, bigger is better. This is a good economic principle, and therefore we just need to go ahead, no questions asked”.

Obviously, this sounds ridiculous, and yet I see the government pushing ahead with deals like CETA without having done the same due diligence. Where is the analysis of the benefits and the costs? Where is the analysis of where we are going to gain or lose jobs? Where are the consultations? Where are the studies? Canadians should expect better from their government.

My colleague the hard-working member for Vancouver Kingsway has done a lot of work on the trade file in the past. He developed a very pragmatic approach to assessing trade deals on the whole. He outlined several criteria for how we as parliamentarians could do our due diligence in assessing whether a trade deal is in fact in Canada's best interests.

● (1120)

First, is the proposed partner one who respects democracy, human rights, environmental and labour standards, and Canadian values? If there are challenges in these regards, is the partner on a positive trajectory toward these goals?

Second, is there a significant or strategic value for Canada in having a deal with the proposed partner?

Finally, is the deal itself satisfactory?

There are no easy answers, but this lens is very helpful in looking at deals and deciding whether, on balance, they make sense for Canada. I certainly considered this lens in evaluating the Canada–Ukraine FTA and, on balance, I do think this is an agreement New Democrats can support. That said, there are some areas of concern. Ukraine has had a tumultuous few years. It certainly appears to be on

a positive trajectory toward a stronger, democratic society that upholds human rights, environmental standards, and labour standards. On the other hand, there continue to be conflicts and tensions, as well as some human rights concerns.

It was not very long ago that the EU postponed its trade agreement with Ukraine over concerns with human rights and democratic values. Therefore, I am hopeful that Ukraine will continue on its positive trajectory. We need to be realistic about the ongoing challenges, and therefore I would like to see a human rights impact assessment as a component of this agreement.

I have noted that the Canada–Ukraine trade relationship is a relatively small one. However, we are also historic friends, and Ukraine needs its friends very much right now. Canada sent a training mission to Ukraine in 2015, known as Operation Unifier. There was no debate in this place before 200 troops were deployed, which is a dangerous precedent. Now Ukraine is asking for Canada to extend this mission.

We also know that last year the government launched a consultation on the possible addition of Ukraine to the Automatic Firearms Country Control List. Adding Ukraine to this list would make it permissible to export Canadian-made weapons to Ukraine. The government has been dodging questions on the results of this consultation and on whether Canada will in fact add Ukraine to the list. It is time for the government to be forthcoming on this, particularly as we debate ratifying a free trade agreement with this country.

I would also like to note an environmental concern with this agreement. I read through the government's final environmental assessment of CUFTA, which is a requirement as part of the government's treaty-tableting process. The assessment makes really no mention of the impact of increased imports and exports of coal. We would like to get some more information on this, also at the committee level.

Unfortunately, I did not have the opportunity to ask these questions of the minister when she came to our committee the other week. We had just an hour of her time to cover both CETA and CUFTA. I do hope the minister will make herself available again, as I do believe it is important to give these agreements proper study and due process.

I would like to end by reiterating that New Democrats intend to support the Canada–Ukraine free trade agreement at second reading. I have outlined some concerns with the agreement that we would like to see addressed. However, I have also outlined many benefits of the agreement. It would allow us to strengthen our historic friendship with Ukraine and would benefit various Canadian exporters. This would be the second of three pieces of trade legislation that have come before this Parliament that New Democrats support.

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As I have outlined, New Democrats are strong supporters of good trade that benefits Canada. The trend of multilateral deals that deal with everything but the kitchen sink is not the way Canada should be engaging with our partners. Bilateral deals, such as the one before us today, have much clearer benefits and do not ask average Canadians to bear the brunt of extending corporate privileges to foreign investors. I look forward to seeing Bill C-31 come before the trade committee and to participating in today's debate.

As I believe this will be my last speech in this place before the House rises until January, I would like to wish my constituents and my colleagues very happy holidays and a merry Christmas. I would like to particularly thank all the people in this House who work behind the scenes to make Parliament function so well every day. I thank everyone who helps in Parliament. Merry Christmas.

• (1125)

Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I obviously welcome the support. I am a bit stunned, but I am happily stunned, I must admit, by the NDP's support for this trade agreement.

I am curious in terms of the criteria that the member for Vancouver Kingsway has put forward. One of the things that the hon. member has pointed out in applying those criteria is the way in which trade agreements help to structure larger kinds of political relations for the positive. I am curious as to why this kind of weighting was not given to the CETA.

Ms. Tracey Ramsey: Madam Speaker, I can assure the parliamentary secretary that there was exactly this type of weighting in looking at CETA, on balance, and at the impact, both positive and negative.

In CETA we see 25% of the bill impacting patent extension rights. That means that every Canadian will pay more for pharmaceuticals. We certainly see seafarers losing a great number of jobs, 3,000 jobs upon the signing of CETA, because we will not have Canadian-run vessels anymore for our own Canadian seafarers.

There are the ISDS provisions, which are not included in CUFTA but are part of CETA. There is the court system that is being created. There is the declaration, which is a side agreement that Wallonia and the Belgians were able to bring forth for themselves, but we will not share those benefits. There are many pieces that are of concern in CETA, and it is quite shocking to me, actually, that the parliamentary secretary does not have as part of his process that he would review all aspects of a trade agreement and not just slap a gold stamp on something that was negotiated in the previous government.

As a parliamentarian, I take my role very seriously in looking at trade agreements, the entire agreement, and listening to Canadians about the impact it will have on them. I encourage all members to do that on every piece of trade legislation in this House.

• (1130)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, like my colleague, I appreciate the fact that the NDP will be voting in favour of this trade agreement. I see that as very positive, and I encourage the House, as much as possible, to move relatively quickly on this for a multitude of reasons.

I am wondering to what degree the New Democrats, for example, gave any consideration whatsoever to the TPP. We knew that the decision was made even before the ink was dry that the NDP would not be supporting the TPP. If the member is truthful with the House, as I am sure she will be, could she indicate why it is that the NDP said no to the TPP before anything ever came out with respect to the TPP?

Ms. Tracey Ramsey: Madam Speaker, I know the member opposite has been in this House for quite some time past my own time here, but I would encourage him to be respectful of other members of the House, and I would appreciate that respect, please, as a member.

I would like to speak about the fact that New Democrats have supported two of the three pieces of trade legislation going through this House. As a matter of fact, I followed the procession for royal assent last night on Bill C-13. I was pleased to do so.

At the trade committee level, we have been working incredibly hard and asking difficult questions, questions the government, on the other side of this House, seems unwilling to address.

When we talk about CETA, the government will not speak about the impact on the cost of prescription drugs for Canadians. It simply will not answer. The minister herself visited the trade committee and refused to answer our questions.

Yesterday New Democrats stood proudly in this House debating a very important piece of legislation, Bill C-30, on CETA, the largest trade agreement we have entered since NAFTA. It is not just me who thinks that. The minister herself stated that in the previous Parliament.

New Democrats will always look at every aspect of a trade agreement. As for the TPP, I encourage the member opposite to read the 6,000 pages, because I can assure him, I have done so. I have done my due diligence as a parliamentarian. I have travelled with the trade committee to every province in this country and seen more than 400 people. I have held seven town halls on TPP. I promise the member that I am doing my due diligence as a parliamentarian on all trade agreements.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her extraordinary work on this international trade file.

I hope that the Minister of International Trade's staff is busy revising her little book of prepared answers and that they will delete the line where it asks the NDP when it will finally support a free trade agreement, because today it is supporting one. I look forward to her not repeating that statement when she answers questions.

In any event, can my colleague tell us why this time the NDP can support the agreement we are debating today? What is the difference between the agreement with Europe and the one with Ukraine? How is it that today the government is fortunate, at least I hope they think so, to have our support for this agreement?

Government Orders

[English]

Ms. Tracey Ramsey: Madam Speaker, it is true that the minister herself has been talking about progressive trade and what that is. What we see today in CUFTA, in Bill C-31, is a bilateral agreement, an agreement that addresses labour concerns, that was tabled properly in the House, that talks about environmental assessment, and that provides all the pieces that are necessary. It also provides us with greater flexibility.

I was so pleased, when the department officials debriefed me on the bill, to know that they had created some specific language around phytosanitary and sanitary measures, because this is incredibly important to our agriculture. They told me that the reason they were able to do that in this agreement and not in others, like CETA and TPP, is that it is a bilateral agreement. It is more of an intimate conversation between two countries about what will benefit them.

The issue we have with large multinational agreements is that we become lost in the details. We end up giving up more than we are getting. We have to look at these agreements on balance. With CETA, Canadians will be paying higher costs for drugs. We will be giving up our sovereignty by having a new court system that will exist above our Supreme Court and that will be appointed by the minister.

There are so many flaws in these multilateral agreements, and it certainly is not reflective of the things we share in common with those countries. It is well known that we share great things in common with our European partners. The issue is the cost for Canadian people, Canadian jobs. There would be 30,000 jobs lost. The EU, in one of its parliamentary committees last week, said that they will not support CETA, because they are going to see 200,000 job losses.

We support CUFTA because we are able to have more leverage in our negotiations. This deal makes sense for Canadians.

• (1135)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I want to support the response of my hon. colleague from Essex to the parliamentary secretary earlier, who asked why any party would be against the trans-Pacific partnership agreement before the ink was dry. It is a very simple, straightforward answer. There is logical, principled consistency in opposing any trade agreement that allows more foreign corporations from more countries to have superior rights to those awarded to Canadian companies.

Why should companies from Vietnam or Japan have the right to sue the Government of Canada if they do not like a provision that protects the environment or human rights or workers' protection? Why should all the countries in the EU have corporate rights that exceed those of domestic corporations? Those characteristics of investor-state agreements apply to TPP and apply to the comprehensive economic trade agreement but do not apply to Ukraine.

I ask my colleague if the NDP members are now prepared to take a position for all time that they will not support any trade deal that includes an investor-state agreement, as, unfortunately, they have in the past on some in the 41st Parliament.

Ms. Tracey Ramsey: Madam Speaker, I share the concerns of the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands on the provisions in trade agreements. We are the most sued country in the world under chapter 11 in NAFTA. The experience has not been good for us when investors have been able to sue our country.

Initially in NAFTA, when we engaged in it, it was because of concerns about corrupt court systems in Mexico. It has not been Mexican corrupt court systems that have hurt us; it has been international corporations that have sued our government when we have attempted to legislate on behalf of all Canadians.

Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have a chance to speak to Bill C-31 before us today. The bill calls on the government to take all necessary legislative steps to ratify the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement, something I encourage all of us to support.

Moving forward with the ratification of the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement will help to further strengthen Canada's support for Ukraine as it works toward securing its future as a stable democratic and prosperous country.

Since the beginning of the crisis in Ukraine in November 2013, Canada has been at the forefront of the international community's support for Ukraine. As part of Canada's response to Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and its ongoing support of the insurgency in eastern Ukraine, the Government of Canada has imposed nearly 300 sanctions, in coordination with international partners, against Russian and Ukrainian individuals and entities. It also has committed more than \$750 million in assistance to Ukraine, including \$400 million in low-interest loans to help Ukraine stabilize its economy and more than \$245 million in bilateral development assistance.

The Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement complements the objectives of Canada's assistance to Ukraine: to expand opportunity to Ukrainian citizens and to contribute to a higher standard of living. This benefits Canada in terms of both promoting stability for an important ally and building a stronger market into which Canada can sell its goods.

Canada-Ukraine trade relations have been relatively modest to date, with two-way merchandise trade totalling \$278 million in 2015. Canadian exports that same year totalled \$210 million, while imports from Ukraine reached \$68 million. There is room to grow.

Ukraine's economy has significant potential and offers diverse commercial opportunities for Canadian business, given its strategic location between Europe and Central Asia, its solid industrial base, its abundant natural resources, in particular in the agricultural and energy sectors, and its well-educated population.

Government Orders

The Canada-Ukraine FTA will enable our companies to take greater advantage of these opportunities with new market access and by creating more predictable conditions. That is why the legislation before us today is so important.

• (1140)

[*Translation*]

Let me elaborate on that. An important aspect of the agreement is the opening of new markets for Canadian goods. When the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement enters into force, it will eliminate tariffs on about 86% of current Canadian exports to Ukraine. That means that Canadian exporters will see an immediate benefit from this agreement. The balance of Ukraine's tariff reductions and eliminations will be phased out over a period of up to seven years.

At that point, the agreement will have basically eliminated all tariffs on the goods that are currently being exchanged between Canada and Ukraine. The agreement will also create more favourable conditions for exporters through important non-tariff measures. For example, the agreement includes provisions that will ensure that market access gains are not undermined by unjustified trade barriers.

This agreement includes trade facilitation measures to reduce red tape at the border, and protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights, which will allow Canadian IP rights holders to do business in the Ukrainian market with increased confidence. As part of the agreement, Canada and Ukraine both commit to not levy customs duties or other charges on digital products that are transmitted electronically.

I will now talk about how this agreement will result in real benefits for Canadian businesses. In particular, the Canada-Ukrainian free trade agreement will create opportunities for important sectors of the Canadian economy, including industrial products, fish and seafood products, and agriculture and agri-food products.

From 2011 to 2015, Canada's industrial exports to Ukraine averaged approximately \$123 million a year.

However, those exports are currently subject to tariffs of up to 25%. On the day the agreement comes into force, virtually all of those tariffs will be eliminated. This is good news because it will make our industrial exports to Ukraine more competitive and help our exports grow. Iron, steel, industrial machinery, and plastics are some of the products that will benefit from the agreement.

Canada's fish and seafood industry also has a lot to gain from preferential market access under the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement. Canada is one of the top exporters of fish and seafood to Ukraine, with average annual exports of \$31 million between 2011 and 2015. Canada is the largest exporter of frozen shrimp and cold-water shrimp to Ukraine and is one of its main suppliers of frozen hake. As in other sectors, these products are subject to tariffs of up to 20%. Once the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement eliminates tariffs for this sector, Canadian fish and seafood products will be much more competitive.

Canada's agriculture and agri-food sector will also benefit from the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement. Between 2011 and 2015,

Canada exported an average of \$18 million worth of agriculture and agrifood products to Ukraine per year. However, those exports are subject to tariffs of up to 30%.

Once the agreement comes into force, it will eliminate the majority of those tariffs. Virtually all of the rest will be eliminated over a seven-year period. The main Canadian agricultural products that will benefit from duty-free access are beef, pulse crops, grains, canola oil, processed foods, and animal feed. Greater market access for Canadian pork exports was of particular interest during the negotiations, and one of the first things the government did to meet people's expectations was obtain duty-free access for fresh and chilled pork.

As far as the export of frozen pork and pork products is concerned, Canada will enjoy a duty-free tariff rate quota that exceeds current exports by a large margin. These tariff outcomes put Canada's pork industry on equal footing with the European Union, a key competitor in this sector. This agreement will also give Canadian companies a leg-up on competitors in all the other countries that have not concluded a free trade agreement with Ukraine.

Those are just a few of the benefits of this agreement. Our government has said from day one that trade and open markets are essential for ensuring Canada's economic prosperity. Canada is a trading nation. We know that with increased trade come more well-paying jobs.

Our government also wants to work on growing a more inclusive economy to ensure that the trade benefits are distributed better. We must ensure that the increased trade and investment strengthens the middle class. We must also ensure that the trade benefits do not come at the expense of environmental protection, labour rights, and the rights of governments to make rules in the public interest.

Our government is committed to making trade progressive, as we have demonstrated with the comprehensive economic and trade agreement with the European Union, and we continue to demonstrate with this agreement. The Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement integrates a number of key progressive trade components to ensure that economic gains are not achieved at the expense of the values and priorities that are important to Canadians.

• (1145)

The labour-related commitments made in the agreement require both countries to enforce their laws in this area, and those laws must be in line with the International Labour Organization's 1998 Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. This includes strengthening the freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, the elimination of child labour and forced labour, and the elimination of discrimination in the workplace.

Government Orders

The agreement also includes occupational health and safety protections, acceptable minimum employment standards, and non-discrimination provisions to protect migrant workers.

The commitments made in this agreement also emphasize the importance of co-operation on labour issues and include mechanisms to monitor compliance with labour-related commitments, as well as a dispute settlement mechanism that can result in monetary penalties. These are the most comprehensive labour-related commitments ever negotiated by Ukraine.

[*English*]

The Canada-Ukraine FTA also includes a chapter on the environment that involves substantive and binding commitments. The agreement's environmental chapter contains commitments to maintain high levels of environmental protection as we intensify our trade relationship. Importantly, both Canada and Ukraine commit to not lowering their levels of protection in order to attract trade or investment.

This agreement's environment chapter reflects Canadian values that trade liberalization and environmental protection should be mutually supportive. To support these obligations and ensure that they are respected, the environment chapter includes a distinct dispute resolution mechanism with recourse to an independent panel of experts. Canada and Ukraine also agreed to work together to implement the panel's recommendations.

In addition, the agreement contains commitments ensuring the transparency of the parties' domestic administrations including the prompt publication of legislative, regulatory, procedural, and administrative rulings.

Furthermore, the agreement contains a robust state-to-state dispute settlement mechanism that includes a binding, compulsory panel procedure. This dispute settlement mechanism reinforces Canada's commitment to transparency.

The Canada-Ukraine FTA also includes a number of commitments on anti-corruption. For instance, it obliges the parties to adopt, maintain, and enforce anti-corruption legislation and related measures, in particular to adopt or maintain measures to establish acts of bribery and corruption involving public officials as criminal offences. It also obliges Canada and Ukraine to ensure that they have jurisdiction over these criminal offences. These obligations are also supported by a dispute settlement mechanism involving an independent panel if parties are not able to resolve an issue related to these anti-corruption commitments.

Furthermore, the Canada-Ukraine FTA contains provisions ensuring the ability of the governments to regulate in the public interest, including specific provisions that preserve the right to protect national security; human, animal, or plant life or health; as well as the right to pursue cultural objectives.

Finally, trade-related co-operation is another important element of the Canada-Ukraine FTA, which will indeed facilitate co-operation between Canada and Ukraine, with the objective of maximizing the benefits from the agreement and contributing to sustainable development, for example, through capacity-building, joint activities in research, and the transfer of technological skills and practice.

Canada's strong friendship and partnership with Ukraine has very deep roots, stretching back 125 years to the arrival of the first Ukrainian immigrants to Canada, the first of successive waves of immigrants who would leave lasting and indelible impressions on the fabric of our Canadian society, economy, and political landscape.

Today, there are more than 1.2 million Canadians with Ukrainian heritage, including a number in this House, making the Ukrainian community one of Canada's largest ethnic communities and an important source of information and support in the political, security, and commercial spheres for both Canada and Ukraine. Such deep ties are important for many reasons. Strong trade relationships depend on strong people-to-people relationships.

Our government believes that these uncertain economic times call for more global partnerships, not less. Moving forward with the timely ratification of the Canada-Ukraine FTA will establish a more stable trading environment that will be beneficial for both Canada and Ukraine, strengthening our bilateral relations, supporting Canada's foreign policy objectives, and enhancing commercial opportunities that can contribute to sustainable economic development.

I therefore urge all hon. members to support Bill C-31 to help us to accomplish that and a great deal more.

• (1150)

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Madam Speaker, while I have the floor I want to thank the cafeteria staff for feeding us perogies at lunch today, which was very appropriate given the deal we are debating.

I want to thank the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of International Trade for bringing forward a trade deal to this House that the New Democrats are happy to support. It removes tariffs from steel to seafood, and aids exports, and adds Canadian jobs, without any of the downside of the other trade deals the government has been supporting, which give more rights to foreign investors to challenge disputes in the new investor court in the EU, for example, and undermine our environmental and social regulations.

Both the parliamentary secretary and the trade minister on the Liberal side have talked a lot about progressive trade deals. I would like to learn more, because we have had two very different types of trade deals in the House, one the New Democrats support and one we do not. Can the parliamentary secretary tell us more about his view of what constitutes a progressive trade deal and how this one fits with that?

Mr. David Lametti: Madam Speaker, as members on that side of the House know, I will go to no lengths to make the NDP happy on trade deals.

Government Orders

Progressive trade deals are meant to reinforce social values that we share, such as protecting the environment, advancing labour standards, and advancing standards of transparency, and enshrining the right to regulate.

Trade deals are not all the same. They have different political and social goals that can be attained in any given situation, depending on whether they are multilateral or bilateral. Hence, every trade deal is different. Accordingly, we on this side of the House feel that CETA and CUFTA are progressive trade deals for a variety of different reasons. We believe they advance these various goals in different ways, to different degrees, but always within the realm of the possible.

• (1155)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I too will be supporting Bill C-31. It is interesting that the bill does not contain the investor-state provisions. I do not know why there is the assumption that investor-state provisions have to go into every trade deal. The hon. parliamentary secretary and I have discussed this before.

I would like some clarification. Were there any substantial changes, or any changes at all, made between this Canada-Ukraine agreement, for which I understand negotiations were concluded under the Harper administration in 2015, and the version that was signed by our current hon. Minister of International Trade earlier this summer?

Mr. David Lametti: Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for her work on these files.

The investor-state dispute resolution mechanism is not in this treaty but exists in a prior foreign investment promotion and protection agreement, FIPA, that we had signed with Ukraine. It contains the standard ISDS mechanism that is well known. I do not start from the presumption that everyone who participates in ISDS is in some way a crook, or something like that; rather, it is meant to provide for more efficient resolution of disputes, which in most cases involve issues akin to the expropriation of private property. Therefore, it is not a question of people getting additional rights, but a different way of regulating rights that most of us in this House recognize exist.

To finish the last part of the member's question, it is my understanding that there were no substantial changes made to the treaty as negotiated.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry—Suroît, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to say that this treaty has been demonstrably and thoroughly analyzed by all parties in the House, including the NDP, and that our party can show that there are free trade agreements that it can support, such as those that help Canadian workers and the Canadian economy and ensure respect for human rights and democracy abroad—in Ukraine in this case. There are some bilateral treaties that are simpler, such as the one with Ukraine, that we can support.

The parliamentary secretary compared the treaty with Ukraine with CETA, and said that the Liberals were being very transparent. However, the process was quite different for both. The government

did not allow some witnesses to present their briefings to the committee that studied CETA. That shows a lack of transparency. There were supposed to be 21 days between the tabling of the agreement and the tabling of the bill in the House. However, that was not the case for CETA, but it was for the Ukraine agreement.

The transparency around these two agreements was altogether different, and I hope that the Liberal member can acknowledge that.

Mr. David Lametti: Madam Speaker, I thank my honourable colleague for her question.

I would like to point out that the CETA text has existed since 2014. The parliamentary process was followed by the former government during the 41st Parliament. Therefore, generally speaking, the agreement was studied.

The NDP is exaggerating when it says that there is a double standard. Both treaties were duly studied by committees, as they should be.

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech.

Could my colleague elaborate on the geopolitical impact that the signing, ratification, and implementation of the free trade agreement with Ukraine would have on that part of the world?

• (1200)

Mr. David Lametti: Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his excellent question.

It is important to note that, by helping Ukrainians develop their economy and reduce their dependence on other countries, namely Russia, we are helping Ukraine become a truly independent country.

By strengthening bilateral economic relations between our two countries, we can also create a more positive structure and space that will promote other types of political relationships and political stability in the region.

[*English*]

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am going to raise this issue in my speech, but I would like to ask the parliamentary secretary's perspective in terms of the issue of ongoing co-operation with Ukraine. Obviously, this trade deal is something we support, and it reflects very much our values as well as our economic interests. However, there has been, in some important areas of co-operation, some pullback from the government in terms of that co-operation less on the economic and more on the military side.

I would ask the member's perspective on his government's decision to stop providing satellite imagery to the Ukrainian armed forces. This was something that Canada did through RADARSAT-2 under the previous government, which was stopped in May of this year. I certainly agree with the importance of collaborating with Ukraine on multiple fronts. Does the member agree that the government should at least look at restoring that vital support to the Ukrainian armed forces?

Government Orders

Mr. David Lametti: Madam Speaker, relationships, whether they be military, economic, or political, evolve. We continue, as we will, under this trade agreement as under our political engagements, and continue to evaluate our relationship with Ukraine and every aspect of that relationship.

We will make decisions in a variety of specific cases, as we have done with satellite imagery, as we are doing in the economic realm, and in other places, to do what is in the best interests of Canada first and foremost, but also in the best interests of helping Ukraine to build itself as a country.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to rise to join this exciting and important debate about ratifying the Canada-Ukraine free trade deal. This is an agreement and legislation that all parties in the House support, at least the three major parties. We are grateful for that and the statement it makes about Canada's co-operation with Ukraine.

I want to share a bit of the history of the Canada-Ukraine co-operation and talk specifically about some issues in Ukraine. Then I will also make a plea to the government to consider doing more when it comes to this co-operation. I think there is some pulling back in terms of this important relationship that has happened under the current government, not so much on the economic front but on other fronts. I want to draw the attention of members to that issue and again ask members of Parliament and the government to do more, because we are, indeed, talking about a relationship that is critically important for both countries.

I had the honour of visiting Ukraine in August of this year. I stayed in a hotel that overlooks Independence Square. I was there when this young nation marked its 25th anniversary and it was such a powerful experience for me. Canada is coming up to its 150th anniversary, an important milestone for our country, but we experience our founding moments as a matter of history and not so much a matter of immediate personal experience. They are part of our collective memory, but not part of any of our individual memories. Even so, our founding did not come out of occupation.

Being in Ukraine for this 25th anniversary was so powerful on multiple levels. The history of the occupation of all of Ukraine is very immediate. Most Ukrainians will remember what it was like to live under Soviet occupation, but Ukraine is also a country that is currently being occupied by Russia and Russian-backed entities. There is no doubt that there is a great deal of sorrow about the ongoing challenges and the occupation, but there is also a great pride in Ukraine about what this young nation has been able to accomplish.

Ukraine has been compared to the mythological creature, the phoenix, that dies and is continually dramatically reborn. This is the story of Ukraine, entirely irrepressible and continually reborn in the midst of a very harsh environment geopolitically in terms of the neighbour it has to deal with. The current incarnation of the Ukrainian state has, indeed, accomplished so much in a short time, so much since its founding 25 years ago and since the Euromaidan movement, which started about three years ago.

Eastern Europe, like many parts of the world, is a place where the shifting sands or, in this case, we might say the shifting snows, of

empire have left a multicultural and multi-ethnic reality that makes the definition of ethnic borders quite difficult. This is sort of true of Canada as well, although we generally think of our multiculturalism here as being voluntary. Much, though not all, of our diversity is the product of immigration and accommodation as opposed to conquest. However, Ukraine emerged only recently from occupation, an occupation that included genocide, which was followed, in turn, by the sending of ethnic Russians into communities that had previously been inhabited by Ukrainians.

Therefore, as we think about Ukrainian identity and the reality of the Ukrainian state, it might be worth suggesting and understanding that, though quite diverse, Ukraine has found itself in a place of what we might call involuntary diversity. During the occupation, people were sent there and this was a situation that the Ukrainian state, upon coming into existence, found itself in. That history, obviously, has made certain cultural ties between Ukraine and Russia inevitable.

Because of this, we hear some political narrative from people with an interest in propelling this narrative about division, the claim that Ukraine is divided between east and west, between Ukrainian and Russian speakers, and along ethnic and religious lines. However, what I found when I was in Ukraine in August, what I observed and what I was told, is that Ukraine is a diverse but also a deeply united country, indeed, united in its intention to resist foreign aggression, a country that, in the midst of a history of involuntary diversity, is choosing to build a shared civic nationalism, with shared values and shared cultural touchstones as well.

● (1205)

It is within this context, and other members have already referred to this, that we hear about an interest in the Canadian model of unity around common values in spite of differences.

I mentioned my hotel room, when I was in Ukraine, overlooked Independence Square, which was the centre of a movement that started about three years ago, called the Euromaidan movement, where protestors bravely resisted a corrupt Russian-backed autocrat Viktor Yanukovich and successfully forced him from power.

As we have a discussion today about a trade deal with Ukraine, it is worth reminding ourselves that the spark that set off that conflict, initially, was actually a discussion about trade. The then government of Ukraine decided not to pursue closer economic integration with Europe, despite previous commitments to do that.

As we think about that, and we think about the debate we are having today, it is a good reminder that trade association, in this context, is not principally about the economy. It was, for Ukraine, about independence and identity. The initial decision to not proceed with this agreement would have left Ukraine in a position of serious economic vulnerability and, therefore, geopolitical dependence on Russia.

The Russian regime, the Putin regime, did not want Ukraine to be able to develop trading relationships that affirm and deepen its independent western and European identity; hence, the pressure that was put on Yanukovich. This was a key pivot point associated with a discussion about trade.

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Because of the bravery of protesters who risked and, in some cases, gave their lives, Ukraine positioned itself to start a stronger future as a more independent, more European, more western-looking nation. It was a brave and proud moment for Ukrainian nationals.

Russian propaganda, then and since, tries to dismiss Ukrainian nationalism, in general, and the Euromaidan movement, in particular, as being about narrowly xenophobic and ethnic nationalism, even anti-Semitism and white supremacy; but the reality could not be further from the truth.

In fact, these messages are particularly ironic when we identify Russian support for far right movements in Europe. The Russian regime and its enablers and useful idiots in the west peddle an exclusive colonialist vision of nationalism that suggests they have a right to seek to control affairs in countries that they have historically bullied or occupied, their so-called sphere of influence.

No sovereign state has a right to bully another on the basis of cultural ties or historic claims to so-called sphere of influence. There is no moral or legal justification for such bullying, and there never has been.

However, while the Russian state peddles narrow and ethnocentric nationalism, the Ukrainian nationalism that spawned the Euromaidan move is open, pluralistic, and democratic, and it has strengthened Ukraine and it continues to strengthen Ukraine.

When I was there, I spoke with young Ukrainians who participated in the Euromaidan movement, of all varied ethnic and religious backgrounds. I met with Jewish leaders, one of whom led a Jewish brigade in the Maidan. I met Muslim Crimean Tatar leaders who have inspired their fellow Ukrainians by showing as great a pride in their predominantly Christian country as anyone else.

We have an opportunity tonight in the vote to recognize the genocide they have faced and to do something very important for this community.

We have Muslim Ukrainians, ethnic Tatar Ukrainians, Jewish Ukrainians, Russian-speaking Ukrainians, Polish Ukrainians, Catholic Ukrainians, Orthodox Ukrainians, Ukrainian Ukrainians. They are all Ukrainians, united by culture, to some extent, but, more important, by common Ukrainian values of independence and democracy.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine sought to capitalize on a moment of weakness but, in fact, it united Ukrainians more than ever in a commitment to share civic nationalism, and to the western and European values that spawned Euromaidan in the first place.

Ukraine's success was never inevitable, but her people have shown, and continue to show, inspiring and inspired courage.

Trade with Ukraine is economically useful, but it is also a moral and strategic imperative. We must use our own significant and unique cultural ties with Ukraine to ensure that this brave nation is never again as vulnerable to the bullying of Russia as it once was. Its independence requires economic ties with nations that will respect that independence and, indeed, that share its values.

●(1210)

We share cultural ties with Ukraine, but also we have a common approach to nationalism, a love of country rooted in shared civic values, not in ethnic exclusiveness or a desire to dominate someone else.

While I am pleased to see a certain consensus in the House around the need to have a strong relationship with Ukraine and to support Ukraine, we need to do more and better when it comes to standing up for Ukraine. I want to identify three specific areas where the government can do a better job when it comes to standing by our important partner.

The first thing we can do is to do more for domestic human rights issues inside Russia. Why would I say that in the context of a debate about Ukraine? Because we know, and we can see as we look at different conflicts around the world, that a government that is a menace to its own people is necessarily going to be a menace to international peace and security. When a government is aggressive and hostile toward its neighbours, we know that will also likely lead to or be associated with the repression of human rights domestically.

It is in the midst of the Russian attempt to distract attention from domestic challenges, economic challenges, and human rights issues inside Russia that it is undertaking this aggressive activity in other countries. Therefore, we need to be very clear about the fact that human rights in Russia must not be sacrificed. There is a very concrete way that we can do it. We can support and pass Magnitsky sanctions, which specifically target human rights abusers associated with the Russian regime. This is a piece of innovative political technology that targets, with sanctions, individuals involved in human rights abuses. Unlike in times passed, the autocrats of the world and those around them often enjoyed having investments in and travelling to countries in the west. By working with our allies to impose these individual targeted Magnitsky sanctions, we can make a real concrete difference for human rights in Russia.

This is something I know individual members of the government support, but so far we have seen in statements made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, a reluctance to move forward with this. I think we know why. Because the government is pursuing a policy of closer relations with the Russian government. It justifies it on the basis that if we engage, we could talk about human rights issues. I would be more sympathetic to that if we actually saw the government using engagement as a means to advance human rights issues, if it was talking to the Russians but still insisting on Canadian values and still insisting, for instance, on the implementation of Magnitsky sanctions. However, that has not been the tone, and does not seem to be the direction, at least, that the current Minister of Foreign Affairs is setting.

Government Orders

I encourage all members of the House to understand the importance of Magnitsky sanctions. This is not a piece of political technology that is limited in its effectiveness to Russia. We should explore the use of Magnitsky sanctions in many different places to target human rights abusers, but let us take this vital step. It is a step that is important to Ukrainians and the Ukrainian community in Canada. They want to see their Russian neighbours enjoying the same freedoms that people in Ukraine and Canada enjoy. I think they understand that a Russia that is genuinely free and democratic can be a good neighbour to Ukraine, at some point in the future we hope. However, as long as there is internal repression of human rights in Russia, there is a greater threat that exists to Ukraine and other countries in the region.

Number one is to do more for human rights inside Russia.

Number two is that the government needs to strengthen military co-operation with Ukraine. We hear a lot from members of the government about the need to be engaged as a strategic partner with Ukraine. However, there is one simple thing they could do, which is to reverse a step they took back on May 6 of this year. At the time of the previous government, the Harper government, it was agreed that we would share information from Canadian satellites with the Ukrainian armed forces. This information was very helpful in their fight with Russian-backed entities in eastern Ukraine. This was a decision the previous government undertook, but then it was reversed by the Liberal government. We have stopped providing these satellite images.

• (1215)

I have asked this question of multiple members of the government today, and it is important that we continue to ask this question. No justification has been given for withdrawing the use of this imagery in terms of giving it to the Ukraine government. We can imagine what the reasoning might be. We can only assume that the Russians wanted Canada to stop providing this information to Ukrainian authorities and that the Liberal government decided to listen to the wishes and the interests of the Russians. The reality is that this satellite imaging was extremely helpful to the Ukrainian armed forces. It was right for us to be providing this strategic support. As of May 6 of this year, Canada stopped providing these images.

I have a quote from Ivan Katchanovski, a political science professor at the University of Ottawa. He said, "I think this was a sign of a possible change in the Canadian stance toward Ukraine". He noted as well that budgetary considerations were unlikely to be the real reason for these decisions.

These images are being taken anyway. Canada has these satellites, so sharing these images with the Ukrainian government does not strike me as a difficult or challenging thing to do. If the Russians are against it and the Liberal government is being over-influenced by Russian interests, then that obviously creates a problem for Ukraine. Ukraine is in a battle for its very existence and Canada needs to be there. We need to provide these satellite images.

For all of the government members who are giving flowery speeches about the need to support Ukraine and to work with Ukraine, I ask them to take this simple step and show goodwill, show that they actually want to co-operate. That would be proof positive of a real commitment to working with Ukraine. However, it

looks like, on the one hand, there is this discussion of the need to work with Ukraine. On the other hand, there is this pulling back of support. There seems to be a dissidence between what is being said and the reality, at least as it pertains to military co-operation.

We need to strengthen military co-operation with Ukraine. This would mean the continuation of the training mission that began under the previous government, which is up for renewal in March 2017. We have yet to hear a formal commitment with respect to continuing that support. It would be really unfortunate if the government did not continue to provide Ukraine with what it needed in addition to the satellite imagery we pulled back in other areas.

The final point I want to make with respect to Canada's co-operation with Ukraine is on the areas in which we can do more. We can reinstate initiatives that were aimed at promoting communal harmony in Ukraine. When I was in Ukraine in August, it was interesting to have discussions with people about the issues of some of the religious tension that existed. There have been significant concerns about faith-based persecution taking place in Crimea and in other Russian-occupied parts of Ukraine, the persecution especially of Catholics and Protestants, as well as some persecution targeted at the Muslim community.

As we think about that, it is important to recognize that under the previous government, we had the Office of Religious Freedom. It provided funding for on-the-ground projects aimed at building harmony between different communities. That office had projects inside of Ukraine aimed at bringing together some of the different religious elements and promoting communal harmony, this being important for the ongoing unity of the Ukrainian state.

During a debate we had in the spring about the Office of Religious Freedom, one member from the NDP suggested that the fact we were putting money into projects on religious freedom in Ukraine suggested that this office was somehow political, as if to suggest that there were no real issues with communal harmony in Ukraine but especially as we saw the persecution of certain faith groups in Russian-occupied parts of eastern Ukraine. There is a need for Canada to be involved in that conversation, and we can provide meaningful support.

• (1220)

I am pleased to support this free trade deal, but I am also eager to urge the government to do more when it comes to helping Ukraine, to do more for human rights inside Russia, to strengthen our military co-operation with Ukraine, reverse the decision with regard to satellite imaging, and reinstate international initiatives aimed at promoting communal harmony, especially which have benefits for Ukraine. We could do these things. We could actually put our money where our mouths are when it comes to helping that country in addition to this important step today, which is the free trade deal.

Mr. Omar Alghabra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Consular Affairs), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows that the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development is conducting a study for the sanctions framework, and it is looking at, among other things, the Magnitsky proposal. However, I have a question for the member. If the Magnitsky Act was so clear cut, when his party was in government, why did it not implement it?

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Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, under the previous government, important steps were taken with regard to supporting Ukraine and addressing human rights issues in Russia, and there was a commitment to move forward with the Magnitsky Act. In fact, the parliamentary secretary's own party committed with respect to supporting a Magnitsky Act before the last election. I do not know the precise timelines when this was proposed. The idea of a Magnitsky Act is something that has been developed relatively recently. It is not a form of sanctions that has been around for decades. This is a new piece of political technology that was developed to deal with human rights abuses. It is innovative, it has been passed in the United States and it works very well.

Obviously the commitment was there. Had the Conservatives been re-elected, we would have seen the implementation of the Magnitsky Act. The parliamentary secretary's own party made this commitment. If this is so ambiguous and it needs more study, the Liberals should have done the study before they made this commitment. Let us get this done, let us pass this common sense initiative and let us make it non-partisan.

● (1225)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I was fascinated to hear the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan raise the issue of the provision to Ukraine of images from Canada's RADARSAT-2 technology, which is contractually provided to Canada by MacDonald, Dettwiler.

When the Harper administration first provided that satellite imagery and proposed it internally, my information, which I believe to be solid, is that it was opposed by both the Department of National Defence and the department we now call Global Affairs Canada. There were significant concerns about pushing through with providing this technology, and some of those concerns came from MacDonald, Dettwiler.

I am very pleased to hear that we are no longer providing those images because, in my view, it posed a significant threat to our access to those images for the things for which Canada needed RADARSAT-2 and that we were putting ourselves in a position where, due to the conflict in Ukraine, we could have lost access to that technology.

Could the hon. member shed more light on this? He is the first member I have heard raise this in the House.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, it is difficult to comment on this when my colleague talks about her information on what she has heard may have been discussed in the Department of National Defence. I certainly never read anything on the public record suggesting anything of the nature of the concerns she has raised. If she has documentation to support some of these concerns, I would be interested in reading it and learning about where those concerns come from. I do not think that any of this is at least on the public record. The reality is that this was a decision taken by the previous government and it did not in any way negatively impact our access to these images. It was important for Ukraine and for Canada. Whatever hypothetical concerns may have existed beforehand, certainly they were not borne out in practice. We were providing these images and we had the positive effects for Canada as well as for Ukraine. These are very important for Ukraine's security.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):

Mr. Speaker, I appreciated a number of words by the member across the way as he reflected on the situation we found ourselves in a few years ago when we had the Euromaidan movement. I had the privilege of being onsite three or four times, and it was an interesting experience. What I really appreciated was the degree to which people of Ukrainian heritage here in Canada got involved in the whole process in trying to help solve the problem. I was encouraged by that.

When the President of Ukraine spoke to this House, one of the things he talked about was the importance of getting a free trade agreement. Therefore, we are formalizing a free trade agreement here. Even though it might have been referenced in the past, and I know I referenced it many years ago in the House, it is great to see that we are fulfilling something that is of benefit not only to Canada economically but is also the right thing to do at the right time.

Could the member provide his thoughts on how important it is that we see this come to fruition?

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, I would love to chat with my colleague offline about his experience there at that time.

First of all, I want to affirm the member's comments about the important role the Canadian diaspora plays in supporting Ukraine. One of the things I heard repeatedly in Ukraine was the value of Ukrainian Canadians in the relationship with Ukraine. This is something that we see across the board, in which communities in Canada with origins in other countries are able to help develop the friendships between Canada and these other countries and strong supporting both.

I completely agree about the importance of the free trade deal proposed today, both in terms of its economic and strategic benefits. Again, I am asking the government to consider doing more to support Ukraine and restoring some of the things it previously did in support of Ukraine. At least on the economic front, we have not seen any pullback. We may have seen pullback on the security and foreign affairs front, but we are full steam ahead in terms of economic co-operation by the current government with Ukraine. That certainly is a positive.

● (1230)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech in this debate.

It seems to me that the Conservatives are in the habit of fully supporting every economic and trade agreement without question, while we are always being accused of not supporting any of them. I think it would be fair to consider why they seem to fully support agreements without even having seen the text of those agreements.

Does my colleague think that his party is irresponsible in that regard because the Conservatives support trade agreements without having even seen the text? Can he comment on that and tell the House whether he thinks that this is a responsible way of dealing with free trade agreements?

[English]

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, it will not surprise members to hear that I do not share my colleague's characterization of things. The reality, of course, is that when we were in government, the trade deals that came before the House were obviously ones that we supported because we negotiated them. In all of those trade deals, we had naysayers who said that we could not possibly get a good deal for Canada, that we could not possibly preserve certain aspects of our domestic policy environment, and yet we were able to sign good deals for Canada.

Why did we support those deals? It is because they were good deals that we negotiated. Under the Conservatives, we were hard-nosed negotiators. We got good deals done for Canada.

Certainly, in a number of cases, we see the new Liberal government continuing with deals that were partially, or in the case of CETA, completely negotiated by the previous government. We see that as a positive. Again, obviously, members could expect us to support those deals.

In terms of the NDP's position on this, its members are sounding more and more like Donald Trump every day. They are saying they are okay with one-off bilateral trade deals, but that big multilateral trade deals, whoa, are a little too huge for them.

The reality is that multilateral trade involving multiple countries provides a great deal of economic benefit for our country. Obviously, there are certain cases in which moving forward with a bilateral trade deal, in this case with Ukraine, makes sense. However, that does not mean that we should be reluctant to sign trade deals with larger groups of countries, especially in the case of Europe, where it is not possible to proceed with individual, bilateral trade deals with one European country here or there if they are part of the EU. There is a need to negotiate on a multilateral basis.

However, this is good trade deal, and CETA is a good trade deal. Again, when the Conservatives were in government, they had a progressive, positive trade deals, but also effectively negotiated in the interests of Canada to get things done that maybe naysayers said were not possible, but that we were able to get done.

Mr. Arif Virani (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Mississauga East—Cooksville.

It is my honour to rise in the House today on behalf of my riding of Parkdale—High Park to speak in favour of Bill C-31, Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement implementation act. Our government signed the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement on July 11, 2016. It is now time to ratify that agreement here in the House of Commons.

This deal represents an important milestone in the Canada-Ukraine bilateral relationship. The Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement is sound economic policy that will meet the needs of businesses, industry, and consumers in both Canada and Ukraine. It will also continue to strengthen Canada's relationship with Ukraine by fostering important cultural ties and social growth between our two countries.

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Finally, the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement makes an important contribution to Canadian foreign policy by helping consolidate Ukraine's place in Europe while keeping in check aggressive foreign powers in the region.

I want to begin today by outlining the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement's economic benefits. Not only does this agreement serve as an opportunity to export Canadian goods abroad, but Canadians across the country will also benefit from a diverse range of Ukrainian goods that will come into Canada. This will translate into dynamic business opportunities in both countries and means that Canadian consumers from Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian backgrounds alike will have easy, affordable access to the products they demand.

Our industries will benefit from tariff-free iron, steel, and minerals. Ordinary Canadians will find new occasions to sample specialty Ukrainian confectionaries and beverages. This includes enticing treats such as Ukrainian chocolate, baked goods, and even Ukrainian vodka, just in time to warm us up over the holidays.

These goods will all be tariff free, which means that middle-class Canadians will pay less in stores for the same high-quality goods. The same could be said of our Ukrainian allies. Their consumers will enjoy more affordable Canadian beef, pork, and seafood, which will translate into increased demand for our Canadian producers and manufacturers.

Canada and Ukraine are already important trading partners and our economic relationship continues to grow with each passing year. In 2015, bilateral trade between our two countries increased by 14% over 2014, totalling almost \$278 million. Of that, Canada's exports to Ukraine reached approximately \$210 million. This is clearly a business opportunity we cannot afford to miss out on, as it will accelerate the growth of both of our economies.

•(1235)

[Translation]

The evidence is clear. One need only consider the impact of the North American Free Trade Agreement. Over a period of 12 years, merchandise trade between Canada and the United States has more than doubled. Over the same period, merchandise trade between Canada and Mexico has increased eightfold and continues to rise by 10% per year. Our economic integration with each of these countries encourages the development of Canadian businesses and makes them more competitive. The same thing will happen with Ukraine. We will see a positive impact throughout Europe.

[English]

However, this is not just about imports and exports. The Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement, like all such free trade deals, would ensure that our trading relationships follow predictable rules and include reduced technical barriers. As a result, our businesses will be better prepared to offer value-added products and services to markets across the globe.

Government Orders

Despite the widely acclaimed fiscal effects of free trade agreements like the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement, this accord has important implications beyond its economic benefits for both countries. Bill C-31 will strengthen Canada-Ukraine relations. That is why the 7,000 proud Ukrainian-Canadians in my riding of Parkdale—High Park have been advocating for free trade. That is why leaders like Paul Grod, Renata Roman, and Taras Bahriy of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress have been working so hard to see the finalization of this agreement. That is why Marc Marzotto, the president of the Ukrainian Canadian Professional and Business Association of Toronto, wants to see the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement ratified here in the House of Commons. That is why I receive numerous communications from my constituents, people like Leda Lada and Anna Semotiuk, who lead the Ukrainian social services; and people like Ludmila Kolesnichenko of the Canada-Ukraine Immigrant Aid Society; and people like Andre Sochaniwsky from the Ukrainian Credit Union. All of them all care deeply not just about this agreement but about the future of the Canada-Ukraine relationship.

I thank all of these individuals and groups for their continued advocacy.

[Member spoke in Ukrainian]

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, all of these advocates know that concluding a free trade agreement between Canada and Ukraine would strengthen the ties between our two countries. When we facilitate and promote trade relations with other nations, we open channels of communication with them. We create opportunities for dialogue, growth, and mutual understanding, and these channels inevitably lead to closer relations.

This means that Canada is building trust with Ukraine and, in turn, Ukraine is building trust with Canada. We are forging pathways to share more than just our trade goods. We will strengthen the cultural exchange between our two nations and will be in a better position to promote our interests in Ukraine and learn more about what Ukraine can offer in Canada.

We have heard many people today debate this issue. We know that Ukrainian culture and history are already woven into the tapestry of Canadian heritage. Canada is home to 1.3 million people of Ukrainian descent. We started to welcome Ukrainians to our shores 125 years ago, so Ukrainians' contributions to our country's history are vast and deep.

We celebrate those contributions each year in my riding at the Bloor West Village Toronto Ukrainian Festival, one of the single largest annual celebrations of Ukrainian culture in North America. In 1991, Canada was the first western nation to recognize Ukraine's independence, on December 2 of that year. On behalf of my riding of Parkdale—High Park and the thousands of members of the Ukrainian diaspora within my community, I welcome the opportunity, through the ratification of this trade agreement, to work even more closely with the Ukrainian community.

The ratification of this free trade agreement could not come at a more critical time. Crimea has been illegally annexed and a war is raging in the Donbass region. Our government has made commit-

ments to defend Ukrainian interests against increasing Russian intervention and aggression, and free trade is yet another means of doing this. This trade accord is a symbol of our steadfast support and solidarity with Ukraine and its interests. This agreement would not only benefit Ukraine by contributing to the economic power it needs to assert on the world stage, but it would also strengthen the economic and cultural relationship between Ukraine and the European Union. Allow me to explain.

Canada and Ukraine both have free trade agreements with the EU. Thanks to our government's efforts, Canada has signed on to CETA, while Ukraine has a deep and comprehensive free trade area with the EU. These triangular trade relations are significant for several reasons. First, triangular trade means that Ukraine can enter trade markets worth roughly \$500 billion. By entering into agreements with both Canada and the EU, Ukraine is opening itself up for investment. This investment means growth for Ukraine, as well as for Canada. The Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement has been cited as a means of reducing unemployment in Ukraine and helping strengthen the overall economy.

Currently, Russia has an economic blockade on Ukraine, so free trade with Canada is an opportunity for Ukraine to diversify its markets. It is also an opportunity for Canada to fill the void in the Ukrainian market left by Russian sanctions against Ukraine. Thus, through the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement, Ukraine will be in a better position to stand strong against Russian economic influence and to take control of its own priorities on its own terms.

Members of the House will recall that Ukraine's assertion of economic sovereignty and its move towards Europe and the west was the very genesis of the original Orange Revolution in Ukraine against Russian influence. This free trade agreement would make the liberalization of Ukraine's economy more viable and facilitate Ukrainian self-determination and autonomy. Canada's involvement in this agreement would help ensure that the number and quality of Ukrainian exports would increase and match the EU and Canada's quality and safety standards. Thus, it strengthens incentives for Ukraine to move away from the soviet-influenced standards, with which it has been burdened for so long.

This demonstrates that Bill C-31 is not only economically sound for both Canada and Ukraine but is also ethically responsible. Ukraine's evolving regulatory standards can be aligned with Canadian and European standards for safety, intellectual property rights, and environmental protections, thus paving the way for responsible, clean, and ethical investment. This also means that Canada will be in a better position to support Ukraine's democratic transformation.

I want to conclude simply by re-emphasizing how important the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement is for the Ukrainian community in my riding of Parkdale-High Park and for the Ukrainian-Canadian diaspora across the country. The agreement would cement the deep historical, cultural, social, and economic ties between our two nations. This agreement is sound economic policy and would facilitate dialogue between Canada and Ukraine, social and cultural ties, and aligns with our ethical duties to support our allies in eastern Europe against foreign aggression.

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I stand in support of Bill C-31, I stand in support of Ukraine, and I encourage all of my colleagues in the chamber to do the same.

Slava Ukraini.

• (1240)

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Conservatives will be supporting the bill as well. When we were in government, we worked very hard to show our support for Ukraine.

The member talked about the importance of the Ukrainian roots that weave through the fabric of our culture and society. We have a community that is very rich in Ukrainian culture in Alberta, and that is Vegreville, which the government has turned its back on. It is going to cost that community 280 full-time jobs. The ripple effect through that small rural town will be disastrous. We have asked the government many times to present some sort of analysis of the financial impact, anything that was done on this, to show that the closure of that office in Vegreville is warranted.

We are talking about the connection between Ukraine and Canada. Vegreville has a very deep and rich Ukrainian cultural history. How do we support trade agreements with another country when we are not supporting that culture right here at home?

The Deputy Speaker: I recognize the hon. member for Foothills has tried to make a link with his question. It is not entirely pertinent to the motion that is before the House today, but I see the parliamentary secretary rising, and perhaps he will have a chance to address it just the same.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Arif Virani: Mr. Speaker, we know that the Ukrainian diaspora does not originate in one particular city in this country but is a truly national diaspora. The 1.3 million Ukrainian Canadians who populate this country and enrich our fabric are scattered from coast to coast to coast. That includes residents of my riding, residents in Etobicoke, and residents all the way across the Prairies, in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba.

We are concerned about the Ukrainian Canadian diaspora and assisting it in terms of its prosperity, in terms of the benefits that are provided to that community, and in terms of addressing the rich cultural heritage that it brings to our country.

In terms of the Ukrainian Canadian residents, and indeed all residents of the city of Vegreville, we are alive to these concerns. We have addressed them at frequent occasions in the House of Commons. We have reached out to the member whose constituents are being affected. We are trying to ensure that we provide balanced and fair processing in the immigration streams with the wise fiscal and prudent use of taxpayer dollars, while at the same time marrying the requirements and the job needs of the people who are working in Alberta. We have secured jobs for all of those people who are currently working in Vegreville. They will have the opportunity to work in Edmonton, another bona fide Ukrainian centre, and we will continue to work on this front.

• (1245)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech.

I am pleased to inform him that the NDP will support this trade agreement, in part because it does not contain a parallel legal system for investor-state dispute resolution.

Can my colleague tell us more about that? Why is there no such mechanism in this agreement even though it is in the agreement with Europe? Why are these two agreements different in this respect?

Mr. Arif Virani: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from my colleague opposite.

For the Canada-Ukraine agreement, we settled on very specific conditions. We added a number of key issues. However, when negotiating a multilateral agreement that involves more than two countries, obviously there are going to be other conditions and features. The two approaches are not exclusive.

We will continue to pursue free trade around the world. We will negotiate agreements with some countries directly, but we will also continue to work very hard on multilateral agreements to open up and grow our economy and create jobs here in Canada.

[*English*]

Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East—Cooksville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I speak today in support of Bill C-31, an act to implement the free trade agreement between Canada and Ukraine.

This agreement and the related legislation are part of the government's ambitious, consistent, and very progressive free trade agenda. They are part of our strong drive to get Canadian goods and services to foreign markets. The Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement represents an important milestone in the Canada-Ukraine bilateral relationship.

It would benefit Canadian businesses and Canadian workers. It would also benefit Ukrainian businesses and Ukrainian people. Since the 1880s, Ukrainian immigrants have come to Canada to embrace the opportunity to work, to prosper, and to raise their families in peace and freedom. For over 120 years, Ukrainian culture has enriched the Canadian landscape in every facet in our communities.

In my riding of Mississauga East—Cooksville, we have a strong, vibrant Ukrainian diaspora. Being married to someone of Ukrainian heritage, my wife Christina Yaremczuk, I see what Ukrainian Canadians bring to the community. Both of my twin boys dance in a Ukrainian folklore dance group. It is led by Pan Fedyr Danylak. It is a great dance group. It has travelled globally. It has visited many countries. It has been here in Ottawa. I had a chance to host the group here on the Hill. The Barvinok Ukrainian dance group really is an enlightenment of all the Ukrainian culture, and the members bring that to so many audiences through song and dance.

At this time of year, we also celebrated Yarmarok just recently and the harvest festival, and we are getting ready for the Christmas season. Having a wife of Ukrainian background means I get to celebrate Christmas twice. We have the Orthodox Christmas as well as the Christian Christmas. Our house is full of joy for a little longer

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There is also a solemn time when we remember those who lost their lives in the Holodomor, in 1932 and 1933, in a genocide, a famine, constructed by Stalin, the starvation of so many Ukrainians. Millions of Ukrainians lost their lives, and we remember. I am so proud of St. Mary's church, just down the street from my house. There is a memorial to the victims of the Holodomor, those who lost their lives and their families.

In Canada's global market access plan, Ukraine is designated a priority emerging market with specific opportunities for Canadian businesses. This trade treaty is the result of Canada pursuing that priority and seeking those opportunities for Canadian businesses.

In addition to generating commercial benefits for Canadian businesses, CUFTA would support economic reform and development efforts of the Government of Ukraine, strengthen partnerships between our two countries, and help pave the way toward long-term development.

The business opportunities provided by this agreement would be particularly promising for agricultural industries, our seafood businesses, and our industrial sector. The strengthened business ties in these and other sectors would have obvious benefits across Canada. Regarding agriculture, specifically, the Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance says:

Free-trade agreements such as the agreement with Ukraine will help Canadians involved in our globally competitive agri-food export sector....

This agreement would eventually see the Ukrainian tariffs on our agricultural products reduced from as high as 14% to zero. Given Ukraine's significant unconventional oil and gas deposits, opportunities for our oil and gas technology and related industries is very apparent. Co-operation and joint ventures are all possibilities.

Currently, a far too modest amount of trade happens between Canada and Ukraine, but this is no reason to forgo or to ignore the tremendous opportunity. Rather, these moderate numbers should spur us on to seize this chance to grow our mutual trade into a much more substantial economic relationship.

This agreement would eliminate tariff and other barriers to mutual trade; thus it would provide new and growing export opportunities for Canadian business. Our goods and services would be more competitive in Ukraine. This would mean more good Canadian jobs and a wider range of less-expensive Ukrainian imports for our consumers. Canadians would benefit from both results of this free trade agreement.

• (1250)

This trade growth would result in more job opportunities here in Canada and in Ukraine. This would increase our middle class. I wish to remind everyone that export-related jobs are particularly important because wages in the industries that emphasize exports tend to be 50% higher than wages in those sectors that are not export oriented. Economically disadvantaged Canadians would be more likely to be able to work their way into the middle class because of this treaty.

Our other properly negotiated and implemented free trade agreements and our other non-trade related policies will further empower those struggling to join our middle class.

The opportunity to have a chance to seize with this free trade agreement and legislation is another illustration of how Canada derives strength and prosperity through its diversity. We are strong because of our diversity, not in spite of our differences.

In this case, we would utilize the talents of all Canadians, but particularly those Canadians with Ukrainian heritage. Ukrainian Canadians would contribute disproportionately to the strengthened business ties we would build with Ukraine because of this agreement.

The importance of this Ukrainian diaspora in Canada warrants mention of a few perhaps overlooked facts about these Canadians. These facts illustrate how broadly and deeply Ukrainian Canadians are woven into our Canadian fabric.

First, Canada is the home of the largest number of Ukrainian descendants in the world outside of Ukraine and Russia. They number 1.3 million Canadians.

Second, Ukrainian Canadians do not all live in the prairie provinces. Large numbers of Ukrainian Canadians are found from coast to coast to coast. Especially in the GTA, there are many Ukrainians, many of them living in my riding: I believe the number is around 8,000 or 9,000 Canadians of Ukrainian descent. These illustrations demonstrate what a mark Ukrainian Canadians have made on our fabric, and they have made it much richer and stronger.

While certainly there are differences between Canada and Ukraine, we have much in common. Canada and Ukraine are both middle powers. We share a similar climate. We have roughly the same size populations. Canada and Ukraine must trade to survive, and we both must trade intelligently to prosper. The Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement is exactly that smart free trade that we both need.

In addition to the mutual economic benefits of this free trade treaty, it is appropriate that Canada show strong support for the Ukrainian people. This support is warranted because Ukraine has added much to Canada's strength and prosperity. This was accomplished through the welcome and positive contribution of successive waves of Ukrainian immigrants to Canada. We have benefited from this immigration for over a century. There is not one aspect of Canadian life that these immigrants and their descendants have not enriched.

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When we formed government, the Minister of International Trade's mandate letter highlighted our commitment to deepening trade links with traditional and new trading partners. This agreement, along with CETA, would do just that. Both these treaties can be seen as part of a worldwide attempt to build bridges. These bridges, while primarily economic, have broader non-economic implications. Those implications extend to strengthening culture, governance, development, and security. Further, each properly constituted free trade agreement between any two countries serves to build a global culture of mutually beneficial interdependence that benefits all the world's peoples.

During our successful campaign to win Canadians' trust in 2015, in our real change platform, we promised to get Canadian goods to market. We made it clear to Canadians that trade is vital for our economy. When implemented, this progressive agreement would generate opportunities for Canadians and Ukrainians, create new jobs, and help to grow the middle class. This agreement and this legislation is a significant part of our fulfilling that promise, and I wholeheartedly support it.

• (1255)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for sharing more about the Ukrainian culture and the Ukrainian diaspora in Canada.

As this debate continues on Bill C-31, it appears that the implementation of the Canada-Ukraine free trade deal has the support of the speakers I have heard so far. I am only unsure of whether the Bloc Québécois supports it, only because I have not heard its members speak. Certainly the NDP, the Conservatives, the Liberals, and the Greens support this bill.

I wonder if I might be permitted to ask a more difficult question, one for which there may not be an answer.

We are aware that when we speak of the annexation of Crimea, we refer to it as the illegal annexation of Crimea by Russia. We are also aware that the president-elect of the United States is very close to Vladimir Putin and might not characterize it as illegal annexation.

Does the current government have any analysis of how Canada's policy toward Ukraine may be affected by a very Putin-friendly president of the United States?

Mr. Peter Fonseca: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for the great question, a geopolitical question.

What I believe is that through Bill C-31, we would be strengthening our ties. We have strong cultural ties, but we can strengthen our economic ties and let Ukraine know that we have a mutual bond, that we work together, maybe by helping in training. I know that we have had some of our servicemen and servicewomen out there helping Ukraine. With our ties with Europe with CETA, and with CUFTA, it would give Ukraine more leverage and put it in a stronger position to stop what is going on with the annexation of Crimea. We have to do our part. We have to show it not only through our voices but economically, which would only strengthen its position.

• (1300)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):

Mr. Speaker, today is a wonderful day in the sense that we are debating a free trade agreement with Ukraine. Both economies will benefit. We have identified the cultural connections. It has not been lost on the government. This is an important step, but it also important for us to note that there are still sanctions being put in place. Just a month or so ago, we saw additional sanctions against Russia as a direct result of what has happened over the last number of years.

It is important to recognize the valuable contributions of our Ukrainian community, which has built up many of the communities in which we now live.

I would ask my colleague to further expand on how this trade agreement is just one step in the ongoing good relationship between Canada and Ukraine.

Mr. Peter Fonseca: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague. I know the work he does and how Ukrainian Canadians have touched his community, as they have touched mine.

Right now we have pretty modest growth. With our diaspora of 1.3 million Canadian Ukrainians, our trade right now is less than \$300 million a year. The potential is huge. It would not only strengthen those cultural ties but would help both our middle classes. It would help the middle class in Canada grow and have opportunities through the many sectors in which we could trade with Ukraine and the many products and services we could acquire from Ukraine.

This is a tremendous opportunity, one that I think has for too long been lost by Canada not tapping into those diaspora communities. I have to say that Ukrainians must be one of our largest diaspora communities, at 1.3 million people.

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, "Canada is a friend, indeed". Those five words, spoken by Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko, state a very simple truth. When one thinks of the many kinds of relationships two countries can have, such as enemies, allies, partners, and competitors, none of these words touch as far or as deeply as being described as a friend. However, can countries be friends? That is a great question and one I hope members of this chamber will let me answer.

Before I go down this path any further, I would like to inform you, Mr. Speaker, that I will be sharing my time with my friend from Yellowhead.

One of my favourite authors and speakers, in defining the very term friend, remarked that a friend is a person who will come and get us. He remarked that if he ever found himself locked up in a foreign jail and unduly accused, a true friend would, despite the obstacles and accusations, come and get him and take him home. Despite all the relationships he had built and acquired over a lifetime of business and philanthropic activities, filled with hundreds of acquaintances, partners, co-chairs, and colleagues, only one, perhaps two, would meet the standard of what it would be to be a friend. Sure, many would sympathize and say, "I totally understand your situation, and I wish there was something I could do. Please let me know when you get back stateside". Ultimately, only a friend would come and get him, no questions asked, no matter what.

Government Orders

Friends will come and get us, no matter what. Friends are the ones who stand at our side during our most difficult times. They will also be there when we need to hear something, even if we do not like hearing it, and especially if we do not like hearing it.

We all know the challenges the Ukrainian people have faced and continue to face right now. Many of us were in this very chamber in September 2014 and heard the very dark assessment given by President Poroshenko that Ukrainian freedoms were being paid for in Ukrainian blood and that it was important for countries like Canada, nay, friends like Canada, to stand fast.

There is no way for Canada to simply come and get Ukraine, nor is there any way to change its geographic locale, which is of such strategic concern that Russia, whether we are speaking of the former Russian Empire, the later Soviet Union, or its current incarnation and administration, simply refuses to leave it alone. However, there are things we can do.

When Russia invaded Crimea, Canada was certainly outspoken, and this was epitomized by the former prime minister, upon shaking the hand of Vladimir Putin, telling him clearly, “get out of Ukraine”. The previous government promised and delivered monetary support, non-lethal defensive equipment, and satellite imaging for intelligence support. While I wish to say that all these efforts and more continue, alas, citing budgetary reasons, the current government has cancelled its satellite imaging. That is regretful and something I hope the government will reconsider.

I realize that some members will cite the continuing efforts to apply economic sanctions, and that is good. I encourage the government to do all it can on this front. I would also like to encourage the Liberals not to dismiss the good work of my colleague, the MP for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, with his Bill C-267, the justice for victims of corrupt foreign officials act.

With all of that said, I would like to now direct my comments to Bill C-31, an act to implement the free trade agreement between Canada and Ukraine. As we have said, Ukraine has many challenges: invasion; corruption; its fiscal and financial development; and meeting the needs and expectations of its people, who have clearly said, through marches, protests, and ultimately at the ballot box, that its future is to be an open, free economy and society, much like Canada is today.

The challenges are large. Let me read from an international monetary analyst, Mr. Benn Steil:

In April 2013, Ukraine was sporting a massive current account deficit of eight percent, and it badly needed dollars to pay for vital imports. Yet on April 10, President Viktor Yanukovich's government rejected terms set by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for a \$15 billion financial assistance package, choosing instead to continue financing the gap between its domestic production and its much higher consumption by borrowing dollars privately from abroad. So a week later, Kiev issued a ten-year, \$1.25 billion eurobond, which cash-flush foreign investors gobbled up at a 7.5 percent yield.

● (1305)

Everything seemed to be going swimmingly, until May 22, when the U.S. Federal Reserve's then chair, Ben Bernanke, suggested that the Fed might, if the U.S. economy continued improving, soon begin to pare back, or “taper,” its monthly purchases of U.S. Treasury and mortgage-backed securities. The Fed had begun the purchases the previous September in order to push down long-term interest rates and encourage private lending; their end would mean higher yields on longer-maturity U.S. bonds, making developing markets decidedly less attractive. Investors in

Ukrainian bonds therefore reacted savagely to the taper talk, dumping them and sending their yields soaring to near 11 percent, a level at which they would remain for most of the rest of the year.

Ukraine's financial problems had been mounting over many years, but it was the mere prospect of the Fed pumping fewer new dollars into the market each month that pushed the cost of rolling over its debt—that is, paying off old obligations with new bonds—beyond Kiev's capacity to pay. Had the Fed stayed dovish, Ukraine could have at least delayed its financial crisis, and a crisis delayed can be a crisis averted. Yanukovich ultimately turned for help to Moscow, which successfully demanded that he abandon an association agreement with the European Union in return. Ukrainians took to the streets—and the rest is history.

Like many countries, it can be difficult to exist in a global market where investment can disappear overnight. The only protection is a thriving economy where domestic industries can build competitive advantage and compete internationally. Forming stronger, long-term, and diversified trade will create jobs and a more sustainable tax base that will help Ukraine.

Whatever members have heard, and despite what the NDP likes to say, Canada knows very well the benefits of trade. I mentioned the importance of the stabilizing effect trade can have on an economy when it expands trade. I mentioned an expanded tax base. When a country has a stable tax base, there are more resources for citizens for health care, schools, important productive infrastructure, such as a new bridge or airport, and quality-of-life infrastructure, such as advanced waste water management or water treatment. It also allows for institutions of the state, like tax collection and a well-resourced legal framework with authorities, that can help tackle institutional corruption and make them more inclusive.

More inclusive institutions are better equipped to help receive and share information with the public through access to information and better public monitoring of elected and other public officials. This creates a more open and productive society, and Canada can help by sharing its experiences.

It is also important for us to see that we have a way to go when it comes to transparency and making sure that corruption is stamped out. One only has to see the damage to the institutions of government, and not just to the Liberal Party's brand, when Canadians can plainly see either preferential access to elected decision-makers or perceived preferential access with cash for access fundraisers.

Let us celebrate our way of life here in Canada, but let us not be blind to our own conduct as we encourage institutional development internationally in countries that seek a path similar to Canada's.

Government Orders

I return to the words of President Poroshenko: “Canada is a friend, indeed”. There is much to support in Bill C-31. There is much promised and made good by the previous government, and to some extent, the current Liberal government as well. However, like a friendship, it never ends until we part ways personally or through death. I would suggest, in answering the question of whether countries can be friends, that yes, they can be. However, until we see the Ukrainian people through these dark days, stand firm with them, share with them our concerns, and help them through this trying time, only then can we say, in response to President Poroshenko, “Canada is a friend in deed”.

● (1310)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments by the member and especially that he cited what the President of Ukraine had to say on the floor of this illustrious chamber, where he asked parliamentarians to move ahead and try to get the free trade agreement. That is what we are doing here today.

It is encouraging. We have Conservatives, New Democrats, and the Green Party onside and recognizing the value of having a free trade agreement with Ukraine.

Would the member not agree that there are many economic benefits for both Canada and Ukraine and that we cannot underestimate the importance of our Canadian-Ukrainian heritage groups, and even those outside those groups, and their desire to advance goodwill and build a stronger, healthier relationship with Ukraine?

Mr. Dan Albas: Mr. Speaker, I do hope the member heard my speech, because I think I said many of the very same things. However, I do take the point that there are many Canadians of Ukrainian heritage who would want Canada to live up to Mr. Poroshenko's words.

Again, Canada is a friend indeed, but a friend stands fast when times are tough. A friend tells one what sometimes one does not want to hear but needs to hear. A friend stands with one despite everyone else leaving.

I think for Ukrainian Canadians and those Canadians of Ukrainian heritage, this is the kind of action they want from the current government. They got it from the last government, and I hope the current government is listening.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the hon. member again raised the issue of the satellite data from RADARSAT-2 and the cancellation, because it gives me a chance to follow up on the response when I last put the question to the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

I have found confirmation, in coverage by the media, of the fact that there were concerns, both operational and contractual, within the Department of National Defence. The information I have is that both the minister of defence in the Harper cabinet and the minister of foreign affairs, as it was then called, objected internally, but the prime minister went ahead.

The evidence that I have from media coverage confirms that it was not just budgetary concerns but operational concerns. Members can find this information in a *National Post* story, which was headlined, “Red tape forces Canada to stop providing Ukraine's military with satellite imagery...”.

However, that red tape, when we read the story, is not red tape in the bureaucratic sense, but operational concerns, including from MDA, including the Department of National Defence, which is the reason it was opposed internally to begin with.

I would ask the hon. member to reflect on that. It certainly was not budgetary concerns, but operational concerns, including those of the Canadian military.

● (1315)

Mr. Dan Albas: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for her contribution to this place and for raising a number of concerns.

Again, budgetary was named in a number of different sources, and the member has cited a few other ones. I do not necessarily disagree that there might be some operational and contractual issues.

However, I will always go back to this: Leadership means making decisions and making them for the betterment of all. It may cause some concerns operationally, it may cause some concerns financially, but as it has been said many times, we only need one reason to do the right thing, and it is that it is the right thing to do.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, in response, the concerns are not just whether it is a matter of political will, and on that I agree with the member that we could push through obstacles. However, here is what I understand operationally.

The satellite imagery had to be read by Canadian defence staff and then transferred over to Ukraine, and there was a timeline. As far as I understand from the access to information materials that were obtained by the *National Post*, because of that lag, Ukraine responded by asking that an operational RADARSAT receiver be put inside Ukraine. However, if we were to do that, and it were to be taken out by a conflict on the ground, we could then lose access to all the RADARSAT-2 data that Canada needs for domestic purposes. Therefore, it was a nationally strategic concern that stopped sending that satellite data and not pressure from Russia.

I do not know if that changes my friend's opinion of the decision.

Mr. Dan Albas: Mr. Speaker, again, I do appreciate that there are a number of concerns when someone is taking a decision. Again, there was a point in time where we offered that service to support Ukrainians in their time of need, and it was cut off.

Now it may not have been ideal for a department, it may not have been ideal for the Ukrainians, but it was supportive of them, and it was something that Canada could, and I argue, should do.

Mr. Jim Eglinski (Yellowhead, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak to Bill C-31, the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement implementation act.

Our Conservative Party supports Bill C-31, as do most parties in this House.

Government Orders

CUFTA was successfully negotiated and concluded on July 14, 2015, by our previous Conservative government. As the Right Honourable Stephen Harper stated, “The Ukrainian people want a western future, a future of prosperity.”

I look back to this summer when we had a number of Ukrainian interns on the Hill working for many members of Parliament from all different sides of the House. We could see in their eyes and in their souls that they were looking for a future for their country. They were here to learn about democracy from us. They came to our offices and we shared stories and developed a trust and respect between the members of Parliament and these interns. My intern Mariia was an inspiration and the model of a young Ukrainian youth looking to the future. I was so proud of them. I met with the whole group of 30-something one night and bought them pizza. We sat and had pizza, pop, and maybe the odd beer. We had great discussions and developed relationships. It made me so proud of my heritage. I am from Ukraine. My grandparents are Ukrainian on both sides. I am wearing a Ukrainian tie today. I see that some of my colleagues across the floor are wearing Ukrainian dress. I appreciate and thank them for that.

CUFTA is consistent with the previous Conservative government's economic action plan 2015, which committed to jobs, growth, and long-term prosperity. This bill supports the Conservative Party's pro-trade plan, which aims to diversify trade and enable companies to benefit from new opportunities.

Once in force, this agreement would eliminate 99.9% of the tariffs on current imports from the Ukraine to Canada, and 86% of Ukrainian tariffs on Canadian products, including such things as industrial goods, wood products, and fish and seafood products. This would benefit both Canadian and Ukrainian exporters and consumers.

Between 2011 and 2013, my part of the country, western Canada, on average exported about \$80 million annually to Ukraine. Some of the top exports from western Canada included frozen hake, bituminous coal, reservoir tanks and similar containers, parts of boring or sinking machines for drilling, air compressors and other similar equipment, seeders and planters, and that which I think is most important, frozen pork. Why do I think frozen pork is so important? It is a staple food that Ukrainians like. I grew up with pork, probably more so than beef. On any given day, if you offer me a steak or a barbecued pork chop, I will leave the steak and take the pork. I see my heritage must still be with me.

Upon entry into force of the agreement, Ukraine will immediately eliminate tariffs on 75% of the tariff lines for industrial products, with a further 24.8% to become duty-free over seven years, making it 100% duty free in seven years.

According to Canadian government officials, the total back-and-forth trade between Canada and Ukraine averaged \$350 million between 2011 and 2013, and slowed drastically during 2014, as Ukraine was dealing with a political upheaval and armed conflict in southern and eastern parts of the country.

The provisions of the agreement on free trade between Ukraine and Canada provide the deepening of trade and economic co-operation, including trade in industrial and agricultural goods,

intellectual property protection, and regulation of public procurement.

The free trade agreement does not impact Canada's ability to maintain its existing supply management policy, as Canadian over-quota tariffs for supply management goods, being dairy, poultry and eggs, are excluded from the tariff concessions.

● (1320)

Total bilateral merchandise trade between Canada and the Ukraine averaged \$289 million between 2011 and 2015. In 2015, it expanded by almost 20% as a result of the implementation of this trade.

Canada's GDP will increase by \$29.2 million under CUFTA and the Ukraine's GDP will expand by \$18.6 million.

As a result of this agreement, Canada's exports to the Ukraine will increase by \$41.2 million. Canada's export gains will be broad-based, with exports of pork, machinery and equipment, transport equipment, other manufactured products, motor vehicles, parts, as well as chemical products leading the way.

The Ukrainian market offers many opportunities for Canadians, Canadian businesses, and investors in areas such as aerospace, agricultural equipment, information and communication technology, agriculture and agrifood, fish and seafood, and mining equipment.

The agriculture and agrifood sector employed over 530,000 people in 2014 in Canada and accounted for close to 3% of Canada's GDP. Canada is the world's fifth largest exporter of agriculture and agrifood products. Our agriculture exports to the Ukraine averaged almost \$30 million between 2011 and 2013 each year.

The majority of Ukrainians who came to Canada in the late 1800s and early 1900s settled in western Canada and became farmers. They farmed the area and opened up the land. They homesteaded. It was not only Ukrainians. Germans, Italians, Dutch, and many others helped to open up Canada and make it such a prosperous agricultural nation.

Today, there are approximately 1.3 million Ukrainian descendants, the second largest population of Ukrainians in the world other than Ukraine itself. Many members said in the House that we would need to be friends but we are almost closer than friends in a lot of cases. We are family. When we talk about 1.3 million Canadians with ties to the Ukraine, we are talking families.

In 2015 alone, bilateral trade between Canada and Ukraine increased 14%. That shows that we have been growing every year since this agreement was first looked at.

Canadian exports include pharmaceuticals, fish and seafood, and coking coal. It is important to know that we both export and import coal.

Government Orders

It is also important to note that the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement will generate opportunities for Canadians and Ukrainians. It will create new job opportunities. Ukrainian immigrants came here to prosper and open up this great land of ours. Now more than ever it is time for Canadians to help Ukraine prosper and grow.

I remember many times hearing my grandfather talk about what it was like in the Ukraine and why he left. He left because there was no chance to succeed. He heard there were opportunities in Canada and he came here. I am proud to say that from the descendants of my great-grandparents there are close to 1,000 of us from two people. That says a lot in just a little over a century.

We had great opportunities. The Ukraine has struggled over the last few years but it is on the right road to democracy. It is looking for our help in trade and we must help. Young Ukrainian entrepreneurs working with young Canadian entrepreneurs can grow each other's economies.

Our Conservative Party supports Bill C-31, the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement implementation act, that was successfully negotiated by the previous government and supported by the current government and most members of the House.

• (1325)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement appears to have the support of all political parties in the House. We have yet to hear from the Bloc but I anticipate that the two members will hopefully support what is a great agreement.

My question to the member relates to the importance of trade to our country. Economically, Canada's middle class benefits immensely when we have trade. Canada is a trading nation and will benefit economically from this trade agreement.

Could the member provide some additional comments with respect to the benefits of enhancing Canada's special relationship with the Ukraine that goes beyond economics between two great nations?

Mr. Jim Eglinski: Mr. Speaker, this goes so much further than the trade agreement we sign here. I spoke earlier about our House having Ukrainian interns working with members of Parliament from all parties. They came here to learn about democracy and the best way they could become future leaders for their country. In speaking with many of them, I learned that not only had they come to Canada, but that some had been to the United States, England, and France as well. There is a general sense that they want to learn, and we must give them that opportunity. The Canadian parliamentary intern program with Ukraine is one that our government should support and I would like to see it supported financially because it needs help.

• (1330)

Mr. Wayne Stetski (Kootenay—Columbia, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my grandfather and grandmother on my father's side, the Heshka and Stetski clan, all settled around Yorkton, Saskatchewan, and we still go back every five years for a family reunion. There is nothing better than a feast of ptahe, holubsti, and kielbasa.

The NDP will be supporting the bill. It is a very important increase in the positive relationship between Ukraine and Canada

and a much better bill than CETA in many aspects. Because of the importance of the relationship between Canada and Ukraine, does the member think that the Liberal government could be doing even more?

Mr. Jim Eglinski: Mr. Speaker, government could always do more. Exactly what we need to focus on is assisting Ukraine in times of need. People there are being threatened by the Putin regime and I believe our military support must remain. Maybe we need to increase some of the support for training, etc., that we give the military. I believe government can always do better and we must look at ways of doing better.

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Yellowhead has been a wonderful addition to the House over the last couple of years and it is always wonderful to hear those personal experiences. Some of the decisions we make in the House do have an impact, not only in our communities but also on our family histories. I really appreciated my colleague's remarks about the parliamentary internship program and what an impact it has had.

When the president of Ukraine was here a few years ago talking about how important the Canada-Ukraine relationship was and looking for support, was that shared among the younger people whom the member had the opportunity to work with? Could he talk about the impact that the Canada-Ukraine relationship and this trade agreement will have on the next generation of Ukrainian people moving forward?

Mr. Jim Eglinski: Mr. Speaker, we had our discussions the night that we sat and had some pizza and the odd beer. They were afraid that the funding for their country was drying up and were hoping that Canada would support and continue its program of support, because they found it so beneficial to the development of their future. My colleagues on all sides of the House who belong to the Canada-Ukraine Parliamentary Friendship Group feel it is very important that government supports the group with funding.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with my esteemed colleague from the beautiful Lac-Saint-Louis.

I am thankful for the opportunity to speak today on the topic of the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement and the benefits it would provide to Canadians and Ukrainians. I am proud to speak in support of this free trade agreement on behalf of the riding of Davenport.

In my riding of Davenport, believe it or not, there used to be a fairly significant Ukrainian community centred around the Ukrainian school and two churches. Most of the Ukrainians have now moved away to Etobicoke or Mississauga, but the churches, the school, and the memories still remain. The school was called Saint Josaphat's. I used to attend it in grade school, but, sadly, it is now closed. My father was Ukrainian, which is where I got the name Dzerowicz, and my mother is Mexican. I feel very blessed and lucky to live in a country where I can be both a proud Mexican Canadian and a proud Ukrainian Canadian.

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Today, I stand in my Ukrainian shirt as a proud Ukrainian Canadian to talk about something I am so excited about, the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement. It is a blessing for me to be able to strongly support this agreement. I believe that strong economic ties will be mutually beneficial for both countries, as well as in so many other ways, including helping Ukraine continue to strengthen its financial systems, develop its economy, strengthen its civil society, and combat things like corruption that have plagued Ukrainian society for far too long.

What is the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement? It is a modern, high-standard agreement that includes chapters in a breadth of areas, including trade facilitation, government procurement, intellectual property, competition policy, transparency, and anti-corruption. Once fully implemented, this agreement would not only support Canadian and Ukrainian businesses through preferential market access but also deepen trade linkages, further strengthen Canada's bilateral relationship with Ukraine, enhance co-operation, provide for increased transparency in regulatory matters, and help reduce transaction costs for businesses.

As in all of Canada's free trade agreements, the cornerstone of the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement is new and enhanced market access for Canadian-produced and manufactured goods. Once the agreement is fully implemented, 99.9% of Canada's current exports will be eligible to enter Ukraine duty free. This would make Canadian goods more competitive in the Ukrainian market. Importantly, it would put our exporters on a level footing with European companies who are already benefiting from the EU's free trade agreement with Ukraine, and lead to new opportunities for Canadian business. It would also put Canadian exporters at a decided advantage relative to most of the rest of the world, which is not lucky enough to have a free trade agreement with Ukraine.

Let me elaborate on this point a little further. On the first day the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement enters into force, Ukraine would eliminate tariffs on approximately 86% of current Canadian exports to Ukraine. This means that Canadian exporters will see a huge immediate benefit from this agreement. The balance of Ukraine's tariff reductions and eliminations would be phased in over periods of up to seven years.

Speaking of specific products that would benefit, the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement would eliminate tariffs on all industrial products and the vast majority of agricultural exports to Ukraine. For example, Ukraine would eliminate tariffs on industrial machinery, which currently faces tariffs of up to 10%, as well as plastic articles and cosmetics, which currently face tariffs of up to 6.5%. In terms of agriculture, this agreement would eliminate tariffs of up to 20% on fish and seafood products, including on caviar substitutes, which would be duty free on the first day the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement enters into force.

Alongside Canada's fish, seafood, and industrial goods producers, Canada's leading agricultural producers would also benefit from the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement. I do not have time to go into all of the examples in all of the agricultural areas that would benefit from this agreement, but once this agreement is fully implemented, tariffs of up to 30% on key Canadian agricultural goods would be eliminated. This would provide Canadian agricultural producers with

the same market access opportunities as their European counterparts, and be an advantage over most other competitors.

I have spoken at length about the goods market access benefits of the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement, so let me now turn to other ways that the agreement would help Ukraine. Not only would it help its economy tackle some of the issues that it has been trying to reform, such as corruption, but it would also help it to build its economy and financial sector, with a huge emphasis on small and medium-sized businesses.

• (1335)

[*Translation*]

Canada has taken a comprehensive approach to economic assistance that supports the stabilization, reform, and growth of the Ukrainian economy. Since January 2014, Canada has committed over \$543 million in additional assistance in support of stabilization, reform, and growth. This includes \$400 million in the form of a low-interest loan to help stabilize Ukraine's economy during the implementation of the democratic and economic reforms. It also includes \$143 million in bilateral development assistance to support economic reform and economic growth in Ukraine.

Backed by the private sector, our support for economic reform aims to promote more inclusive growth, investment, and job creation in order to reduce poverty. Our support for economic growth aims to bolster local economic development and make small and medium-sized enterprises, or SMEs, more competitive.

Canada sent more than 65 experts to provide specific expertise in the short term and sectorial support in the long term in crucial areas such as: fighting corruption by hiring and training lawyers at the national anti-corruption bureau; assisting in restructuring the finance minister's office; and assisting in trade by supporting the design and implementation of an export development office.

Canada's assistance is consistent with Canadian objectives for the free trade agreement with Ukraine, namely fostering economic opportunity, both in Ukraine and in Canada, and raising the standard of living for our citizens.

As demonstrated around the world, trade is often a key driver of economic development and helps all trade partners generate absolute gains. Canada is committed to providing practical assistance to help Ukraine benefit from this free trade agreement with Canada. This initiative aims to strengthen the ability of Ukrainian SMEs, especially SMEs owned and operated by women, to export and attract Canadian investments.

Small businesses have made a huge contribution to job creation and economic growth in Ukraine. They are able to adapt quickly to changing economic conditions, including for example new business opportunities with Canada. Increasing their participation in trade, their ability to attract foreign investments and comply with international standards, and their productivity will help foster inclusive and sustainable economic growth in that country.

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We are confident that the Canada-Ukraine trade and investment support project will provide the technical assistance needed by the selected SMEs to comply with global standards and better take advantage of the opportunities offered by the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement, which will benefit consumers and businesses in Canada and Ukraine.

Investment and competitiveness lead to economic growth, and equitable and sustainable economic growth allow Ukrainians and Canadians to take advantage of the benefits of trade and a strengthened bilateral relationship between the two countries.

• (1340)

I strongly encourage every member of the House to support Bill C-31 as well as the ratification of the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement when the time comes.

[*English*]

I urge all hon. members to support the swift passage of Bill C-31, which will allow the government to move forward with the implementation of the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement and allow Canadians to start benefiting from this agreement.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Liberals are trading the same vyshyvanka among different members or if there are multiple ones.

I would ask the member about the discussion we have had throughout the day on satellite images and sharing them with the Ukrainian military. We all agree about the importance of Canada's strong relationship with Ukraine. Unfortunately, under the government, a decision was made to stop providing those important satellite images that the Ukrainian military was using in its fight against Russian-backed terrorists in Ukraine.

I want to try to understand why the government did that, and if the member thinks it would be a good idea to start providing this kind of support to the Ukrainian military again.

• (1345)

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Mr. Speaker, this vyshyvanka came right from Ukraine. It is mine and has not been traded with anyone. I cannot be a proud Ukrainian Canadian without owning my own vyshyvanka. I am very proud to have it.

On the member's question, trade agreements more than just mutually benefit our respective economies. They are also about forming stronger relations in a number of different areas, such as security, defence policy, and other foreign affairs issues. It is working together in a number of different ways.

From the time we were elected and came into office just over a year ago today, our government has stood very firmly in support of Ukraine. We have provided assistance in a number of ways, not only helping to support its economy, and this free trade agreement is one example, but also doing everything we can to support it on the ground, helping to build its forces and a stronger democracy.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech. I would like to mention to her that the NDP will be supporting this bill. I hope she will be pleased.

I would also like to ask her whether the government is doing anything to foster trade. Having as many free trade agreements as possible is a good thing. However, our businesses sometimes face technological or technical barriers that may limit their ability to export.

Is the government being proactive and investing in exporting to ensure that it is easier for our businesses to export and to do business around the world? That is the role of free trade agreements, but there are other barriers to exporting besides tariffs and taxes.

Is the government also working on supporting exporting and trade in order to help our businesses export their goods around the world?

[*English*]

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to hear the NDP will be supporting the bill.

I began my speech by saying that this agreement was more than just promoting freer trade and eliminating tariffs. I also said that it would include a number of elements that would talk about trade facilitation, competition policy, intellectual property, and government procurement. There are a lot of regulatory changes in there.

We are a free-trading nation, and our government has been very active in supporting that value and belief. We also engage with a number of key stakeholders to ensure our companies continue to have freer trade around the world. A number of key stakeholders are supportive of this agreement, such as the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, The Conference Board of Canada, the Business Council of Canada, and the Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters. We engage with them all the time to ensure that beyond even this trade agreement, we continue to help our companies become competitive internationally.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to have the opportunity to speak today on the topic of Canada's progressive approach to trade.

Globally, there are trends of growing populist backlash against international trade and globalization more broadly, while at the same time increasing protectionism. In addition to what we have seen in recent months from political campaigns in the U.S. or the Brexit referendum result in the UK, the World Trade Organization and other international institutions published a report in November that noted that G20 economies introduced 85 new trade-restrictive measures between mid-May and mid-October 2016.

At an average of 17 new measures a month, this is a slight decline over the average of the previous review period. However, this number remains high and coupled with the slow rollback of existing trade-restrictive measures means that we are seeing a steady accumulation of such measures.

This growing protectionism is an issue of global concern, and it is especially problematic for a trade-dependent country such as Canada. Canada is a medium-sized economy competing in the global marketplace. As such, free and open trade is integral to our economic success.

Government Orders

The Government of Canada is determined to ensure that Canada is well-positioned to take advantage of the opportunities of international trade that are so important for Canada's continued economic prosperity. Implementing the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement is an important step in that regard, because free trade agreements, or FTAs, are important tools to access the benefits of trade. FTAs provide transparent and predictable rules for Canadian companies doing business abroad, and ways to deal with problems when they arise. They create and maintain level playing fields in foreign markets, and they reduce or eliminate tariffs or other barriers.

While trade is crucial to the Canadian economy, however, it is also important to Canada and Canadians that trade is inclusive and is not conducted at the expense of important values. That is why the Minister of International Trade is working with Canadian and international partners on the development of a progressive approach to trade to address the concerns of citizens and organizations regarding trade and globalization more generally.

Trade, immigration, and international openness are more and more commonly identified as the cause of economic hardships and inequality. Globally, people are feeling powerless and anxious in the face of unceasing change. The issues are not just about trade. Globalization and the technology revolution have created wealth and opportunities for many, but parts of the middle class and those working hard to join it feel they are falling behind.

These apprehensions are not entirely unfounded. For example, Credit Suisse found that the top 1% of wealth holders owned just over half of the world's wealth; the bottom 50% combined owned less than the top 1%. Furthermore, 71% of world's adult population has a net worth of less than U.S. \$10,000.

Our government believes we cannot turn back the clock on globalization and that we should not turn our backs on trade. Increased trade can actually raise living standards, create more jobs, increase prosperity and help to strengthen the middle class, when it is done with the right overall objectives in mind. If Canada and other countries start closing borders, we will find ourselves in a less prosperous and more insular, fearful world.

This is one of the reasons that our government is pursuing a progressive approach to trade in collaboration with our like-minded partners around the world.

A progressive approach to trade seeks to advance higher standards of living and foster sustainable and inclusive economic growth. It includes an emphasis on transparent and inclusive approaches whereby the government is committed to a consultative process on international trade that allows all segments of our society to contribute and be heard. It also ensures government can pursue broad, societal objectives without facing obstacles imposed by trade agreements. The government firmly believes that governments should defend the best interests of their citizens, particularly the most vulnerable.

• (1350)

In addition, a progressive approach to trade also ensures government's continued right to regulate for strong rules on food safety and consumer protection, in addition to world-class, publicly funded health care and other public services. This approach will

more effectively promote labour rights and result in stronger environmental protection. It will also include a more progressive approach to investment dispute resolution that is widely recognized as fair, open and impartial, including exploring the establishment of a multilateral approach.

The government is still in the early stages of developing this new progressive approach to trade, but we can already see some real results. This includes advancing the Canada-European Union comprehensive and economic trade agreement, CETA, toward ratification and implementation, on which the Minister of International Trade has worked tirelessly with her EU and member states counterparts. These results also include the work before us in the House today to implement and help bring into force Bill C-31 to implement the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement.

The Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement is a modern, high-standard agreement that once fully implemented will provide new opportunities for Canadian businesses, deepen trade linkages, provide for increased transparency in regulatory matters and help reduce transaction costs for businesses.

This agreement will provide Canadian companies preferential market access for exports of goods, as well as preferential access to procurement opportunities in Ukraine at the central level. It also includes commitments on non-tariff measures that will help to ensure that market access gains are not undermined by unjustified trade barriers; trade facilitation designed to reduce red tape at the border; and protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights, which will allow Canadian IP right-holders to do business in the Ukrainian market with increased confidence.

The Canada-Ukraine FTA also includes provisions to address the needs of 21st century economies. An electronic commerce chapter obliges both Canada and Ukraine to not levy customs duties or other charges on digital products that are transmitted electronically, for example. In addition, the Canada-Ukraine FTA incorporates several key progressive trade elements to help ensure the economic gains are not achieved at the expense of important Canadian values and priorities.

The agreement contains robust provisions in the areas of labour, environment, transparency and anti-corruption, as well as protections for the government's right to regulate in the public interest. It also supports our foreign policy objectives by strengthening Ukraine's commercial ties to western nations and supporting Ukraine's economic reform efforts. This will complement the support we have committed through bilateral assistance and low interest loans to help Ukraine stabilize its economy.

I support the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement and all the benefits it would bring to Canadians and Ukrainians. I urge all hon. members to support the bill. I heard in the House this morning that all major parties seemed to support it, which is good news for both Canada and Ukraine.

• (1355)

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is important that all major parties agree about the importance of passing this trade deal and a deeper economic integration between Canada and Ukraine.

In my speech earlier, I mentioned a number of areas where I thought Canada could do more to help Ukraine. One is to support the Magnitsky Act and do more for human rights inside of Russia. Another is to return to a policy we had under the previous government of providing satellite images to support the Ukrainian military.

Does the member agree that the government can and should be doing more to support Ukraine, and what he thinks of those specific proposals?

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Mr. Speaker, there is a wide range of areas in which we can co-operate fruitfully with Ukraine, but the subject of today's debate is really focused on international trade. Of course international trade is one component of the whole series of relationships in which two countries can engage. Usually we start with trade and we expand those relationships. Trade brings countries together around commerce and trade, but those relationships can spawn so many other areas of co-operation.

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Lac-Saint-Louis will have three and a half minutes left in questions and comments when the House resumes debate on this motion.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*Translation*]

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Mr. Michel Boudrias (Terrebonne, BQ): Mr. Speaker, today, I am very proud to be a Quebecker. That is a feeling I know quite well, because we Quebeckers always stand our ground when what matters most to us comes under attack. Once again, Quebec stood up to the ambitions of the powerful Toronto banks. On behalf of the Bloc Québécois, the member for Joliette sounded the alarm with regard to Bill C-29, and we are extremely proud of that.

However, somebody somewhere had to get the message. Quebec's National Assembly got it. Consumer protection groups, the Chambre

Statements by Members

des notaires du Québec, legal experts, the media, and all of the opposition parties in Quebec and Ottawa got the message and passed it on.

The message that Quebeckers and the Quebec nation sent has been taken into account. People took notice. They presented an indomitable united front, something that does not occur often in the House. Solidarity is the foundation of our society, and it is no coincidence that, over the generations—

• (1400)

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The hon. member's time is up.

The hon. member for Scarborough Centre.

* * *

[*English*]

HELLENIC HOME FOR AGED

Mrs. Salma Zahid (Scarborough Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Hellenic Home for the Aged, an organization providing exceptional care and services to seniors in Scarborough Centre and across Toronto.

We are blessed with a large Greek community. The volunteers and staff at Hellenic Home offer a unique cultural setting that recognizes the customs and traditions of Greece, while providing for the needs of individuals from all communities.

In addition to seniors' housing and long-term care, Hellenic Home also offers a day program to benefit elderly adults living with disabilities or cognitive impairment.

I recently had the pleasure of attending Hellenic Home's 18th annual gala, with great entertainment from famed Greek recording artist Yiannis Katevas. The 550 guests raised over \$190,000 to support long-term care and improve the quality of life for local seniors.

Please join with me in congratulating Hellenic Home for the Aged for its service to our seniors.

* * *

BATTLE OF HONG KONG

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, 75 years ago today, Canada was fighting our first battle of the Second World War: the Battle of Hong Kong. Hong Kong is often forgotten because it began on the same day as Pearl Harbor. Hong Kong is Canada's Pearl Harbor, and we cannot forget.

During that 17-day battle, 1,975 Canadian soldiers of the Royal Rifles of Canada and the Winnipeg Grenadiers desperately defended Hong Kongers, including my father and his family, from a vicious attack: 290 were killed; 500 were wounded; those not killed were taken as prisoners of war and 264 of them died in prisoner of war camps, under horrific conditions.

Of the nearly 2,000 Canadians who went to Hong Kong, over 1,000 were killed or wounded, one of the highest casualty rates of the Second World War. These Canadians died so that my father and his family could live.

Statements by Members

We will never, ever forget.

* * *

AGINCOURT MALL

Mr. Arnold Chan (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased, today, to rise to recognize an important milestone in my riding of Scarborough—Agincourt. Agincourt Mall recently celebrated its 50th anniversary.

This mall, which was built in 1966, holds a rich history. Members may be wondering how my riding of Scarborough—Agincourt or the Agincourt Mall got their name. It started when a local merchant, John Hill, wanted to bring a local post office into the area. Through the assistance of a Quebec MP he did so, but on the condition that he actually give it a French name. He decided on the name “Agincourt”, which was the name of the French battlefield where King Henry V prevailed in 1415.

Over the years, the mall has changed a great deal, but it remains an important cornerstone of my riding, a place that I have frequented many times since I was a small child.

I want to personally congratulate Agincourt Mall on its 50th anniversary and its service to the community as an important community hub. I invite my colleagues to join with me in the celebration of this important milestone.

* * *

JOHN HOWARD SOCIETY

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, at Christmastime, Nanaimo—Ladysmith celebrates groups serving on some very tough front-line social issues, such as the John Howard Society, which helps prison inmates stop reoffending and falling back into addiction.

After its staff Christmas party, Nanaimo business Holdfast Metalworks Ltd. gifted The John Howard Society with \$5,000, saying:

... we have been impacted by the fantastic work the Society provides. We have two gentlemen employed at our shop that have been through your “Guthrie House” program. [They’re] exemplary employees. They are motivated, caring and compassionate people with well-honed skills in conflict resolution and clear communication. It is because of your programs that they are looked upon as role models in our shop and have changed many of our other employees’ attitudes in how they judge people that have had a less than typical past.

Thanks to the John Howard Society and to Holdfast Metalworks Ltd. for celebrating this work.

I wish my colleagues a merry Christmas.

* * *

• (1405)

HOUSING

Mr. Ramesh Sangha (Brampton Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I rise to speak about a special project in the heart of my riding. As a member of the human resources committee, we are actively working on a national poverty reduction strategy. The committee has discussed and researched the study in great detail, and will be travelling shortly from coast to coast to coast.

On behalf of our government, I am proud to have the opportunity to announce an investment of almost \$16 million for the affordable housing program. I had the pleasure of visiting the project, which included a state-of-the-art accessible affordable housing facility and indoor playground.

There is no reason for poverty. I shall not rest until the enemy is destroyed. I appeal to everyone today to let us join hands and take on our enemy.

* * *

MIDDLE EAST

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this weekend the world again saw darkness as three separate terrorist attacks rocked the Middle East and Turkey, leaving at least 117 dead and 226 wounded. In Cairo, parents and children were indiscriminately murdered while they worshipped, in a brutal violation of the peace and safety that the church represents. In Istanbul, 38 people were killed outside a sports stadium by an extremist faction. In Aden, soldiers who sacrifice to defend their families and their country were killed in a suicide bombing. Among those who were fortunate and survived these attacks, hundreds will face a lifetime of pain and hardship from their injuries.

We condemn these attacks as cowardly and despicable crimes. We stand with all nations that oppose the senseless taking of life. We expect that the anti-terror efforts of our NATO ally Turkey will not serve as an excuse for the continued persecution of minorities and abuse of human rights but that the Turkish government will respect the rule of law as it seeks to bring those responsible to justice.

* * *

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Marco Mendicino (Eglinton—Lawrence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last week the hon. Minister of Immigration announced the prioritizing of the family reunification program, which will reduce processing times so that Canadians and permanent residents can reunite with their loved ones faster than ever before. The minister has been working hard to combat these waiting times for applications. In 2016, processing times were reduced by 15% for in-Canada applications. The program will have a big impact for families right across the country, including for the people in my riding. Thanks to these changes, more families will be reunited in my riding by this time next year than would have otherwise.

[Translation]

We expect to be able to reunite 64,000 spouses, common-law partners, conjugal partners, and dependent children by the end of 2017, a number that exceeds the average for the past 10 years.

[English]

Family is very important to me. In fact, my two girls are here today. This is why I would like to congratulate the minister for this initiative that is working to reunite families and bring homes back together.

*Statements by Members***SUICIDE PREVENTION**

Ms. Filomena Tassi (Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, November 19 marked International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day, when people gathered to comfort one another and grapple with the aftermath of suicide by sharing stories of healing and support.

When I was a chaplain, I walked with youth haunted by dark emotions of emptiness, helplessness, anger, guilt, and sometimes the light of hopeful healing. That is why it is important to support the organizations that work to prevent suicide, like Hamilton's own MINA, Minds In Need of Attention.

Prevention is important but it is not enough. There is a quiet multitude of people who selflessly support those living with mental illness. Offering this support comes at a great cost to them: mental, physical, social, and often economic. We must find ways to support both those at risk for suicide and the people who give up so much to care for and help them.

* * *

CHRISTMAS CHEER

Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Christmas is a time for giving, and a time for families to join together to celebrate the birth of Christ.

• (1410)

[Translation]

The Vecchios will be very busy while our children are travelling home to St. Thomas.

[English]

Christmas Eve will be a night filled with *oliebollen* prepared by Pops, as Nana scurries around for hors d'oeuvres.

[Translation]

Many families will be at the First United Church for the candlelight service at 10 p.m.

[English]

It will be Reverend Roger Landell's last Christmas service.

On Christmas Day, the Martyn family will be busy with everyone looking for space to lay their heads for our traditional Christmas Day nap following our turkey dinner.

[Translation]

I know how lucky I am. However, it is important to think about those who are less fortunate.

[English]

Let us work together to give everyone a merry Christmas. Please support one of our Salvation Army kettle drives or help serve dinner at one of the local missions. Make Christmas great for everyone.

My family wishes everyone and their family a very merry Christmas and a healthy and prosperous new year.

[Translation]

LAVAL COMMUNITY SUPPORT CENTRE

Mrs. Eva Nassif (Vimy, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Christmastime gives us an opportunity to gather with family and friends and to reflect on how fortunate we are to live in Canada, where peace and freedom are part of everyday life.

So many people around the world are without food and shelter and live in fear and terror every day. That is why it is important to draw attention to the remarkable work of the exceptional individuals and organizations working so hard to make our world a better place by fighting poverty, disease, violence, and discrimination.

So many people and groups in the riding of Vimy dedicate themselves to these causes. I would name them all if I had the time, but today I would like to single out the Relais communautaire de Laval for all of the work it has done over more than 30 years to help Canadian families in crisis. Thank you for all that you do, and merry Christmas.

* * *

[English]

NORAD SANTA TRACKER

Mr. Anthony Rota (Nipissing—Timiskaming, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as Christmas day draws near, the men and women at North American Aerospace Defence Command, located at 22 Wing CFB North Bay, are preparing for the most important mission of the year. On December 24, NORAD personnel who keep watch over Canadian airspace will join their counterparts in Colorado Springs to track Santa Claus as he travels around the globe.

[Translation]

In North Bay, NORAD tracks Santa Claus and dispatches fighter jets to escort his sleigh when it enters Canadian airspace.

[English]

I encourage all Canadians, young and old, to visit noradsanta.org to track Santa's progress on Christmas eve.

On behalf of all hon. members, I would like to salute the personnel at 22 Wing CFB North Bay for their service to this country and for bringing a little bit of magic to us all.

Merry Christmas to you, Mr. Speaker, to all hon. members, and to all Canadians.

[Translation]

Merry Christmas.

*Statements by Members**[English]***GOVERNOR GENERAL'S AWARD**

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to honour 10 recipients from my riding who received the Governor General's Award in 2016. Five decorations for bravery were presented to Michael Clayton Heide, Wilbert Kent, Robert Reid, Thomas Blair, and Leading Air Cadet Shannon Young. Rescuing people from drowning, burning vehicles, or an armed intruder, these individuals all showed great courage and a willingness to risk their own lives to save another's.

The Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers was awarded to Dennis Robertson, while the Caring Canadian Awards were presented to Lori Fry and Linda and Paul Blanchet. These individuals were recognized as exceptional volunteers who have made significant and sustained contributions to their respective causes.

Finally, the Meritorious Service Award was dedicated to Gordon Gore. Kamloops will always be thankful to Gordon for sharing with us his love of science, passion for education, and his dedication to the Big Little Science Centre.

To these 10 recipients, their actions inspire our nation and command our deepest gratitude.

* * *

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Mr. Peter Schiefke (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I rise in the House to acknowledge the important work of several community organizations and their volunteers who are providing help to families in need this holiday season.

[Translation]

Community organizations in my region make it possible for these families, these men and women, to enjoy the magic of the holidays.

Uppermost in my mind is the great work done by Jean-Philippe Giroux, the executive director of Operation Red Nose in Vaudreuil—Soulanges, Carol Laws of Le Pont Bridging, Francine Plamondon of the volunteer centre L'Actuel, Lynne Kershaw of Meals on Wheels, various local food drives, and all the dedicated volunteers who give their time to these organizations.

Once again, I would like to congratulate them for their generosity and dedication. They make Vaudreuil—Soulanges a good place to live.

Merry Christmas!

* * *

● (1415)

NEW YEAR'S EVE IN LA SARRÉ

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, before we leave for the holidays, I would like to take the time to invite you and your gang, and all Canadians, to a wicked New Year's Eve party.

In fact, everyone is invited to attend a traditional Canadian New Year's Eve celebration at the Nicol Auto arena in La Sarre.

Saddle your horses and get dressed up because there will be a lot of people at mass. One hundred years is a really big deal.

Everyone should come on down and grab a seat because our fiddlers and harmonica players will be providing the music, and there could be some good tunes from our surprise guests.

Mr. Beaulieu, a really nice guy, will also be regaling us with his stories.

When the time comes to bring in the new year, a fancy cocktail will be served. Naturally, it is not a good idea to get tipsy because the reverend will not be very far away.

If you happen to miss this party, all is not lost. The 100th anniversary celebrations will continue in the summer of 2017.

* * *

*[English]***THE AGA KHAN**

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today marks the 80th birthday of His Highness the Aga Khan, the spiritual leader of 15 million Ismaili Muslims. In leading his community, the Aga Khan has emphasized pluralism and tolerance, reason and dialogue, and the importance of humanitarian work.

He has a strong connection to Canada, having been named an honorary Canadian citizen in the last Parliament and also having played hockey in his younger years. His development foundation has partnered with Canada, in particular with our Office of Religious Freedom.

When he addressed Parliament two and a half years ago, he encouraged MPs to appreciate the connection between faith, politics, and humanitarian work. He said:

The role of the Ismaili imam is a spiritual one. His authority is that of religious interpretation. It is not a political role.... At the same time...the spiritual and material worlds are inextricably connected. Faith does not remove...from daily practical matters in family life, in business, and in community affairs. Faith, rather, is a force that should deepen our concern for our worldly habitat, for embracing its challenges, and for improving the quality of human life.

I wish him a happy birthday.

* * *

CHRISTMAS PARADES

Mr. Mike Bossio (Hastings—Lennox and Addington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to rise in the House today to spread a little holiday cheer. Over the past weeks, I have had the pleasure of marching in not one, not two, but 11 Santa Claus parades, and that is not even all of them.

Oral Questions

From Maynooth, near the edge of Algonquin Park, to Amherstview, along the shores of the St Lawrence, to the heartland of Highway 7 in Marmora, Madoc, Tweed, and up to Northbrook in the Addington Highlands, my wife and I joined with many volunteers to join in the celebrations and met with families throughout my riding. I know that most urban MPs have the opportunity to march in maybe one or two parades, and that is okay, but I can assure everyone that there is no better place to be than in rural Canada at this time of year.

My family and I wish all Canadians a very merry Christmas and all the best in 2017.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[*Translation*]

ETHICS

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday was a disappointing day for Canadians. They saw their Prime Minister brag about being the target of illegal lobbying activities at Liberal Party fundraisers. Canadians watched him admit to behaviour that is unworthy of his position. They heard the message he was sending: the rules do not apply to him.

Does the Prime Minister realize that he is not above the law? Will he finally put an end to his fundraising activities involving privileged access?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians know that, no matter where I am or who I am speaking to, I always talk about our challenge, which is creating growth for the middle class, I talk about our priority of raising taxes on the wealthiest 1% so we could lower them for the middle class, and I talk about the fact that we are no longer sending child benefit cheques to wealthy families so we can give more to the families that actually need it.

We are always talking about our priority, which is to create growth for the middle class. That is what motivates us every day.

[*English*]

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that the Prime Minister has changed his talking points about following the rules, after what he said yesterday.

Let me remind the Prime Minister that on the day he was sworn in, he said that he was committed to the highest ethical standards. Now that has become a joke.

My question for the Prime Minister is simple. What happened? When did money become more important than the integrity of his office?

• (1420)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians know that I say the same thing in any given context. I am always talking about our priority of creating growth for the middle class, our priority of raising taxes on the wealthiest 1% so we could lower them on the middle class, and that we are ending the sending of child benefit cheques to wealthy families so we can give more to the families who actually need them.

Canadians know that we are focused on creating growth for the middle class and we always follow the rules.

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what happened yesterday was not just disappointing for Canadians. It was embarrassing for the Prime Minister. He actually admitted to reporters to being illegally lobbied at fundraisers for the Liberal Party of Canada, and Canadians had to watch him admit to behaviour that brings disrepute to his office. They also saw the message that he was sending, that the rules do not apply to him.

Does the Prime Minister understand that he is not above the law, that he especially is not above the law, and that he should end these cash for access fundraisers?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, wherever I go across the country I hear from Canadians who are pleased that we are raising taxes on the wealthiest 1% so we can lower them on the middle class. They are pleased to hear that we have stopped sending child benefit cheques to the wealthiest families so we can do more for the families who need it. That approach is going to lift 40% of kids living in poverty out of poverty. It will raise hundreds of thousands of kids out of poverty.

That is our priority. That is what we talk about wherever we go.

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, no one actually believes the Prime Minister on this issue anymore.

Let us talk about priorities, because how a prime minister spends his or her time says a lot about the person. By attending countless cash for access fundraising events for the Liberal Party, the Prime Minister is showing his true priorities to Canadians and is setting a low standard for the people around him. Canadians now think the Prime Minister can be bought, and he has already done enough damage to his office.

When is the Prime Minister going to stop this cash for access fundraising? Today?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians well know that we raised taxes on the wealthiest 1% so we could lower them for the middle class, which, quite frankly, the Conservative Party voted against to protect its friends.

The fact is that raising taxes on the wealthiest 1% so we could lower them for the middle class, ending child benefit cheques to wealthy families so we can give more to the families who need it, are things this government is focused on doing. This is what we will continue to make our priority.

Oral Questions

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, speaking of following the rules, Canada's political finance rules are clear: foreign powers cannot donate or buy access. But foreign donors from China have now been exposed as using the Trudeau Foundation as a back channel way to make donations and gain influence with the Prime Minister. Everybody knows they are not writing these cheques out of the goodness of their hearts, because they have only started doing it since that member became the Prime Minister to buy access to him.

Will the Prime Minister do the right thing and instruct the Trudeau Foundation to stop this practice immediately?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Trudeau Foundation is an independent foundation established in the memory of my father, with which I ceased to have any engagement shortly after having become leader of the Liberal Party. It is an excellent foundation that does good work—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. I know that members are aware of the event coming in a week or two, and they want to be on their best behaviour, so let us allow the right hon. Prime Minister to finish his answer.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, as an independent foundation with which I have no involvement, the Trudeau Foundation does good work to advance the cause of the social sciences and humanities in a non-partisan way.

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, let me read what the Liberals have said about cash for access fundraising: “at events like this, government business is not discussed”, from his minister; any individual “who wishes to initiate a policy discussion is immediately redirected to instead make an appointment”, from the Liberal Party; and finally, from himself, “[I] listen broadly...and [I] make the right decisions based on what's best for Canada”.

One of these quotes is not like the others. Can the Prime Minister tell us who is telling the truth?

• (1425)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as Canadians well know, this government listens to all Canadians in different contexts; but the fact is that one of the things we do is say the same things regardless of the context we are in.

We point out that we raised taxes on the wealthiest 1%, so we could lower them for the middle class. We point out that we have stopped sending Canada child benefits to wealthy families, so that we can do more for the families who need it, which will reduce child poverty by 40% and lift hundreds of thousands of kids out of poverty. Those are priorities, and we talk about them in every given context.

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it seems that “just watch me” has become just trust me; and on this, Canadians just do not.

[*Translation*]

I am sure that the Prime Minister had no intention of writing a piece of fiction when he drafted his so-called new ethics rules for the government. These rules were supposed to be solid, rules that the

Liberal government was meant to follow, and we want to help with that.

We want to know if the Prime Minister will support the NDP bill to give teeth to his rules?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, wherever I go and whomever I talk to, I always say the same thing, that our priority is to create growth for the middle class by raising taxes on the wealthiest 1% so we can lower taxes for the middle class, so that we can send Canada child benefits to families who need it and stop sending them to wealthy families. Those are our priorities and that is what we have been working on for the past year. That is what we talk about in every given context.

* * *

[*English*]

JUSTICE

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the problem with saying that he listens but is not influenced is that it reminds people of someone who said that he smoked pot and did not inhale. Nobody believes it.

Speaking of that, to get elected, the Prime Minister loved to say that the war on drugs is not working; but today's Liberal cannabis report says nothing about decriminalizing possession. Before he can say that his number one priority is to protect young Canadians, can the Prime Minister tell us how handing out criminal convictions and criminal records to young Canadians is somehow supposed to protect them?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have been very clear since the very beginning that our plan to control and regulate the sale of cannabis has two goals. One goal is to keep it out of the hands of our kids. Right now, kids have easy access to cannabis across this country; we need to change that. The second goal is to remove the source of significant revenue to criminal organizations and street gangs who benefit from the illicit trade of cannabis.

Those are our priorities. That is what we are focused on. Until we change the laws, the laws stand.

* * *

STEEL INDUSTRY

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, during the last election, the Prime Minister promised that, if elected, he would help protect the workers and pensioners of insolvent U.S. Steel. Yet here we are in the midst of a historic purchase agreement of U.S. Steel, where pension and benefits cuts are on the line, and the Prime Minister has been missing in action. What does the Prime Minister intend to do for a retired Stelco worker who spent 40 years at a blast furnace and stands to lose his health benefits?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we understand how difficult the situation is for many workers across this country and, indeed, the workers at the Stelco plant. That is why we are focused on working with them to try to develop solutions. We are engaged, we are aware of this challenge, and it is one that we are working with them on.

* * *

[Translation]

ETHICS

Hon. Denis Lebel (Lac-Saint-Jean, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after weeks of questions, yesterday, the Prime Minister finally admitted that he had discussed government business at fundraising events. Every time the Prime Minister accepts a \$1,500 donation for his party, he engages in behaviour that is unworthy of the position of Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister should be above all that and should never give the impression that people can buy favours from the government. Is the Prime Minister aware of the impact this has and will he stop behaving this way?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have always said that we would listen to all Canadians across the country, and we promised that we would work on issues that are important to them. When it comes time to make decisions, we are guided by a very important principle: the best interests of middle-class Canadians.

That is the approach that we took when we reduced taxes for the middle class, when we created the Canada child benefit, and when we enhanced the Canada pension plan. We are going to continue to work for Canadians.

• (1430)

Hon. Denis Lebel (Lac-Saint-Jean, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the only full-time position they have created since coming to power is probably the one held by the person responsible for rewriting all of their messaging since yesterday because they completely changed their response.

When one is in government, one must handle state affairs with utmost dignity. I know that the Prime Minister wants to do that, but I am told that yesterday, the government admitted to discussing state business during these events. Meeting people and talking to them is one thing, but getting them to pay \$1,500 for the privilege is an ethical problem. This has to stop, and the government has to stop talking government business during party activities.

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member is very well aware that the fundraising rules are among the strictest in the country. The rules state that only Canadians can donate to Canadian parties. We will continue to follow the rules. When one follows the rules, there is no conflict of interest.

[English]

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we now know there is no one over at the Privy Council Office enforcing the rules set out in the Prime Minister's open and

accountable government document. We also know that the vast majority of Canadians oppose these unethical and shady cash for access events that the Prime Minister and his cabinet are hosting. We even know that members of his own caucus are afraid to identify themselves when they speak about their disapproval of these very same events.

When will the Prime Minister stop digging in the hole he has created for himself and end these unethical cash for access events?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what the member clearly does not understand is that the government is committed to working with Canadians. Our government is committed to engaging and listening to Canadians. When our government makes decisions, there is only one thing we consider: what is in the best interest of middle-class Canadians. Those are the people we will continue to work for. Those are the people we work very hard for, and I encourage all members of this place: let us work harder together.

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is actually insulting and, frankly, embarrassing that the House leader has to answer these questions with the same old, tired talking points. She is forced to do the dirty work for her leader, who most of the time cannot even be bothered to show up and answer these questions himself in the House. So the Liberal caucus—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. I know the member does not want to bring disorder into the House, and he knows that members cannot draw attention to the presence or absence at any time of another member, so I would ask him to come to his question.

Mr. Blaine Calkins: Mr. Speaker, I think if you check the record, you will find I did no such thing.

The Liberal caucus knows—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: The hon. opposition House leader.

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after months of denials, the Prime Minister finally admitted what everyone knows to be true, that he discusses government business at his Liberal cash for access fundraisers.

Now that he has admitted to breaking the rules, will his ministers do the same? Will the justice minister tell us what government business she discussed with lawyers at the fundraiser last April? Maybe the finance minister can tell us what fiscal policy he discussed with bankers at the Liberal cash for access event in August. Can they please all get their stories straight, and can they please admit they all broke the rules?

Oral Questions

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what every member of our government will say is, yes, we are engaging with Canadians. We are listening to Canadians, and everywhere we go we will tell Canadians that we are working hard for middle-class Canadians and those working hard to join them. That is why we lowered taxes on middle-class Canadians. That is why we increased taxes on the 1% of wealthiest Canadians. That is why we are supporting and helping families with children that need it the most; and we will continue to do the good work we are doing.

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard said:

...our colleague knows very well that at events like this, government business is not discussed.

We all know now that this is completely false. Was the fisheries minister told by the Prime Minister to mislead Canadians? How long will Liberal ministers go along with the Prime Minister's corrupt and deceptive behaviour?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians know very well that this government is working very hard for middle-class Canadians and those working hard to join them.

We will continue to engage and listen to Canadians. That is why we are consulting with them. That is the work we will continue to do when we are making decisions, because we know that we need to respond to the very real challenges that Canadians are facing.

* * *

●(1435)

[Translation]

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP): Mr. Speaker, according to the minister of pipelines, the energy east assessment can resume once three new commissioners are appointed to the National Energy Board, the NEB.

What about the fact that the recusal of former board members undermined the process, that the Prime Minister promised the NEB a new process, that he approved Kinder Morgan with Stephen Harper's flawed process, and that he supports energy east?

Quebeckers deserve better than the 40 Liberal MPs who have forgotten Quebec's motto, *Je me souviens*, I remember.

Why does the minister not ask the Prime Minister to keep his promises?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, all I can say is that there is no minister by that name in this House.

QUEBEC

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the fall session is winding down and that is the only good news for the Liberal government, because it has been a tough road.

The Liberals are already embroiled in scandal and have been notably absent from files that are important to Quebeckers.

Do members hear that? Let's listen closely.

That is the sound of silence coming from the 40 Liberal members from Quebec.

Nothing for Bombardier. Nothing for the forestry. Nothing for SMEs. Peanuts for the cheese factories, and we have yet to hear anything about public transit.

What exactly are the Liberal members from Quebec doing? Where are they hiding?

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his restraint.

I want to be very clear that the 40 MPs from Quebec, the Prime Minister, six ministers, and 33 members, are here to advance the interests of Quebec. That is what we have been doing since day one and that is what we will continue to do until the end.

* * *

TAXATION

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister finally came clean yesterday. I now encourage him to come clean on something else, since the Prime Minister is so imaginative when it comes to finding new ways to tax Canadian workers.

He literally created a new charge on Canadians' pension plans. He also created the new Liberal carbon tax, the Liberal health insurance tax, and the Liberal dental care tax. The Prime Minister really is coming up with all kinds of creative ways to impose more tax on Canadians.

Is the Prime Minister ready to invent a tax on broken promises?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are the government that reduced taxes for the middle class. That is the first thing we did.

We also introduced the Canada child benefit, which helps nine out of ten families by leaving more money in their pockets. The other parties were against that; they were against those cuts and against the Canada child benefit. We are confident that our measures are going to help the middle class.

[English]

Hon. Peter Van Loan (York—Simcoe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today is one of those days when Liberals are trying to think up new ways to tax Canadians. By that, I mean a day ending in the letter y.

That has Canadians asking why. Why is the Liberal innovation agenda now being led by a new tax on hard-pressed middle-class Canadians for their Internet use? Last week it was a carbon tax on everything. This comes after tax hikes on textbooks, children's sports, music lessons, income taxes, and more.

Why do the Liberals now want to tax Canadians more just to use the Internet? Why is their Christmas gift to Canadians just sacks full of tax?

Hon. Navdeep Bains (Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we believe that the Internet is a key part of our innovation agenda that will focus on Canadian middle-class families, that will focus on the rural and urban digital divide, and that will focus on creating jobs and opportunities from coast to coast to coast.

We recognize that innovation is the key engine of our growth, and we are going to remain focused on investing in people, new technologies, and companies, because that is what is good for the Canadian economy.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Postmedia revealed this week that the government was considering a new tax on health and dental plans that could hit 13.5 million hard-working Canadians. Such a tax might cause employers to drop the plans altogether, making it impossible for middle-class families to see a dentist or a psychologist. Only the super-rich, those who can afford Liberal fundraisers, would have that luxury.

Is this government so broke that it needs to tax Canadians out of their health plans?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we would like to be very clear in the House. We first introduced a reduction in taxes on middle-class Canadians. That was an important first measure. Then we moved forward to help nine out of 10 families with children with, on average, \$2,300 more money, without paying taxes on that.

We are ensuring that our tax system is efficient, that it is fair and that Canadians can understand it. We will move forward with fair measures that will ensure middle-class Canadians are doing better in future than they are doing today.

• (1440)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, by middle-class tax cut, he means they gave \$800 in tax relief to someone earning \$150,000 a year, like a Liberal MP, and zero to someone earning \$45,000 a year. Now that same person has to pay Liberal carbon taxes, Liberal payroll taxes. Those carbon taxes will raise the price of the very goods on which the lowest income people need to spend a disproportionately large amount of their income.

Why is the government so determined to hurt most those with the least?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): In fact, Mr. Speaker, we have put in measures that will help Canadians along all sectors of the income stream.

For that family, the \$45,000 that the hon. member mentioned, if it has children, that family is significantly better off. It is better off in the time when it is raising its children, being able to pay for the things it needs in its family life on a day-to-day basis.

Oral Questions

We will continue to focus on how we can help middle-class Canadians and on how we can help families to raise their children. That is the mission we are on in this government.

* * *

[Translation]

SOFTWOOD LUMBER

Ms. Karine Trudel (Jonquière, NDP): Mr. Speaker, once again, the government is not there for Quebec.

There is no softwood lumber agreement and no plan B. Our workers are going to pay the price as plants close, jobs are lost, and the regional economy weakens.

The Government of Quebec is grabbing the bull by the horns and announcing loan guarantees. The federal government should take its responsibilities seriously once and for all.

Quebec already has a plan B. Is the minister waiting for hell to freeze over?

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are prepared for any eventuality and we will continue to work with the Canadian forestry industry. The Minister of International Trade and I had a very productive meeting with our Quebec counterparts last week, and we will continue to work with them and our provincial and territorial colleagues.

* * *

[English]

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today on the Hill we are joined by laid off port workers who came all the way from Churchill to fight for our port. The closure of the port is devastating for Churchill and for our north. What is the Liberal record? The Liberals privatized it and are doing nothing to re-open it.

This is about standing up for our country. When will the Prime Minister stand up to the American billionaire who is holding Churchill and our north for ransom. When will he stand up for Churchill, for our north and for Canada?

Hon. Navdeep Bains (Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is a very important file. That is why I am working with my colleagues from Manitoba.

Oral Questions

I visited Churchill. I had an opportunity to meet with the northern delegation and have a town hall session with members of the community to hear their concerns, and put forward a plan going forward. That plan includes \$4.6 million for regional economic development. We are focusing on tourism, Arctic research. We are looking at ways to diversify the economy, create jobs and opportunities.

Churchill is important for the north and it is important for Canada. Our government is committed to that region.

* * *

[Translation]

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Mr. Rémi Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, consumers in my riding and across Quebec and Canada want to be properly protected.

Yesterday, the Minister of Finance announced that he was going to ask the Commissioner of the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada to engage with stakeholders and his provincial and territorial counterparts in order to examine and assess best practices in consumer protection.

Could the minister explain to the House the reason for that decision?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, consumer protection was a key component of our plan to support the middle class and promote economic growth.

That being said, we have listened to Quebecers' concerns about their level of protection. That is why I asked the leader of the government in the Senate to remove division 5 of Bill C-29 so that we can reintroduce it following consultations on how to maintain a comprehensive and effective federal financial consumer protection framework.

* * *

• (1445)

[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there is no decision that bears more gravity than putting Canadian troops in harm's way. It is a Canadian tradition that such a decision is debated and voted on in the House. It is not only Canadian tradition; it is what every parliamentary democracy does.

The Dutch government tabled a 14-page report in its parliament detailing the duration and size of its value mission, its goals, risks, costs, and the rules of engagement.

Will the Liberals submit their proposed UN mission to Parliament for a full debate and vote before committing our troops to the African mission?

Hon. Stéphane Dion (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of things that my colleague has said that are completely true. It is a very serious decision. The government is considering it very seriously. We are working with our allies to see in which way Canada will fulfill its responsibility for peace in the

world. We are also considering in which way we will engage Parliament about it.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the answer that the Minister of Foreign Affairs gave proves the need for a debate and a vote before we send our soldiers into the mess in Mali to keep a non-existent peace.

Before deploying troops, the Netherlands ensures that there is a national consensus about the mission. No consensus, no mission. In the Netherlands, the government is open and transparent about its troops' participation in missions. A letter detailing all of the finer points of the mission is sent to Parliament, and there is a debate.

Will the Liberals pledge to be just as transparent?

Hon. Stéphane Dion (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the reason we deploy peacekeepers is that peace is not secure. We do not go to places that are peaceful. We go to places where peace is in jeopardy and must be kept with courage and resolve, as Canada has always done. We will live up to our history and our role as international peacekeepers.

[English]

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals always say “just trust us”, but Canadians are not buying it. Canadians deserve to know where our troops are being sent, what drugs they will be prescribed while they are there, what the exit strategy is, and how this mission is in Canada's national interest.

Before sending their troops to Mali, the Dutch government outlined this important information to its parliament. This is exactly the type of information the Liberals demanded when they were in opposition.

When will the minister do the right thing and be honest with Canadians about this mission?

Hon. Stéphane Dion (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Certainly, Mr. Speaker, the practice of this government is to always be open and frank with Canadians. On such a matter of this importance, my colleague can be assured that we will communicate to Canadians in the proper way and we will communicate to the House with a very open mind and with a lot of transparency. This is a very serious decision that we need to take to honour Canada's history in the fight for peace everywhere in the world.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government could take a lesson from the Dutch before sending our soldiers into theatre in the most dangerous UN mission on the planet.

Oral Questions

More than 106 peacekeepers have been killed in Mali. The Senate Standing Committee on National Security and Defence is calling on the government to clearly define the size of the mission, its goals, the risks involved, the costs, and the rules of engagement, and to ensure that it has multi-party support, before it deploys any troops.

Will the Liberal government follow the Senate's wise recommendations?

Hon. Stéphane Dion (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are putting thoughtful consideration into what the Senate and the opposition have to say about this important mission.

My hon. colleague will understand that I cannot announce ahead of time something that the government will announce in due course. However, we will do so with maximum transparency, since this is an important decision that will honour Canada's role in global peacekeeping efforts.

* * *

[English]

STEEL INDUSTRY

Mr. Scott Duvall (Hamilton Mountain, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Prime Minister really knows what is going on with U.S. Steel from the answer he gave earlier.

During the campaign, the Liberals promised U.S. Steel employees and retirees that employers must honour commitments and “pensioners must be included in any consultation and planning process”. Today, Hamilton steelworkers are forced to come to Ottawa to once again ask the government to come to the table. The impending sale of U.S. Steel gives no guarantees that pensions, health benefits, and wages will be protected. Hamiltonians are asking, what is wrong with the government?

With Hamilton steelworkers in the room, why is the government refusing to help the 20,000-plus who stand to be hurt by this deal?

• (1450)

Hon. Navdeep Bains (Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the member knows, our government recognizes Canadian steel producers to be world-class. That is why we are engaged on this file. It is very important to our manufacturing sector and our innovation agenda going forward.

The member knows the proceedings are still before the courts, but I hope for a fair and successful resolution. We are committed to the region and to the sector. We are very much engaged and we are working very closely with the member for Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, the member for Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, and the member for Burlington.

We will continue to work on this file, work with the steelworkers, and work with the company to find a good solution.

Mr. David Christopherson: No, no, that's all talk. You're not doing it.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: The member for Hamilton Centre will come to order.

Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP): Mr. Speaker, again, no answer from Liberals for working Canadians. When will the government start standing up for Canadian steel jobs?

China is unfairly dumping steel at prices that undercut and hurt Canadian producers. Our steel industry is urging the government to strengthen Canada's trade remedy rules. Instead, the Liberals are considering giving China market economy status, which will make it even harder for our steel producers to compete.

Why are the Liberals letting China off the hook and when will the government get serious about tackling unfair steel dumping?

Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, steel dumping is a major concern for Canada. The minister is working with her colleagues, the ministers of Finance and Innovation, to support Canadian jobs and competitiveness.

The minister met with the CEOs of Canada's steel companies, through the Canadian Steel Producers Association, in early June to discuss their concern. She has met with workers. She has also worked on the issue while in Europe this month.

As chair of the Canada-U.S. committee in cabinet, the minister is working with our American counterparts to address the issue of over capacity.

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JUSTICE

Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, some of the marijuana task force recommendations directly contradict the Prime Minister's claims about keeping pot out of the hands of young people. The task force recommended a legal age of 18 to buy marijuana. This goes against the Canadian Medical Association's recommended age limit of 21, and the scientific evidence that marijuana use can have serious effects on the brain up to the age of 25.

Are the Liberals going to make a political decision or an evidence-based decision?

Hon. Jane Philpott (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we were very pleased this morning that the cannabis task force presented its report. We look forward to reviewing its recommendations in full detail. We know this task force was well led by the Hon. Anne McLellan, that the experts on the task force heard from Canadians across the country, including those who understood the evidence around all of the questions that were put to this group.

We look forward to introducing legislation in the spring, which will legalize, regulate, and restrict access to cannabis.

[Translation]

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this morning we learned that the report on the legalization of marijuana recommends authorizing personal cultivation at home.

Oral Questions

Can a minister explain to us how the government plans to prevent children from having access to marijuana if people can grow it at home? Who is going to police that, the municipalities, provincial governments, the federal government, or the police?

Since the report was released, we have been seeing red flags all over the place.

Is anyone over on that side of the House finally going to give us some answers to these questions?

[English]

Hon. Jody Wilson-Raybould (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to stand in the House to acknowledge receipt of the task force report, the substantive amount of work that it did, and also to acknowledge my parliamentary secretary, the member for Scarborough Southwest, for his work.

We look forward to reviewing the report in a comprehensive manner, with my colleagues from public safety and health, to ensure that we introduce legislation in the spring of 2017 to legalize, strictly regulate, and restrict access of marijuana.

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HEALTH

Ms. Rachael Harder (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our democracy is founded on the principle that people's voices matter. They get to have a say. The need to consult and gain social licence is something about which the Liberals constantly boast. However, yesterday the health minister announced that the Liberals were gutting the community consultation requirements when it came to heroin injection sites.

Families deserve to have a voice. Schools deserve to have a voice. Small businesses deserve to have a voice. Why have the Liberals silenced the voice of local communities when it comes to implementing safe injection sites?

• (1455)

Hon. Jane Philpott (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is well aware that Canada is facing a serious public health crisis and the hundreds of Canadians who have had accidental overdose deaths this year. We were pleased yesterday to introduce the new Canadian drugs and substances strategy, which will save the lives of Canadians. It will take a harm reduction approach to this serious public health problem. We will recognize the wisdom of the Supreme Court, which gave us guidance as to the factors that had to be taken into consideration, including making sure that communities were appropriately consulted on these matters.

Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada is facing a public health crisis of tragic proportion. In B.C. alone there were 700 deaths this year from fentanyl-laced opioids, and 1,100 across the country. In B.C. and Alberta, thousands are treated, near death, in emergency rooms. Most affected are IV-drug users, youth, those who use recreational drugs, and first responders who are at risk from this high-potency fentanyl.

Can the Minister of Health tell us what she is doing now to save lives, and what tools and resources will she employ to prevent more deaths?

Hon. Jane Philpott (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Vancouver Centre for her outstanding advocacy on this very issue.

We have introduced an approach to drug policy in this country that is comprehensive, collaborative, compassionate, and evidence-based. We recently held an opioid summit and conference, at which 42 organizations made commitments as to what they were going to do to address this very crisis. Yesterday, I was very pleased to introduce the Canadian drugs and substances strategy, which will put control of that strategy into the hands of the minister of health, where it belongs.

We will add harm reduction as a pillar into our response, and we will make sure that Canadians—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Calgary Nose Hill.

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IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it has been nearly two months since the House passed a motion to bring Yazidi women and girls to Canada. Today, the European Parliament honoured Nadia Murad for her work on this particular issue.

After countless hours of committee study and further follow-up, the government has still not produced a number as to how many of these women it is willing to bring to Canada. NGOs and departments are waiting for this information.

Therefore, I have a very simple question that I hope the minister will answer prior to Christmas break. I hope he will do it right now. How many Yazidi women and girls is the government going to bring to Canada?

Hon. John McCallum (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have been working very actively on a two-part strategy. We will bring Yazidi people, women and girls, from Turkey and Lebanon. We have also sent groups of officials into Iraq to consider, and we will bring them from that country as well. The member should understand this is an extremely dangerous part of the world, and so we cannot release the details of our plan, but we are committed to do it and to do it on time.

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THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, indigenous communities in northern Alberta are calling for action on toxic contamination of their traditional foods. Repeated studies have revealed that rising levels of toxins emitted by oil sands operations are contaminating the Athabasca River and Wood Buffalo National Park, despite the mandatory duty of the federal health minister to act on evidence that toxins may impact health.

All that the previous Conservative government did was initiate attacks on a brave doctor who revealed his concerns. Will the current health minister finally act?

Oral Questions

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for her advocacy on this issue.

We are working together, the health minister and I, in addressing concerns in relation to toxins. We take this file very seriously and will continue to act.

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INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this morning I was very pleased to participate in an announcement at the University of Ottawa, where our government committed over \$51 million to support the creation of a new state-of-the-art science and technology complex. This will be a multi-disciplinary innovation hub that will support the entrepreneurship activities of students and researchers.

Can the minister please update the House on how investments such as this at the University of Ottawa are supporting economic growth, spurring innovation, and creating jobs?

Hon. Navdeep Bains (Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Ottawa South for his hard work in the region and for promoting innovation.

As the member knows, the investment at the University of Ottawa is part of an overall \$2 billion allocation that we have for strategic investments for our universities and colleges, which will leverage, with the provinces, territories, and institutions, \$4.8 billion.

This is about innovation. Innovation is about better jobs, better opportunities, better living standards, and a better future for our children and grandchildren. As the Prime Minister says, better is always possible.

* * *

● (1500)

HEALTH

Hon. Mike Lake (Edmonton—Wetaskiwin, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in our balanced budget of 2015, Prime Minister Harper and finance minister Joe Oliver established an expert working group tasked with the creation of a Canadian autism partnership to support those living with autism, their families, and caregivers. The current leader of the opposition, who was then health minister, officially launched the working group that summer. This world-leading team of Canadians has completed its work and reported back to the Liberal health minister with a business plan and a request for support.

Can Canadians living with autism and their families count on the minister's support for this important initiative?

Hon. Jane Philpott (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for his very important work on this matter.

He certainly knows that autism spectrum disorder has a significant and lifelong impact on individuals and their families. We have made significant investments in this area, for instance, through the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. The government

has invested more than \$27 million on direct research related to autism in the last five years.

We are committed to working with all partners to help Canadians with disabilities to participate in our society, including work with the Canadian Autism Spectrum Disorders Alliance. They bring the perspective of those living with autism and their families.

I have received the proposal indicated by the member, to establish a Canadian—

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

* * *

[*Translation*]

POLITICAL PARTY FINANCING

Mr. Rhéal Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois introduced a bill in the House to clean up political party financing. It restores public funding and lowers the contribution limit. This goes beyond ethics. It is about trust in democracy. Democracy loses when there is an appearance of cronyism with the elite and it also loses when the public is under the impression that major donors are controlling their government.

The public wants to know: Will the government vote in favour of our bill, yes or no?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows full well that the rules governing political financing are among the strictest in the country. We will continue to follow the rules. The Chief Electoral Officer also said that Canada's political financing laws are among the most advanced and strict and transparent in the world.

Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, throughout the session, the government has provided us with a myriad of opportunities to criticize its \$1,500 cocktail parties offering privileged access to the Prime Minister.

In the report of the Special Committee on Electoral Reform, Jean-Pierre Kingsley proposed returning to the per-vote subsidy system of party financing in order to make things fair. The Bloc Québécois introduced a bill that would do just that. It is a balanced bill that eliminates sectoral financing and the undue influence of major donors.

What is the government going to do? Will it play back its prerecorded message about having the strictest rules or will it restore the per-vote subsidy system of party financing?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, far from a prerecorded message, these are facts that I am sharing with members of the House and Canadians.

Our government will continue to consult and engage with Canadians so that we can respond to the real challenges they are facing.

Mr. Simon Marcell: Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance urged me to read the provisions of Bill C-29. He said:

Government Orders

He might want to know what he is talking about before asking a question. I can tell him very clearly that, in Marcotte, the Supreme Court asked us to clarify consumer protection provisions.

I read the Marcotte ruling. The court does not call on the federal government to do anything; rather, it requires the banks to respect Quebec and Quebec laws. In fact—

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member for Mirabel for raising this point of order; however, this is a matter of debate.

The hon. member for Vancouver Kingsway, also on a point of order.

[English]

Mr. Don Davies: Mr. Speaker, I am seeking unanimous consent for a very urgent motion. I think all members of the House know that the opioid crisis is a national health emergency taking the lives of Canadians on a daily basis.

Although it has taken a year, the government has tabled a bill that moves us in the right direction by, among other things, repealing the previous government's Bill C-2. The NDP believes there is a critical and irrefutable need to get this bill passed as soon as possible. It will save lives. Therefore, I am asking for unanimous consent for the following motion.

I move that, notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practice of the House, Bill C-37, an act to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act and to make related amendments to other acts shall be deemed to have been read a second time and referred to committee of the whole, deemed considered in committee of the whole, deemed reported without amendment, deemed concurred in at report stage, and deemed read a third time and passed.

• (1505)

The Speaker: Does the hon. member have the unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

Some hon. members:No.

The Speaker: There is no consent.

The hon. member for Red Deer—Lacombe is rising on a point of order.

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTIONS

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my point of order is arising out of question period in regard to the supplementary question I was asking. If you check the record, and if you will permit me to read what I said into the record, it will show this. My question was “Mr. Speaker, it is actually insulting and, frankly, embarrassing”!

I will not go to that part, but I think the part that is in question is this: “She is forced to do the dirty work for her leader, who most of the time cannot even be bothered to show up and answer these questions himself in the House”.

That did elicit a response. Mr. Speaker, I refer you to page 614, chapter 13, “Rules of Order and Decorum” in *House of Commons*

Procedure and Practice. It states: “Allusions to the presence or absence of a Member or Minister in the Chamber are unacceptable”.

Mr. Speaker, you will note that nowhere in my comments did I refer specifically, today, to the presence or absence of any individual at that particular point in time in the House. That is where I would ask you to reconsider what you have done.

I will also point out that in the rules of debate in Beauchesne's, on page 141, it says in paragraph 481(c): “refer to the presence or absence of specific members”. The presence or absence of a specific member was not anywhere in the context of the conversation I was having in delivering my question on a matter that has been widely reported in the public debate, namely, the attendance record of the Prime Minister during question period.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I ask that you review what I actually said and, hopefully, we can come to an understanding where you and I are back on good terms.

The Speaker: I am sure the hon. member for Red Deer—Lacombe would not allow my ruling to come between us.

I am also sure that we will be back on good terms again once he returns to page 614 in *House of Commons Procedure and Practice* and looks at the line above the one he read, which says a member “cannot do indirectly what cannot be done directly”.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

CANADA-UKRAINE FREE TRADE AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-31, An Act to implement the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and Ukraine, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Speaker: The hon. member for Lac-Saint-Louis had three-and-a-half minutes remaining in his debate.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Mr. Speaker, we were at questions and comments.

The Speaker: Questions and comments, the hon. member for Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston.

Mr. Scott Reid: Mr. Speaker, I rise on the same point of order, if you will forgive me, and I stand to be corrected. I too am looking at page 614 of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, and my understanding is that the reference you made here is to the then current presence or absence of a member in the House of Commons. It would, for example, be inappropriate for me now to comment on whether or not the Prime Minister is currently in the chamber, but if it is the case that we are not allowed to refer to the past or future absence of a member, I would like you to draw that to our attention so that we can all act accordingly, if that is in fact the way the rules work.

The Speaker: I appreciate the hon. member's intervention. However, I do not want to engage in debate with members in the House. That is not what the Speaker is here to do.

Government Orders

I have made my ruling. Members should not be drawing attention to whether or not a member is or is not or has or has not been in the House.

Let us move on to questions and comments. We have had enough of this point of order.

The hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I wanted to follow up on a question I asked the member before question period. I asked about the important issue of military co-operation with Ukraine, and he said, quite correctly, that we are here to have a discussion about the issue of trade. However, many members have raised the issue of our more general co-operation with Ukraine as part of this debate. Certainly that is an important part of the discussion.

One of the very positive aspects of this trade agreement is that it affirms Canada's ongoing friendship with Ukraine, a friendship that is about strategic and shared values as well as our economic interests. It is with that understanding in mind that I am so perplexed. On one hand, we have government members praising the relationship between Canada and Ukraine and talking about its importance, and on the other hand, we have a government that has, in a number of important policy areas, pulled back from co-operation with Ukraine. It is no longer taking the position with respect to human rights in Russia that we took. It is no longer involved in providing satellite images that are very important in terms of Ukraine's interests and security.

Could the member answer this question directly? Why is the government pulling back from vital security co-operation with this country?

• (1510)

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I do not think the government is pulling back. There is a measure of continuity in what the government is doing. I refer to Canadian government sanctions related to Ukraine. As the member knows, they were enacted under the Special Economic Measures Act to respond to violations of Ukraine's constitution, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. This was done on March 17, 2014, under the previous government. Amendments have been made since then, including in 2014 and 2015, under the previous government, but also on March 18 and November 28, 2016, by this government.

It is quite clear where the government stands with respect to the situation in Crimea and that it has acted in continuity with what the previous government did.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would not want to pass on an opportunity to talk about the special relationship Canada has with Ukraine. We have a trade agreement that hopefully will be passed sooner rather than later. However, it goes beyond trade. It is economically sound for both Canada and Ukraine, but there is also an important component in terms of that special relationship. Perhaps the member might want to comment on that.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Mr. Speaker, I have been witness to that special relationship. I believe that the member was a member of this House when a former Ukrainian president came to speak to this

House. That was one of the most eloquent forms of testimony to that special relationship.

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure to speak today to the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement. I am going to be splitting my time with the member for Calgary Shepard, who is also very passionate about this.

To start off this debate, I want to thank the Minister of International Trade. She and I are just a couple of prairie farm kids of Ukrainian heritage who are quite excited about this agreement. I want to thank her for carrying the ball over the finish line, but it was our previous Conservative government, under Stephen Harper, that was able to get this trade agreement negotiated, and it took quite some time.

Actually, I was with the former prime minister back in 2010, along with the member from Langley, when we had those first discussions about free trade with the former Yanukovich regime. I can say that those were interesting discussions, to say the least. It was our first chance to interact with the president of that time, before things started going sideways in Ukraine as he tried to stamp out the Ukrainian nationality and as he robbed the treasury of Ukraine and tried to move all those funds into his personal coffers and those of other oligarchs and his own friends and family.

We have to remember that the member for York—Simcoe was the trade minister who started these negotiations back in 2010. Also, we have to pay tribute to the member for Abbotsford, the last Conservative trade minister, who really moved the yardstick when we had the discussions with the new president, President Poroshenko, and was able to finalize the substance of the free trade agreement between Canada and Ukraine in June 2015.

This is a huge win for both the Conservative Party and the Liberal Party. I am glad to see that our colleagues from the NDP are supporting this very important trade deal.

I have been to Ukraine, as have many of our other colleagues, on numerous occasions on election observation missions, on trade missions, and for diplomatic discussions. We can see the potential in Ukraine.

Even though Ukraine is still in a war with Russia, Crimea is under illegal occupation and annexation by Russia, and there is continued conflict in eastern Ukraine and Donbass, we know that we need to stand united with Ukraine. This Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement again shows the solidarity of this Parliament and the Canadian government standing with the people of Ukraine as we continue to support them in this struggle for democracy and international law and in making sure that they are ultimately victorious over the aggression of Vladimir Putin.

Government Orders

We have to also acknowledge that within Ukraine there are still many challenges. The Canada–Ukraine free trade agreement would open the door for more commerce, more prosperity, and more opportunity for individuals and companies in Ukraine and those in Canada who want to do business with Ukraine. Often we assume that it is people in Canada of Ukrainian heritage who are going to go over there and do business, but there is huge potential for all sorts of sectors to go over there and open the door. There is energy and gas exploration and development. The agricultural fields of Ukraine are tremendous. It is often called the bread basket of Europe. We know that if we can go over there and help them with infrastructure, transportation, genetics, and new farming technologies, they will be even more prosperous and more successful. It would enable people to farm their own land and generate wealth for their own families.

This is a key catalyst in making sure that we have a response in Ukraine as Ukrainians aspire to be more westernized, to have closer ties with us here in North America and particularly with the European Union, and to get out of the sphere of influence, which they have been living under for far too long, of Moscow and the Kremlin.

I also have to acknowledge the leadership we saw from former prime minister Stephen Harper. It was an amazing demonstration of Canada's commitment to Ukraine in his numerous trips there. From the time of the Maidan, the revolution of dignity, that took place on the streets, to the time he left the Prime Minister's office, former prime minister Harper was there four times. He was also there before that, in 2010, when we went over for early discussions with the Yanukovich regime. We were trying to make sure Ukraine embraced the west rather than returning to the old corrupt Soviet ways and crawling into bed with Vladimir Putin.

• (1515)

It was former prime minister Stephen Harper who really led the charge on making sure we supported the new president and the young democracy, that we had this trade deal, and that we were supporting them with their defence needs and providing non-kinetic military equipment. It was under his lead that we continued to isolate Russia on the world stage. It was under his leadership that we started to sanction hundreds of Russians and Ukrainians and organizations that were part of the whole process of destabilizing Ukraine with Russian aggression and the invasion of Crimea and Donbass. It was the former prime minister who said we were going to share RADARSAT satellite images with our friends in Ukraine so they could see the activity of Russia, as well as Russian proxies, taking place in Donbass and along its borders.

The former prime minister led on that front, and he was not scared to stand up to Vladimir Putin at the G20 talks in Brisbane, Australia. He told Vladimir Putin that he had to get out of Ukraine. When the Russian president said that he was not in Ukraine, former prime minister Harper told him there was nothing to talk about, and he turned on his heel and walked away. That is leadership. That is being principled. That is why we need to continue in that vein.

While I appreciate all the support from members of Parliament from all parties for the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement, let us make sure we do not forget its other needs.

Operation UNIFIER is coming to an end in March. We have to make sure that the government provides recommendations as well as a mandate to the Canadian Armed Forces to continue the training mission in western Ukraine. They have to support Ukraine's troops to ensure that they are getting up to NATO standards so they can get closer to NATO integration but also so they are more capable of dealing with the Russians as they fight in Donbass.

We also need to sign the defence co-operation agreement we had negotiated as the government. It has not been signed yet by the Liberal government. We have to sign that deal so we can more closely align ourselves and work with the Ukrainian armed forces in their battle.

We have to look at things like visas. As we are going to have a free trade agreement, we need to simplify the process so that people from Ukraine can come here to do business. We need a youth mobility agreement so that young people can come here. Many of us have experience with the Ukrainian interns in our offices, who are just amazing individuals. They are going to change that country in the next generation.

We also have to make sure that we continue to isolate Russia and Vladimir Putin, not normalize that relationship, as the Minister of Foreign Affairs wants to do. Any time we try to normalize, any time we try to engage, any time we try to reset the relationship with Russia, Putin sees that as a sign of weakness. Every time we do that, he tries to expand his aggression in Ukraine or elsewhere, as we are witnessing right now in Syria, especially with the humanitarian crisis and devastation taking place in Aleppo.

Finally, tonight we are voting on Bill C-306, the Crimean Tatar deportation memorial day act, also known as Sürgünlik. The Crimean Tatars have always been ostracized. A genocide was committed against them in 1944. In Crimea today we are witnessing the Russian Federation arresting them, taking away their freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and freedom of assembly. This is an opportunity for us to recognize past genocides.

I encourage members of the House to vote in favour of Bill C-306, brought forward by our colleague, the member for Edmonton Griesbach, so we can show that the House stands united with Ukraine.

Finally, to wrap up, I want to send the member for Abbotsford, who was the trade minister, my best wishes. As all of us know, he has had a bit of a health scare. I know he is sitting at home watching and wishing he was here. We want to wish him a speedy recovery. Our thoughts and our prayers are with him.

• (1520)

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member for doing that. I certainly join him, and I am sure all members do, in sending our very best wishes to the hon. member for Abbotsford for a speedy recovery to excellent health.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Winnipeg Centre.

Government Orders

Mr. Robert-Falcon Ouellette (Winnipeg Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the member could talk a bit more about the spheres of influence that he was talking about, also the idea of promoting democracy or democracy-building around the world and in Ukraine, as I would like to have more information about his thoughts.

We do have a multipolar world, or there are different visions about the world that we should be living in, whether it should be a multipolar world with not just the one superpower, or whether it should be going down, where we should be imposing a world view on various spheres or various areas of the world. I would like to hear his thoughts on those issues.

Mr. James Bezan: Mr. Speaker, let us just keep it focused on Ukraine. It is the people of Ukraine who aspire for closer western ties. The whole revolution of dignity on the Maidan in Kiev was about having more ties to Europe. It was when Yanukovych reneged on his promise to sign the European Union–Ukraine free trade agreement that they decided to start protesting—peaceful protests, which Yanukovych turned into a massacre, with Russian support. We of course remember that day in January, almost three years ago now, when we saw innocent young people being killed on the streets by snipers.

This is about helping Ukraine realize its own aspirations for a government that respects the rule of law, about a democracy that is actually functioning, about an economy that is market driven and not filled with corruption, which we witness in Ukraine today and which was rampant before.

By having a Canada–Ukraine free trade agreement, by supporting its democratic institutions, by working with it and supporting it, as we have been as both Liberal and Conservative governments, in reformation of how its government functions, we will succeed for the people of Ukraine, not the oligarchs, not those who are corrupt government officials, but we will succeed.

This is our opportunity to also bring forward the Magnitsky Act to make sure we hold to account those foreign corrupt officials who are getting rich off the backs of the people, as well as often committing murder and other heinous crimes.

•(1525)

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for his dedication to this file. I know he cares passionately about it and has visited Ukraine many times.

Ukraine also has a free trade association agreement with the European Union, which would allow Ukraine to become a gateway for Canadian businesses to invest in Ukraine, as well as to operate in Ukraine and, in doing so, use Ukraine as a gateway into the European market.

In his opinion, what businesses—in particular, Canadian businesses—could look forward to using this free trade agreement to that sort of advantage?

Mr. James Bezan: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for Etobicoke Centre for his passion for Ukraine, as well, and for that question.

He knows all too well that Ukraine has great potential and that we could capitalize; Canadian entrepreneurs, Canadian businesses, and Canadian people could go over there and do business.

Ukraine wants to do more and more business with the European Union. As the breadbasket, it has this great opportunity for food processing, for more agricultural production, for taking over there our infrastructure for grain handling, for grain processing, as well the livestock industry. As the breadbasket, as we have often seen in Ukraine, it has this huge production capability, this rich black soil from one end of the country to the other. Really, it is an opportunity for it to capitalize on this natural asset. Too often it has been held back from really exploiting because of Soviet communism, because of Holodomor where the people were actually starved to death and not even allowed to plant those fields.

We want to make sure that the people of Ukraine, as well as the people of Canada, can join together to open every door to prosperity, which would bring about a better Ukraine.

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to be joining the debate on Bill C-31. I would like to thank the member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman for his contributions so far. It is a great introduction to the intervention I intend to make.

The member reminded this House that it was indeed Yanukovych's refusal to implement the free trade agreement with Europe that led to the downfall of his regime and to freedom for Ukrainians and unfortunately, today, to the crisis of Ukrainians having to repel an attack from Russian forces, initially under the guise of being a so-called separatist movement. We now know that not to be true.

We know that there are 1.3 million Canadians of Ukrainian heritage living in Canada. Many of these people are small business owners, Canadians who are looking forward to this opportunity to trade freely with their country of origin, possibly the country of their birth and also the birth of their fathers, mothers, grandfathers, and grandmothers.

It is an agreement that was negotiated, of course, and the work on it was concluded on July 14, 2015, by the previous Conservative government. This renewed interest we see from the government on free trade is great news. I will not call it a baptism of free trade, but maybe I will call it a confirmation of free trade. I was always hoping that the Liberal government would take up on every single free trade agreement that the previous Conservative government had successfully negotiated and would bring them to the House for ratification. I am pleased to see this one here today.

We have found this newfound interest that the Liberals are promoting for trade to be both comforting and a good sign. I want to take the opportunity in this debate to talk about the economic benefits for Canada and for Ukraine, which many members have done already. I also want to talk about the broader philosophy of why free trade is both good for our country and good globally. I think it is needed right now, with the wave of protectionism coming through the western world and convincing people to perhaps push back against globalization and against further freeing of trade.

Government Orders

To do that, I will be going back at the end of my speech to talk about Sir Robert Peel and the original corn laws, and the great impact that had on Canada and how it actually formed the Conservative Party. I am a member of the opposition, a member of the Conservative Party of Canada, and we have a proud tradition of having this internal battle within our own party between the protectionists and the free traders.

It deeply inspired many of the Conservatives we see today to become free traders, but that has not always been the case. There have been a great many great Conservative leaders. In the United Kingdom, one of them was Winston Churchill, who made his career on the debate on free trade and actually crossed the floor twice, much to his everlasting shame, I will say.

We know that the provinces in Canada that would likely gain the most would be British Columbia and Quebec. B.C. alone represents 71.3% of Canada's exports to Ukraine, \$150.2 million in 2015 alone, which was an increase of \$46 million in trade from 2014. British Columbia would have an immense opportunity to gain from this free trade agreement.

We also enjoy a trade surplus of \$143 million with Ukraine. I can only see that as an opportunity for Alberta farmers, for Alberta agricultural companies, and of course the resource sector, which is one of the main contributions we make for trade with Ukraine. We know that 86% of tariffs in Ukraine would be lifted; 99.9% of Canadian tariffs on Ukrainian goods would also be lifted.

I just want to go over some of those top exports from western Canada, where I am from: frozen hake, bituminous coal, reservoir tanks and similar containers, parts of boring or sinking machinery, air compressors and other similar equipment, seeders and planters, and frozen pork. These are all things that our western producers either build, make, or grow, which now would have an opportunity to enter the Ukrainian market with a lower tariff.

Furthermore, Canadian pork exporters would benefit from duty-free access on fresh and chilled pork and from the large duty-free tariff rate quota for frozen pork and certain pork offals and fats. Reservoir tanks and similar containers would see the tariffs of up to 7% eliminated immediately upon entry into force of this agreement.

Meteorological, geophysical, and other surveying instruments are something for which Alberta and Alberta companies are well known worldwide. We are one of the top providers in the world of both the equipment and the know-how to operate it. The tariff of 5% would be phased out over five years from the coming into force of this agreement.

Wine and ice wine, as well, would see their tariff go down. Pet food and animal feed, as well as pulses, would see tariffs go down, all good news for Canadian producers and Canadian manufacturers in western Canada.

As we know, as of September 19, 2016, Ukraine has a GDP at purchasing power parity of about \$339.2 billion. It is an immense market and has immense opportunities for Canadian small and medium businesses to expand their trade exports into this country. It has a population of 45.2 million people. It is Canada's 75th largest merchandise trade partner, and we can only see that number decrease over time. It would become a better trading partner with us.

● (1530)

In terms of ease of doing business, it is ranked 83rd among 189 countries. Hopefully, Canadian know-how, knowledge, and interest in trading with other countries would be transferred to Ukrainian companies and they would be able to do business and potentially hire Canadians, maybe of Ukrainian heritage, who would be able to explain to them how to do business and make it easier to do business in Ukraine. Overall, it is an immense opportunity not just for trade but for that cultural exchange and to show Ukraine what it means to trade freely with other countries.

As I have always done, I will give a Yiddish proverb today: many trades and few blessings. It is an old Yiddish proverb that says a jack of all trades will seldom make a good living. In Canada's case, though, it does not prove entirely true. We have been debating the merit of free trade. Free trade is what Canada does, as a jack of all trades, and what we have always done. Whether we have called it reciprocity in the past or free trade, it has been part of our Canadian identity and the culture that Canada has developed over the years, decades, and centuries.

The story of Canada is, in fact, about securing better markets for our products. Confederation came out of debates over a customs union for the Atlantic provinces and when the Fathers of Confederation came together, that was initially what they were talking about. They were not so much talking about forming a Canadian country. That was really Sir John A. Macdonald's great contribution. He injected himself into a customs union conversation, the great debate, raising it to the level of maybe creating a country like Canada based on the free trade of goods between the provinces that were, at the time, colonies of the British Empire.

The Reciprocity Treaty of 1854 was when Great Britain abrogated the protective tariffs it had in 1846 that led Canada to look for new export opportunities for its products. Then Canadians turned to the United States, our neighbour to the south, which has been for a great many centuries now—almost two—our greatest trading partner, the best relationship we have ever had. When Great Britain abrogated the Corn Laws in 1846, it accorded advantageous customs duties to Canadian agricultural products. It was a great debate in the United Kingdom at the time, in the Conservative Party especially, on whether it should move toward freer trade or become more protectionist. In fact, that ripped the party apart. It cost Sir Robert Peel his government and the leadership of the Conservative Party.

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It is important to dwell on that for a moment as we launch ourselves into this Canada–Ukraine free trade agreement, because the cultural identity we have as free traders would be passed on. As I have mentioned, Sir Winston Churchill crossed from the Conservatives to the Liberals over the issue of free trade and then crossed back to the Conservatives later on, in 1924, hoping to lead a right-wing faction of Liberals into Baldwin's government. It was over free trade that he will be most fondly remembered. As he said in his own words, it takes a special type of leader and politician to first rat and then re-rat, twice.

A different generation and a related Parliament fought over the Corn Laws. In fact, in 1842, the Corn Laws disappointed those expectations overnight by substantially modifying the sliding scale duties last revised in 1828 in the direction of free competition. *The Economist* magazine was actually founded to fight the Corn Laws and eventually would win in 1846. It would see the abrogation of all of those tariffs. A similar measure applied to Canadian corn in 1843.

Members are probably wondering why I would bring up the Corn Laws issue of the 19th century. It shows that Canada has been trading for hundreds of years. It has been a great part of who we are as Canadians. It means a lot to us when we find new partners who want to trade with us. We see this rise of protectionism worldwide, as I mentioned before.

It is incumbent upon a country like Canada, which has been dependent on trade and finding new countries to trade with, to implement treaties like this, to show the way for countries that have an opportunity to grow their economies through exports and the imports of goods from the Canadian market, in which the consumers at home could potentially enjoy Canadian maple syrup or others goods. It really comes down to a willing seller and a willing buyer being found and agreeing to make an exchange of goods by bartering or for money.

Choosing who we trade with without government interference is really important. It speaks again to that shared identity we have as Canadians. Just as free trade was transformational for Canada and our shared identity, I am convinced it would do the same for Ukraine. As we trade more with Ukraine, as other western European countries do more of it, trade will pull Ukraine out of the soviet sphere of influence it has been trapped in for past centuries.

It is a great opportunity for geopolitical reasons; it is a great opportunity for trade reasons. I urge all members to support this. I have been pleased to hear so far that all members in the House, seemingly, will be supporting this bill. I look forward to further debate on it throughout the day.

● (1535)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have had the opportunity on a number of occasions to emphasize how important this trade deal is between Canada and Ukraine. I often talk about the economic value. The member across the way talked about how British Columbia and other jurisdictions will benefit and there is no doubt that economically Canada's middle class will benefit by this agreement. There is an underlying theme that we hear from both sides of the House and that is the value of moving forward and getting this trade agreement passed because it

sends a very strong message that goes far beyond economics. Would the member not agree?

Mr. Tom Kmiec: Mr. Speaker, I did not realize the member had Ukrainian heritage, but I congratulate him for it. Obviously, I think this will be the first time this would happen in this Parliament. I am going to agree with the member. I think it is a great opportunity for not just the middle class, but for all classes in Canada.

This is not about raising the profile of Liberals' campaign promises to do more for the middle class. This is about reaching an agreement negotiated before the election and now ratifying it into law in order to enable companies in Canada to freely trade with our Ukrainian partners, companies, and individuals at the most simple of level who want to buy Canadian goods that they know they can trust. I am hoping there will be a massive new market for the export of western Canadian goods, especially at a time when many are looking for work. In Alberta, this can only help more Albertans find work in another export industry.

● (1540)

[*Translation*]

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

As we know, Ukraine and Canada have deep ties. Saint Sophie Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral, Montreal's Ukrainian Caisse Populaire Desjardins, the Ukrainian park, and the Montreal Ukrainian festival are all in the riding of Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie.

Could my colleague tell us what this type of agreement can mean to the Ukrainian community in Canada, apart from the trade details?

Mr. Tom Kmiec: Mr. Speaker, the answer to my colleague's question is that this is a great opportunity for first, second, and third generation Ukrainians in Canada. It is an opportunity to use their language and culture to create new opportunities for the businesses they work for or own. Free trade with Ukraine will be a great opportunity for those who already understand the language and culture. They will benefit even more than others who are not fortunate enough to be Canadian Ukrainians.

[*English*]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what a brilliant speech by my colleague from Alberta. I always appreciate how he resorts to history and first principles. I would like to give him the opportunity to do so again.

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There is a misconception, which often leads toward mercantilism and protectionism, that countries trade with each other. In reality, people trade. Individuals trade and the existence of a voluntary transaction is by its definition a fair trade. If I have an apple and my colleague has \$1 and I give him an apple for \$1, we still just have an apple and \$1 between us, but we are richer because we each have something more valuable to us than what we had before.

Will the hon. member take the opportunity to build upon that analogy and to explain how this and all other efforts to expand the freedom of trade across borders between free peoples is always to the benefit of all parties involved?

Mr. Tom Kmiec: Mr. Speaker, obviously when we talk about first principles, the principle in trade is again a willing buyer and a willing seller. As long as we can match those two people together, and usually it is not the government that is getting between and that should be avoided at all costs, there should be as much freedom as possible for two people to decide what they want to buy.

I will give an example. I am a Canadian of Polish heritage. I was born in Poland and I moved to Canada. I still really enjoy going to the Polish store to buy Polish sweets. If for some reason I were not able to do that, that would be very much to my detriment and to the detriment of three pairs of little eyes who are looking upon me from the gallery today, and I think of my children as well because they have an opportunity to get those types of treats and to purchase them. If the government came in between myself and my kids being able to purchase these Polish sweets, I would say that would be an unfair use of government power. That is what free trade represents, less government interference in our daily lives and an opportunity to purchase and to obtain the services that we want.

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Winnipeg North.

This past July, as the chair of the Canada-Ukraine Friendship Group, and as a Ukrainian Canadian, I had the honour of bearing witness to the historic signing of the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement in the presidential ceremonial hall in Kiev.

I would like to thank our Prime Minister for including me in that delegation, and more important, for making this state visit and signing a priority for our new government. In fact, it was the Prime Minister's first one-on-one state visit after his visit to the United States, and this will most likely be the first free trade agreement to be ratified by our government.

Watching my fellow Ukrainian Canadian, the Minister of International Trade, sign the treaty was especially poignant, as we had first met in Kiev in 1991-92, as young and idealistic Canadians who were intent on making a difference in the ancestral homeland of our parents and grandparents, the minister as a journalist, and myself as a Canadian organizer of Rukh, Ukraine's democratic front.

Twenty-five years later, the minister worked hard to make this free trade agreement a reality. Twenty-five years later, we accompanied Canada's Prime Minister for the signing of this historic agreement.

Canada-Ukraine trade is quite modest, only \$289 million annually, which begs the question as to why this treaty was such a priority for our government.

Canada and Ukraine have a "special" relationship. The word "special", not just an adjective, but a term defined in an agreement in 1994, the "Joint Declaration on Special Partnership between Canada and Ukraine", which was reaffirmed in 2001, and again in 2008. As well, Ukraine was one of 25 countries of focus for the Canadian International Development Agency, CIDA.

Although Canadians and our symbol of the maple leaf are warmly received in almost every country of the world, there is no country where Canadians are more warmly, in fact affectionately, welcomed than in Ukraine.

Many of us literally stood shoulder to shoulder with the people of Ukraine during the independence movement of 1988 to 1991 and the democratic revolutions: the Orange Revolution of 2004 and the revolution of dignity of 2014. I cannot relate to this House and the Canadian people how often during these historic events, Ukrainians, upon hearing that I was from Canada, would embrace me and say, "Thank you, Canada. Please say thank you to the people of Canada."

However, our human ties run much deeper. Ukraine has given its most precious of gifts: its people. Some 1.3 million Canadians trace their ancestral roots to Ukraine. Next year Canada marks our 150th anniversary. This year Ukrainian Canadians mark the 125th anniversary of the arrival of the first Ukrainian pioneers in Canada's prairies.

These pioneers transformed the bush of the prairies into the golden wheat fields of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. As one travels the vastness of the prairies, the golden *paysage* is regularly broken by grain elevators and the domes of Ukrainian churches. In fact, there is not a city in Canada where golden church domes do not testify to the presence of Ukrainian Canadians. They testify to the perseverance, industry, and spirituality of our people.

The ribbons of steel of the Canadian Pacific Railway bound our vast Confederation together. It was largely Ukrainian Canadians who filled that prairie vastness. Their presence countered the movement of American settlers north, who were posing sovereignty threats to their northern neighbour. Canada may well have had a very different geography if not for the government's policy of free land to the "people in sheepskin coats".

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However, Ukrainian Canadians did not only transform our landscape, they gave us a deeper understanding of who we are as a nation. The term “multiculturalism” was first used by Senator Paul Yuzyk in his maiden speech in 1963, and the Ukrainian Canadian Congress lobbied the federal government throughout the 1960s on this issue, a government of the time whose official policy was biculturalism. It was due to these determined efforts that former Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau officially announced the federal policy of multiculturalism in 1971, thus transforming our Canada.

• (1545)

Today, in a world of resurgent xenophobia and nativism, Canada stands as an aspirational city on a hill among liberal democracies. Our multiculturalism, our strength in diversity, a shining example to a world of increasing chauvinism and divisions.

The contributions by Ukrainian Canadians to Canada, both in numbers and in length of time, qualifies them as one of this great country's founding peoples. It is why when Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov referred to us a “rabid diaspora” in January of this year, while ranting against Canada's steadfast policy of standing with Ukraine, that his denunciation was responded to by Canada's foreign minister's statement of January 27, in this House.

The minister stated:

I am so pleased...to express...the steadfast support of Canada for Ukraine, how much we deeply disagree with the invasion and interference of the Russian government in Ukraine, and also how much we will not tolerate from a Russian minister any insults against the community of Ukraine in Canada. We owe so much to Ukrainian Canadians and we will always support them.

Today, Russia poses the gravest geopolitical threat to liberal democracy and the west, and Ukraine and its people are literally on the front line. When Putin ordered his armies to militarily invade and annex Ukrainian territory, he broke a fundamental principle of international rule of law: the sanctity of borders. We have not seen European borders changed through military force since the 1930s. Ten thousand Ukrainian soldiers, mostly volunteers and civilians, have been killed by invading Russian soldiers and their proxies. Why did Putin invade? It was because the people of Ukraine chose liberty and democracy. The revolution of dignity was a revolt against a new enslavement by a kleptocratic president puppet of a dictatorial Kremlin. It was the first time in the history of the European Union that people, student demonstrators, were shot by snipers, killed while carrying the European Union flag, a symbol of the western democratic values that we so cherish.

However, the Kremlin has not only declared war militarily, and there is not just an ongoing propaganda war, there is a Kremlin economic war against Ukraine. Russia has been Ukraine's largest trading partner, equivalent in importance to Canada's economic relationship with the United States. At the same time that Russia militarily invaded, Putin shut down trade with Ukraine. It is why the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement is of such importance. It is a clear statement of support by Canada for Ukraine at a time of Kremlin military aggression and economic war. It is not just a reaffirmation of our government's policy with respect to free trade, it is a geopolitical statement of support.

Having earlier noted the current modest levels of trade, we should not dismiss the opportunities that the agreement affords the business

communities of both countries, especially for small and medium-sized businesses. Ukraine, with its free trade association with the European Union, can be the entry point for Canadian low-cost capital investment and low manufacturing costs on the European continent, a de facto gateway into the European market. Canada can become a gateway for nascent small and medium-sized Ukrainian businesses to expand and invest in Canada as an entry point into the North American market.

I conclude by thanking Canada on behalf of all Ukrainian Canadians. This has been “freedom's shores” and the land of opportunity for waves of Ukrainian immigrants for over 125 years. This is the land in which our ancestors, with their perseverance, industry, and spirituality, built new lives, and in building their lives helped to build and transform our great country of Canada. They built a future in their new homeland, however, they never forgot their ancestral roots, who they were, and where they came from. The Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement is a hand of friendship and solidarity extended by Canada to a country, Ukraine, which gave its most precious resource, its human resources, its people, to us. Long may our special relationship endure.

Slava Canadi, Slava Ukraini.

• (1550)

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member's detailed knowledge of Ukraine. One of the things we do not hear enough about are the violations of human rights that are happening in Russian-occupied parts of eastern Ukraine. There is a major issue in religious freedom as well, churches being closed, the kidnapping of clergy, and these kinds of things, the human rights issue, the religious freedom issue in eastern Ukraine, as well as in Russia itself. I know Canada was engaged there in the past under programs that were operated through the Office of Religious Freedom.

Could the member comment on the current status of some of these human rights problems, and what role he thinks Canada could play working with Ukraine to try to combat what is happening in these occupied areas and to promote religious freedom and freedom in general within the country?

• (1555)

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj: Mr. Speaker, it is quite correct that there are terrible abuses of human rights occurring in the Donbass region of eastern Ukraine, in the so-called Donetsk People's Republic, DPR, and the Luhansk People's Republic, LPR. In fact, they have been documented in reports by Amnesty, the OSCE, arbitrary arrests, disappearances of people. Some 600 people are unaccounted for. Often people are found afterward, their corpses with signs of torture.

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In Donbass and in occupied Crimea, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church has been shut down. In occupied Crimea, mosques are constantly being monitored. The Jewish community of Crimea has pretty much left. There has been an exodus of the Jewish community from Crimea.

The faith communities in those two regions, which have been occupied by the Russian military, their soldiers, and their proxies, have, other than the Russian Orthodox Church, had their activities curtailed, and in many cases they have been shut down.

There is an interesting report that perhaps the member would like to read. It is called "The Peninsula of Fear", written by international human rights organizations about all of the abuses taking place in those occupied territories.

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is the president of our Canada-Ukraine Friendship Group, and I enjoy working with him.

We have had a question about the human rights, but I would like to put a question for the member about broad-spread concerns about the erosion of democracy, the rule of law, and human rights.

I was part of the foreign affairs mission to Ukraine before the change in government. We met with many people, and they raised a lot of concerns. It was the Ukrainian Canadian Congress that advised Ottawa that negotiation should be conditional upon Ukrainian government agreeing to action on democracy and human rights, and that there should be provisions on human rights, rule of law, and adherence to fundamental democratic change. Now we know that there have been some reforms, but I am getting reports back that there are still concerns, including corruption in the courts.

Does the member think Canada should continue or step up our assistance to try to remove those barriers so Ukrainians themselves can benefit from any trade increase?

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj: Mr. Speaker, I would also like to thank the member opposite for the amount of time she has dedicated to the Canada-Ukraine file.

We have worked on various fronts. Ukraine has been militarily invaded, and that is why we are actively engaged in training Ukraine's military through Operation Unifier. Ukraine is under a trade embargo with Russia, which has been devastating to the economy of Ukraine. That is why it is also important to put this free trade agreement in place.

However, Ukraine has also been internally devastated. It is not only fighting an external war against the Kremlin; it is fighting an internal war against corruption.

I had the pleasure of co-chairing, along with our Prime Minister and the Minister of International Trade, a round table in Kiev with Leaders of Change, NGOs in Ukraine working on human rights. We have dedicated a tremendous amount of resources to scores of organizations in Ukraine to guarantee that democratic future Ukrainians died for on the Maidan.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what a pleasure and privilege it is to stand in my place and speak to such important legislation. I have had the opportunity to

debate many other trade legislation, but this one is special because it is related to a country of which I have become very fond.

Ukraine has been a high priority for me, as it is for many of the constituents I represent. Some 1.3 million Ukrainian people live in Canada and call it their home, but they are very proud of their Ukrainian heritage.

When we look at trade agreements in general, we recognize the value they have for Canada as a whole and how they assist our middle class and those aspiring to be a part of it. We have seen a government in the last 12-plus months be very aggressive in pursuing good trade agreements that are in the best interest of all Canadians, which is what we have before us today, a trade agreement with Ukraine.

This agreement has been in the works for a number of years, as has been pointed out. I am very proud of the fact that our Minister of International Trade, in co-operation with our Prime Minister, has moved it forward. I believe the member for Etobicoke Centre was a part of the signing ceremonies in Ukraine just a few months back.

This agreement is special for many reasons. Economically, both Canada and Ukraine will benefit by this agreement. I have talked a great deal about trade and how important it is that Canada, as a trading nation, look abroad and do what it can to take down those trade barriers, which will enhance our economic performance outside of our country. However, this legislation deals with Ukraine. A number of speakers today have said that this is very special because of what has taken place in Ukraine over the last few years.

Winnipeg North is what it is today in good part because of immigration from Ukraine. If we take a look at the traditional north end, we will see a demonstration of that by visiting some of our churches. They are there today because of our Ukrainian community of the past, and they continue. There are organizations such as Prosvita, which is celebrating over 100 years of existence. We have a healthy, strong, and vibrant Ukrainian heritage community in my province and, in fact, in Canada. We should all be very proud of it.

When things were happening the Maidan, there was a great deal of concern. When things happen of concern in Ukraine, Canadians take note, because there is that very strong connection between both of our great nations.

I think of a family friend, Orysia Tracz, who is the wife of Myroslaw Tracz. I had known her for many years. She passed away on November 10. I could not help but reflect on how she embodied the heart and soul of everything good about Ukrainian heritage. Many saw her as being so proud to call Canada her home, but they also saw the manner in which she took on the mantle of strong Ukrainian heritage. I am one of many who has benefited from that ability to communicate the importance of heritage. I truly appreciate that. When she had passed, I extended my condolences to Myroslaw and her family.

The Canadian Ukrainian Canadian Congress has a number of people of the same sort of calibre, whether from the local chapters or the national chapter. They truly care about what takes place in Ukraine in good times and in not so good times. They want to advance that very special relationship between our great nations.

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●(1600)

I look at it and reflect on Winnipeg North. I reflect on individuals like the late Orysia. I think of things such as multiculturalism. I think about Folklorama and seeing her children participating in the Kiev pavilion. I think of how families of Ukrainian heritage are so generous in sharing their heritage, whether it is the independence day, or other festivals. So many organizations of Ukrainian heritage are very quick to demonstrate so clearly why there is such a strong connection. They want to see that continue to grow.

In asking questions, I have made reference to the fact that trade agreements are very important to our country. This is something on which the Prime Minister, the cabinet, and in particular our Minister of International Trade, have put a great deal of focus. We have seen a number of pieces of legislation dealing with the World Trade Organization to the Canada-European trade agreement to what we are debating today, the Canada-Ukraine trade deal. We believe that trade is a good thing for all Canadians. At the end of the day, the more we can build on trade relations with countries around the world, whether it is a collective grouping of countries such as the European Union or single countries such as Ukraine, we will benefit by it.

When we look at what the agreement would do, it is quite significant. Canada's current trading relationships with Ukraine today is relatively modest today, ranking as Canada's 54th largest merchandise trade partner. Nevertheless, there are notable opportunities for Canadian businesses in sectors such as agriculture, agrifood, fish, seafood, aerospace, defence, education, oil, and gas.

From 2011 to 2015, Canada's average annual bilateral merchandise trade with Ukraine was \$289 million. Over that period, average annual exports to Ukraine totalled \$173 million. Canadian imports from Ukraine meanwhile totalled, on average, \$116 million. These are significant numbers, but along with those numbers there is so much more we can and should do.

One of the things I found quite touching was when President Petro Poroshenko addressed the House. I have made reference to his speech on several occasions. Let me quote what the president of Ukraine said on September 18, 2014, literally just a few yards from the Speaker's chair. He said:

Today thousands of brave Ukrainian men and women are sacrificing their lives for the right to live the way they choose, on their land, under the blue and gold colours of the Ukrainian flag, colours that are so dear to many Canadian Ukrainians. In these dark days, we feel your strong support. Thank you very much for that.

He went on to say:

It is in our time of need that we see our friends, and there is no other way to put it: Canada is a friend indeed.

As a commander-in-chief, as a Ukrainian, and as a father of a soldier, I thank Canada for each life that is being saved today in the Ukrainian Donbass by the helmets and bulletproof vests you gave us.

One of the things that the president challenged all of us with was:

I hope that both negotiating teams have translated our firm signal, the Prime Minister's and mine, and the next time we see each other we will have a Ukraine-Canada free trade agreement to sign.

We recognized that the Conservative government did pick up the ball and worked with Ukraine, but we also recognized that we had to finalize the agreement.

●(1605)

In an apolitical fashion, both the current government and the government of a year ago came to a position where we were able to sign off on that agreement. The Minister of International Trade, who is herself of Ukrainian descent, and the Prime Minister were able to go to Ukraine. It made everyone proud when that took place.

●(1610)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Winnipeg North for his speech and also for his attire today.

I want to highlight in particular the contribution of the Ukrainian community in western Canada and also in Montreal. I am fortunate to represent the riding where Saint Sophie Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral and the Ukrainian Caisse Populaire Desjardins are located. Montreal's Ukrainian festival is also held in my riding.

Without going into the details of this future free trade agreement with Ukraine, I would like my colleague to tell us about this openness towards that country and this type of trade agreement with the Republic of Ukraine, and what this can contribute to the Ukrainian community here in Canada.

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the trade agreement would do two things. We have a great deal of room to expand the amount of trade between the two countries, but we also need to go beyond that. We should confer with stakeholder groups like the Canadian Ukrainian Congress or individuals within our constituencies, where there is no shortage of ideas and thoughts as to how Canada and Ukraine can deepen their relationship, a relationship based on respect. Whether it is the arts and culture or electoral reform, Canada has played an important role in Ukraine, participating in monitoring its elections. There are so many ways.

Lloyd Axworthy, as the president of the University of Winnipeg, would often visit Ukraine to try to bridge post-secondary education facilities. There are so many ways. When we look at passing this bill, yes, there are specifics that deal with tariffs and so forth, with the idea of more and easier trade between both countries, but it also sends a stronger and, I believe, an equally important message that we want to take it another step forward in enhancing the relationship between both Ukraine and Canada. There is great value in both aspects.

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, since this may be the last time I will speak in the House this week, I would first like to take the opportunity to wish my constituents in Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe a very merry Christmas and a happy holiday season. I look forward to representing them and working closely with them in the new year.

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I would also like to thank my learned colleague for sharing his reflections on this bill. I am wondering if he could take a few minutes to perhaps elaborate on the benefits of this trade deal between Canada and Ukraine, as well as how it would enhance our own economic performance in this country.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I could talk from a Manitoba perspective about the aerospace industry, I could talk about the fishing industry on the Atlantic coast, or I could talk about the impact it would have on B.C.'s exports, which are already a great percentage of Canada's exports.

The point is that it will affect Canada from coast to coast and everywhere in-between. All regions of Canada, I would argue, would benefit from this particular trade pact. That should come as no surprise. When I was sitting in opposition back in 2012, I asked why we were not exploring the idea of free trade with Ukraine. The discussions about advancing trade with Ukraine has been on the record in the House for a number of years. I know that Jean Chrétien moved forward on a number of treaties in advancing that relationship.

That is why, when I think of what we are debating today, it is yet another significant step in the right direction that would continue to build a more solid foundation of friendship. The president of Ukraine said in this very House how much he valued that friendship. This particular agreement would go a long way in solidifying it. This is a win-win for everyone.

• (1615)

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise here today to continue debate on our free trade agreement with Ukraine and what will be happening next. I will be splitting my time with the member for Edmonton Strathcona. I am looking forward to her comments.

I think this agreement shows the connections with Ukrainians that are so evident across this country. It will be symbolic in effect, given some of the Ukrainian cultural connections we have across Canada. Ukrainians have been coming to Canada and establishing settlements here in organized civil society for over 125 years. This was celebrated this past November in particular. There were Ukrainians here before then, but the marker for the community is 125 years ago. It is important to note the history of that settlement here as we move forward. It is important to note as well that there is a great connection today with the Ukrainian community over social justice in many respects, not only because of what they have faced in their home country but also here in Canada.

I would be remiss not to note that from 1914 to 1920 Ukrainians were interned in Canada under the War Measures Act by Prime Minister Borden of the Conservatives. It is something that was noted in the House of Commons with Bill C-331. Without getting too much into the details of the debate, the bill was the result of a Conservative, NDP, and Bloc effort to push this issue forward. Importantly, it encouraged us, as part of our solid foundation, to make restitution for injustices that have taken place. We saw support for making such restitution for past events become unanimous in the House. Even during World War II, up to 10 million Ukrainians suffered, either through forced labour or by being killed by the Nazi regime. Subsequently we have seen continual problems and challenges.

One of the things we can do as Canadians right now is to continue not to hide from the challenges that currently facing Ukraine from Russia, and how we can do things we can control and support. One of these things is entering into better, more mature, and value-added trade agreements that will be mutually beneficial. As New Democrats, we support that.

For example, in the past we have often seen trade agreements that have been reached for ideological reasons and for business at the expense of people. This agreement would truly be a better opportunity for people-to-people trade, especially since there are no investor-state provisions in it that would give an edge to the corporate element and brand. The trade that could happen among our people is significant.

I think of no less than St. Vladimir's church in my riding, where we have seen people involved with Ukrainian traditions and heritage. In fact, we had a memorial for the Holodomor established in a prominent park. I want to congratulate the entire community for doing this together. We did this before, as we have done for other monuments, most recently for the genocide in Srebrenica. The Holodomor itself is genocide that this House of Commons has recognized. It is recognized in the Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg as well. It is truly important because the survivors are no longer with us in the numbers they used to be, but the memories and the families live on, and the tradition that we have now of connecting that to our day-to-day actions is important.

The trade agreement that we are discussing today would improve trade relations in a number of different ways. The agreement really shows the strength of the Ukrainian contribution to our country when it was new and relied upon hard labour to make its mark in the world, and continues to do so in many respects.

• (1620)

The issues that we have on a number of different products and goods to be traded will dissipate as our tariff levels on trade are reduced. Tariff levels are in the 80s and 90s right now, so there would be a reduction of those by up to 99%, and in the high 80s, if not low 90s, for the reciprocal. It is close to getting together.

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We have iron, steel, industrial machinery, beef, pork, pulses, canola oil, fish, and seafood. My riding has steel, machinery, and industrial development. The reason the strength continues is the mere fact that we have men and women who have contributed to the social development of a society here, which is very much in tune with our collectively working together to make a difference. In my riding, it was the creation of the unions in the sense that Canada, with the auto industry, really made a difference with the Rand formula. The contributions one can make and the work they have done over the years for social justice, equality, and a whole series of different things that benefit the workforce really came from a foundation of immigrants coming to Canada who have played a role in our country to get things done. Steel, industrial machinery, and equipment are part of that. Also, when we go out west and see the word “canola”, we remember the profound farming and agricultural footprint from this contribution. What makes us part of a whole as a country is the fact that this trade continues to happen in a much more robust way.

I mentioned that the agreement is more mature. That is because, for example, on labour, there are enforceable provisions in the bill, which are critical. Those enforceable provisions come to light when we look at the trading elements that are important to us as New Democrats. Labour and environment are privileged issues to many, but for us, they are about justice. When working on a trade agreement, we will focus on the beneficial aspects of those issues, because of the strength or benefit to both trading partners from the longevity of those benefits. It is not a matter of trading for a quick return at the other's expense, because after three or four years we do not see that element coming into play.

The Liberals and Conservatives brag about certain trade agreements they have set, but we have sold out some of our industries in them. Shame on our country for selling out the textile industry on two fronts. The first front is our jobs and our workers. The second front is allowing countries like Jordan to take advantage of poor people, who are almost forced into labour camps to do the jobs they stole from workers here who actually had provisions in their agreements that provided for benefits and safe working conditions. These may not have been the best of jobs, but they were working class jobs with a family heritage that could have provided for a future. We sold them out to places where they now use migrant labour. They use the country just like a storefront, or, as the Liberals might understand, a flag of convenience for corporations. It is a shortcut.

Hence, we have this agreement. I am proud to support it. I know that our member for Essex will be watching over this as it goes through committee. We will be looking at not only enhancing the trade provisions between Canada and Ukraine, but doing what I think it wants, which is looking at enhanced provisions that respect people, justice, the environment, and creating a relationship that is not about trying to be a winner or a loser through the entire process, but about creating a partnership that will be mutually beneficial for all of our citizens.

•(1625)

Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Windsor West for his passionate speech here today in the House. As he is the former trade critic in our party, I thank him

for all the work he has done throughout the years to ensure that we have responsible, respectful, thoughtful trade that is coming through this Parliament and that is looked at on balance.

The member for Windsor West was talking about this being a type of trade deal that we can support, and largely because this is a bilateral trade deal, we were able to sit down and advocate for Canada in the best possible way, because we were only dealing with one other country.

The way we see trade deals going forward in this country, which we are pursuing under this government and the previous government, is as large multilateral trade deals. These multilateral trade deals mean that we have to sit down and look at a whole bunch of other countries, and often, unfortunately, we seem to be getting lost inside of these deals.

I am wondering if the member would agree, as the former trade critic, that moving forward, it is important for countries to focus on bilateral deals rather than these multilateral deals that are sacrificing working class manufacturing jobs in Canada.

Mr. Brian Masse: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the excellent question. Let me personalize that a little bit, because I think it really is the crux of the difference between what we see as trade and maybe what some others see.

I think about people like Leisha Nazarewich and Petro Mycak from Windsor, who have been active in trading, not only in their community but also in Ukrainian relations across this country. What is important is that I want to be able to go back to them and talk about something that is helpful for both our countries.

To answer the question, we look at Canada's trade and the agreement that is settled here. I talked about the percentages of trade earlier: 86% of Canadian tariffs would be reduced going into the Ukraine. It would hang on to a little bit of protection tariffs for its economy, in terms of Canada, but it would also have 99% of Ukrainian tariffs coming into Canada reduced, and that is because we actually have a trading surplus right now. It is an imbalanced relationship.

What we would do with this agreement is, yes, we would continue to have some tariffs on our goods going out there because we have such an imbalance, but coming in, it would then be able to develop those exports and imports at a rate that is bilateral.

I think that is the comprehensive agreement, because we see the agreement as growing for both of us, not serving some other purpose.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am actually quite pleased that the NDP has chosen to support and vote in favour of this particular trade agreement. I am encouraged by that.

Government Orders

As I listened to the member's speech and his answer to the last question, the thought that comes to my mind is this. Are there some aspects of the current agreement that the NDP is concerned with, or is the legislation fairly whole in terms of its support?

Mr. Brian Masse: Mr. Speaker, I think our concern will be how we work within the current context right now, with internal and external pressures on Ukraine, and how issues like human rights, for example, are dealt with in this actual relationship as we continue to work with it.

It is important that we recognize those conditions. As we work through the trade committee, hopefully we will be able to strengthen some of those elements to help protect Ukrainians for those elements, because we know that the situation with Russia is highly complex, to say the least. We also know the types of repercussions that have been forced upon them, the injustices that have taken place; so how do we make sure we do not contribute to further propagate those types of things?

That is one of the key elements we have as New Democrats, looking at how labour is enhanced and how rights are protected. It might mean that we actually support and help develop those elements, so that further injustices and further exploitation of Ukrainian citizens is not taken advantage of by Canadian trade.

• (1630)

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Order. 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 Nanaimo—Ladysmith, Indigenous Affairs; the hon. member for Saskatoon West, Public Services and Procurement; and the hon. member for Windsor West, Automotive Industry.

[*English*]

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am indeed from Edmonton Strathcona and the proud representative of many Ukrainian Canadians. I like to brag that I come from the city with the most Canadian Ukrainians, and I duke it out all the time with Winnipeg and Toronto, but I am sure I am correct.

As others have shared, Canada and Ukraine have had a long friendly relationship, except for, as my colleague mentioned, a period of repression during the internment, which we still need to deal with.

I personally have had the great experience of Christmas eve dinners with the 12 courses of Christmas—and I am wondering how many in this place can reiterate what those 12 courses are—enjoying blueberry petah brought back from Winnipeg by a Ukrainian Canadian friend for me to enjoy, and my father's many clients in Smoky Lake who were of Ukrainian descent. One cannot be an Albertan without having the experience of being Ukrainian by osmosis, even if I am a proud Scottish Irish Canadian.

Our two countries continue to enjoy a positive bilateral relationship with close historic ties of friendship that have been forged through many generations of Ukrainian immigration to Canada. Many of the Ukrainians who immigrated to Canada arrived in Alberta at the station in my constituency before heading off to

establish successful farm operations. A beautiful display of this 125-year immigration story, crafted by the Kule Folklore Centre in my riding, has been travelling across Canada this past year. I would encourage anybody who has the opportunity to take a look at that. It is a beautiful memorial of the immigration of Ukrainians to Canada.

Along with my colleagues, I have been inspired by the determination of our Ukrainian interns, as well. It is very sad that this program has not continued. I would encourage the government, as it moves forward with a trade agreement, to try to come forward with the funding to bring back more of those interns, because I know they have gone back to Ukraine and are doing the hard work of restoring democracy to that country.

In December 1991, Canada became the first western country to recognize Ukraine's independence. That was followed by the establishment of diplomatic relations, development assistance toward sustainable development for Ukraine, a foreign investment promotion and protection agreement, a bilateral convention for the avoidance of double taxation, and a bilateral air transport agreement. There have been many initiatives over time by governments in support of better relations with Ukraine.

The proposed trade agreement would eliminate almost 100% of the trade duties on Ukrainian imports and 86% of Canadian imports into Ukraine, over approximately seven years. As my colleague mentioned, this is a good route to go because we are trying to even off the trade and give greater benefit to Ukraine as it tries to develop its struggling democracy and its economy.

It is important to keep in mind that, from what I understand, there is currently only \$70 million in trade benefits to Ukraine from trading with Canada. Therefore, we are not talking about a sizeable economic benefit. Rather, this is more a gesture of friendship, to serve as a powerful message that Canada supports the economic development of Ukraine and is willing to trade with and work with this new government as it tries to develop economically. It is also a means to open up more opportunities for investment in trade between our countries. Many in my province export grains, pork, beef, and so forth. It is also intended to provide an incentive for Ukraine to institute further economic reforms for the benefit of the people of Ukraine and investors. There has been a long history in Ukraine, prior to the revolution of dignity, when the people of Ukraine were not the beneficiaries of economic development. It is important for us to keep that in perspective, as many members in this place have raised the issues and concerns of human rights.

As the government has said, in addition to generating commercial benefits for Canadian businesses, the deal would also help spur economic reform and development efforts of Ukraine and strengthen the Canada-Ukraine partnership for peace and prosperity. Many have mentioned the problems in eastern Ukraine, the perils that Ukrainians face with the intrusion of Russian troops, and the end of peace and any potential for economic prosperity. The deal would also pave the way for long-term security, stability, and broad-based economic development in Ukraine.

Hope has increased for democratic governance for Ukraine post the revolution of dignity led in the Maidan and the election of a new government. I was privileged to participate in international monitoring missions for several of the recent elections.

Government Orders

●(1635)

Prior to this change in the regime, Canada identified numerous concerns with the erosion of democracy and rule of law and the infringement of human rights. These concerns were documented in a report prepared by the parliamentary committee on foreign affairs. Among the concerns we identified in 2012 were concerns expressed by chambers of commerce in Ukraine about the lack of legal protections for foreign investors.

The current Ukrainian government is committed to addressing improved investment law and corruption in the courts, but it will be very important, as we proceed with this trade agreement, which will be encouraging more Canadian investors to invest, that they must be careful. We were forewarned that, unless they had deep pockets, their investments might be at risk.

Nonetheless, since that date, we do have a new government. There is greater faith in its commitment to democracy and rule of law reform, but we still receive serious reports of corruption in the courts.

In this deal, there are some environmental measures but no evidence of equivalent actions on the part of Ukraine.

It would have been helpful, as I have mentioned on the CETA deal, and it would have been better to actually establish an independent secretariat, as was done under the NAFTA agreement, so that the Ukrainians could benefit by having an independent assessment of whether or not the government is moving forward and making sure that environmental considerations are factored in—as, for example, there may be Canadian investment in fracking in that country.

There is an additional area where Canada could offer extensive expertise and products in trade, including in conservation, ecological tourism, or pollution control.

Another area where Canada could offer its expertise is in energy efficiency. Ukraine was required to initiate a reform program toward ending substantial subsidies on gas as a condition to its IMF loan. As a contracting party to the European energy community, it must make reforms to comply with EU directives on energy efficiency. The country has consequently initiated measures to transform its outdated system of providing energy, including establishing a state agency of energy efficiency and energy saving. There, perhaps we could learn something from Ukraine. Canada could offer expertise in delivering the necessary programs at the national and local levels to increase the level of knowledge and public awareness and support for investments in improved energy efficiency.

Canadian municipalities could also share their experiences with Ukrainian cities that are interested in switching to use of biofuels.

We could also assist Ukrainian entrepreneurs in marketing their energy technologies in North America. I am delighted that one of my former Ukrainian interns is involved in marketing an award-winning energy-efficiency meter designed by a start-up Ukrainian technology company.

Canadian firms will be exploring the potential for developing energy reserves in Ukraine. It will be, as I mentioned, important that

we also promote our technical expertise in alternative energy sources.

As I mentioned, there have been many concerns about the erosion of democracy and corruption in the courts. In fact, the Ukrainian Canadian Congress actually recommended to audit before it would sign on to a trade deal. It actually attached conditions on human rights, rule of law, and adherence to fundamental democratic principles

The UCC, as well as many of us here, now recognizes that there is a new government with more commitment to these reforms, but it is important that, in this trade deal, we watchdog for the purposes of Ukrainian benefit and also for Canadian investors, to make sure that these reforms are in place and so these investments are safeguarded.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments made by my colleague across the way. I know we have had the opportunity, actually, to be election observers in one of the elections and make a trip there. I think members will find that there are a number of members of Parliament who have had the opportunity to go to Ukraine, to take a look at what is in Ukraine and what it has to offer. I would suggest there is a lot to offer coming from Ukraine to Canada and, vice versa, from Canada to Ukraine.

I am anticipating, with this particular trade agreement that we are going to be voting on, hopefully later today, that we will see an enhanced relationship that would ultimately lead to more trade in different fields, as the member made reference to the different levels of expertise and the different types of things Canada can offer.

My question for the member is this. Would she not agree—and I must say I appreciate the support the NDP has indicated toward this bill—that this is a significant step forward in enhancing the relationship between two great countries?

●(1640)

Ms. Linda Duncan: Mr. Speaker, yes, the signing of a trade deal, as I mentioned, would send a message that Canada has faith in Ukraine and wants to encourage greater Canadian investment. However, it does not go far enough.

Canada previously has given some level of aid to Ukraine to develop its institutions, including at the local level, and to work toward engaging Ukrainians who have not had a lot of experience with democracy.

It is our obligation, in entering into this trade agreement, to make sure that Ukrainians themselves, not the oligarchs, benefit from any trade with Canada.

I encourage the Government of Canada to increase that level of investment and work with the brilliant interns who have served us so well here in Parliament.

Government Orders

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to give a shout-out to two important institutions in my riding, the Holy Eucharist Cathedral on Fourth Avenue in New Westminster, and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Sts. Peter and Paul, which is on Eighth Street in New Westminster.

All of us right across the country have significant Ukrainian communities in our constituencies. I wonder if the member for Edmonton Strathcona could talk a bit more about the impact on these closer ties between Canada and the Ukraine in her own community, which she is very active in and supportive of.

Ms. Linda Duncan: Mr. Speaker, there are Ukrainian Canadians right across this country and they have contributed considerably given the way that they were originally treated and have gone beyond that. A Ukrainian Canadian became the premier of my province of Alberta. Many have served as cabinet ministers and now a number serve as members of Parliament in this place.

The Ukrainian community in Edmonton has raised substantial funds to support the people who are fighting in eastern Ukraine to get back their liberty and have spoken up on behalf of the Tatars. They have also spoken up for the benefit of Ukrainians so that they can develop a true democracy and their families back in the old country can benefit from the economic development that they hope will come soon.

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to start by indicating that I will be sharing my time with the member for Regina—Lewvan.

I am pleased to rise on second reading of Bill C-31 to express support for the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement.

I come from a part of the country, Elmwood—Transcona that, like many parts of the country, has a very strong Ukrainian community, of which I am a part. My mother's father's parents originally came to Canada and settled around Gilbert Plains. They were farmers there. When my grandfather left the farm, he served in the Second World War and ultimately landed in Transcona working for the Canadian National Railway, as many Ukrainians did. Ukrainians came to be an important part of Transcona, and an important part of the railway there, which is my heritage. My grandpa worked decades for CN in the shops, and like many with a good employer, good benefits, and a good pension, was able to make a life for his family, retire, and live out his retirement comfortably in Transcona.

I am proud to be a member of the Ukrainian Canadian community. I am proud to represent a riding where that community is strong and active. I am, therefore, also proud to support this agreement.

There are many issues that I had expressed yesterday about the comprehensive economic and trade agreement with Europe that do not present themselves in the case of the bill before us, starting with the government following its own process: tabling the implementing legislation 21 days after tabling the agreement; and actually submitting the assessment that it is required to submit, including an environmental assessment. Therefore, in terms of process, I would say that the government has done a really bad job of CETA, but has succeeded in following its own rules with respect to CUFTA,

which I think helps in terms of engendering a sense of trust and confidence in the process. This is thing number one.

Thing number two that is different is that we do not have the same contentious investor-state dispute settlement clauses in CUFTA that we have in the Canada-Europe trade agreement. This also goes a long way to alleviate some of the concern on this side of the House about the nature of this deal. It allows us to look at what it really is as a trade deal. It is a deal to lower tariffs on Canadian goods going into Ukraine and lower Canadian tariffs on goods coming out of Ukraine into Canada. On balance, when we look at that, there is already an existing trade relationship. There was a lot of business done already with Ukraine, and this is an opportunity to expand that level of trade. Therefore, overall, it is a good thing.

Members on this side have said, and I will say again, that we think it is important that there be a tougher human rights monitoring provision alongside this agreement to make sure that our trade is not being used to further the interests of an oligopoly in Ukraine. However, we are nevertheless supportive, and we would like to see it ultimately come to fruition. We believe this is something that should be part of the process going forward, but not a reason to stop the process here.

Another difference with this agreement over CETA is that there is an important political point, economics aside, to this particular agreement, because of the rich history between Canada and Ukraine, and because Ukraine is in a very difficult position with a belligerent neighbour that has already annexed part of its territory and has made it clear that it intends to and wants to dominate Ukraine. I think this agreement sends an important political message that Canada stands behind Ukraine, because economic muscle is a real tool that belligerent neighbours use against those they want to control. We are willing to help people in Ukraine who want markets to be able to sell their goods and continue doing business. Canada is open to being a good friend and ally to them, and not force them into trying to trade with a belligerent neighbour.

● (1645)

We want to provide Ukraine with positive options that allow it to continue to have a market for its goods through trying times. That is an important political statement to be made about the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement, especially important to make at this time.

Those are my general thoughts on the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement. A nice thing we could do, because Global Affairs Canada has actually issued some information about the agreement and what the government believes the impact on trade would be, is talk about some of the details. We do not have a comparable document, unfortunately, for the Canada-European Union free trade agreement.

Government Orders

I know some hon. members have gotten into those details. I will spare the House from going over them once again, but I want to highlight the fact that we can actually dig down into those details, because the government has endeavoured to make some of them available. That should be standard practice and it is shocking to me that it is willing to do that for a smaller bilateral agreement but when we talk about larger multilateral agreements that, it is fair to say, have a much larger potential impact for the economy, it is ridiculous that we do not have better information. If we want to make sound economic decisions, we have to do it on the basis of numbers. We have them for this agreement, but we do not have them for some larger potential agreements.

Before I sit down, I want to draw the House's attention to that and implore members on the government side to do a far better job when it comes to the larger agreements. There is a template for it with the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement and it is one that they ought to apply to other larger deals.

● (1650)

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member raised the issue of human rights, which is interesting to bring up in this debate. It is relevant, because when we trade with another country like Ukraine, we have to ensure what whatever we are trading with it is not then used in the oppression of the people locally or potentially used by Russian forces on Ukrainian territory to further their interests on the ground.

I would ask the member if he would support something like the Magnitsky Act. There is a private member's bill before the House that is being considered and I know this is being considered by the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development as well. I would like to hear his thoughts on how Canada could better improve our human rights sanction regime in the context of trade.

Mr. Daniel Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, I am afraid I will have to admit that I am not familiar with the details of that particular act, but in the context of trade with Ukraine and, in particular, in light of its situation, we need some kind of strong oversight mechanism. It is a dynamic situation and we certainly do not want to be doing things that would strengthen the hands of Russian actors within that country. If we are going to say that we are committed to human rights and not having the proceeds of Canadian trade perversely fund the oppression of Ukraine, then we need to also be committed to bringing about a realistic process that could give us the right information about what is actually happening on the ground and then assign some meaningful consequences.

I am not familiar with the particular details of the act that the member mentioned, but that is where we need to go. To the extent that we may or may not be going there, then those are the criteria that I would use to assess that particular proposal.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier to some of the member's colleagues, we are very happy that the New Democrats have decided to support the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement. We see that as a positive thing given the benefits that could be had by both countries with this agreement, not only economically but in terms of building upon the wonderful relationship we currently have.

My question to the member is related to the NDP's support. As I indicated, it is great to see the support. Are there any specific concerns in the legislation that the NDP has today?

Mr. Daniel Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, I note that the member, too, represents a riding with a very strong Ukrainian community and heritage. The Ukrainian Labour Temple is in his riding, among other important Ukrainian institutions in Winnipeg, and he is very fortunate to have that community in his riding.

As I mentioned before, going forward, the NDP's focus, in terms of improvement of the bill, would be to ensure that there is a fulsome and adequate process for monitoring the human rights situation in Ukraine and ensuring that if the information coming back is that there are significant abuses or that the proceeds of Canadian trade end up going to help Russian aggression within the region, we are able to take meaningful action in order to quell that outcome and get things back on track.

From the NDP point of view, that is the main focus of improvement with this act.

Mr. Erin Weir (Regina—Lewvan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the member for Elmwood—Transcona mentioned that the government had followed its own process for this agreement. Does the member have any insight as to why the government did not follow its own process for CETA?

Mr. Daniel Blaikie: I wish I did, Mr. Speaker, but I cannot say that I do. It makes sense that as the size of the agreement increases, the importance of following that process increases as well. When the government tables a trade bill as large as what is called the comprehensive economic trade agreement with Europe, and then asks members to debate it in the House in very short order, without the period the government's own policy suggests MPs need to get up to speed on it, it makes no sense at all.

I do not know why the Liberals chose to do it that way. They felt a false sense of urgency about this all along. Perhaps the member for Regina—Lewvan can take up this theme in his remarks.

● (1655)

Mr. Erin Weir (Regina—Lewvan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, of all the Canadian provinces, Manitoba and Saskatchewan are the two that have the highest population share of Ukrainian ancestry. It is certainly a heritage of which we are extremely proud.

One of our great premiers, Roy Romanow, was of Ukrainian ancestry. He often told stories about his father emigrating from the Ukraine and working on the railroad, so there is a lot of excellent common heritage there. Mr. Romanow himself has made many great contributions to this country, first and foremost as premier of Saskatchewan, but before that he played a critical role in the patriation of the Constitution. After his time as premier, he also chaired a very important report on the future of public medicare in Canada. He would be just one example of an important Ukrainian Canadian from Saskatchewan.

Another example, from the same realm, was a fellow named Ed Tchorzewski, who was perhaps a bit less known nationally. He was a deputy premier of Saskatchewan. Unfortunately, he passed away recently, but his son, Dion Tchorzewski, continues as a very active lawyer in Regina and a very important member of the community.

Government Orders

I would like to turn to the trade agreement with Ukraine we are considering today. I would like to note that I rose in this House both on Friday and on Monday to speak against the comprehensive economic and trade agreement between Canada and the European Union. I made two main points in opposition to that deal. The first had to do with trade flows. I made the point that Canada has a deep trade deficit with the European Union, and in fact, that trade deficit is even deeper if we exclude the United Kingdom, which is leaving the EU in the wake of the Brexit vote. I made the point that simply amplifying or trying to amplify trade flows between Canada and what is left of the European Union would likely result in an even larger trade deficit, which would be a detraction from Canadian output and employment. That was one critique of CETA: its potential negative consequences in terms of trade flows.

My other critique of CETA was its investor-state provisions, which have very little to do with trade and everything to do with empowering foreign corporations to directly challenge our democratic laws, regulations, and public policies through a special, secretive commercial tribunal process, which CETA would apply to the municipal level of government for the first time.

As I said, my objections to CETA were the current pattern of trade between Canada and the EU as well as the investor-state provisions.

The reason the NDP is pleased to support this trade agreement with the Ukraine is that there would be a very different pattern of trade present. Currently, Canada runs a significant trade surplus with the Ukraine, and there is every reason to believe that this liberalization of trade could actually improve that trade surplus and could actually add to Canadian output and employment in modest but important ways. We think this agreement could actually be positive in terms of its effect on Canadian trade flows. That is the first important distinction between this deal and CETA.

The other important distinction, as my colleague from Elmwood—Transcona already explained very well, is that this deal does not include these pernicious investor-state provisions that would allow foreign investors to sue the Canadian government when our public interest regulations interfere with some sort of potential future or hoped-for profit. A major problem with CETA is that it would carry on these investor-state provisions and would impose them at the municipal level. The agreement with the Ukraine does not include those provisions, so we are happy to support it as a trade agreement.

Having said all that, I want to also express some concerns about the situation in the Ukraine and its potential ramifications for trade with Canada.

● (1700)

To be blunt, in Ukraine there is a lack of human rights, a lack of labour rights, and a lack environmental protections. Those can have some very negative consequences for trade flows. One example I would cite is that Ukraine has been a major source of steel dumping in world markets. There is a large-scale industry in Ukraine. It is really not subject to a lot of labour standards or environmental rules. The Canadian International Trade Tribunal has applied anti-dumping duties on Ukrainian steel. Just a few months ago, it renewed those duties, because it found that the problem still persisted that Ukrainian steel coming into Canada was very much underpriced.

I do not want to give the sense that everything is well with trade between Canada and Ukraine, but we see this agreement as a potentially useful tool to remedy that situation, in part because the agreement would allow Canada to continue to use those trade remedies to deal with the underpricing of Ukrainian steel.

I mentioned that there are a lot of people of Ukrainian origin in Regina. There are also a lot of people in Regina who work for a steel mill, so one of the things that is important to me about the agreement is the fact that it preserves Canada's ability to use trade remedies to correct some of the problems we see with Ukrainian steel imports.

Beyond steel, given the problems with human and labour rights in Ukraine, it is very important that the agreement also be accompanied by a human rights assessment. That is something the NDP is going to be proposing when the bill is before committee. We think it is very important, in supporting the agreement, to also support a robust human rights assessment to make sure that the benefits of trade are actually helping the people of Ukraine and are not just lining the pockets of oligarchs.

To sum up, there is a very proud Ukrainian heritage in our country, especially in the prairie provinces, especially in Saskatchewan. I think, for example, of the Regina Walsh Acres NDP Ukrainian banquet. It is a fantastic event in the northern part of my riding that I am often keen to attend. It is always a fantastic meal, with great dancing. It is a great social event.

In terms of the trade deal itself, the NDP is pleased to support it, because we have a constructive trade relationship with Ukraine. We run a trade surplus. We see the possibility that the agreement could actually add to Canadian output and employment while at the same time helping with Ukraine's economic development.

We are also happy to support the agreement because it actually is a trade agreement. It does not include these investor-state provisions that would allow foreign corporations to directly challenge our laws, regulations, and public policies.

Finally, we salute the fact that the agreement preserves Canada's ability to use trade remedy provisions when necessary to deal with some of the problems that exist with Ukrainian products, like steel, coming into Canada.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the fact that the New Democrats have chosen to support this trade agreement is a very strong positive for all Canadians.

We believe that when we have these sorts of trade agreements, it is good for Canada's economy. It is good for our middle class and those aspiring to become part of our middle class. It is, in good part, about creating jobs.

Government Orders

Canada is a trading nation. We are very dependent on world trade. What makes this very special, as the member himself attested, is that it is with Ukraine. If one is from the prairies, one has to appreciate Ukrainian heritage. I thought it was really quite nice that we had perogies served for lunch. I suspect it was somewhat of a coincidence, but it was a nice coincidence.

My question for the member is one I have posed to other members across the way. We understand the economic value. We benefit from that, both Canada and Ukraine. Is there anything else the member would like to add in terms of other aspects of the agreement, such as the idea that this is a significant step forward in enhancing a very special relationship between two countries? Perhaps he would like to add some further thoughts on that or possibly on the people of Ukrainian heritage and the ways they have helped form government policy. I am thinking specifically of organizations like the Ukrainian Canadian Congress and people in our communities who have had an impact on what we are debating today.

• (1705)

Mr. Erin Weir: Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Winnipeg North is unusually magnanimous today, and I greatly appreciate his kind question.

He did sort of broaden NDP support for this trade agreement to a general statement in favour of free trade deals helping the middle class. I think this is an important distinction between the NDP and the government. While the government believes that any and all of these trade deals are a good thing and should be blindly supported, we in the NDP think it is very important to look at the specifics of the agreement and evaluate it on that basis.

It is for that reason that we had some very serious concerns with CETA, but we do not find those concerns present in this agreement. In fact, we see good reasons to support it.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I completely agree that CUFTA, the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement, does not include an investor-state provision. However, I was surprised to discover that it was because we already had an investor agreement with Ukraine. It was brought in in 1994. It has not resulted in any cases that we know of, although one of the odd features of such investor-state agreements is that the Canadian public does not have any right to know about all the cases that come before them, depending on the language. The CETA provisions are different.

I would like to ask about the lack of transparency as Canada enters into, bit by bit, bilateral investment treaty after bilateral investment treaty, weaving a web of increased corporate rule at the global level.

Mr. Erin Weir: Mr. Speaker, we have spoken a lot about the investor-state provisions of trade agreements, but the member is quite right to point out that there are also many of these bilateral investment treaties that entail many of the same problems, many of the same challenges. The problem, really, is that it empowers foreign corporations to directly challenge our democratic laws, regulations, and policies, not in front of the court system, which is open and transparent, but before these secretive, commercial tribunals that meet behind closed doors.

I absolutely agree that this is a huge problem, whether it is through investor-state provisions in a trade agreement or whether it is through a bilateral investment protection agreement.

Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley—Aldergrove, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a real honour to speak with your oversight as Speaker today. So I do not forget, I want to wish you and yours a very merry Christmas as we approach the Christmas season, happy Hanukkah and happy new year.

I am truly honoured to speak to Bill C-31. It is a very important bill and it is unique in that it brings all the parties here from diverse opinions on different political debates together to support a free trade agreement between Canada and Ukraine. It is a good thing. It is nice to see the New Democrats temporarily lay aside their ideologies and their positions on free trade agreements, which is normally no, and say yes, and it is for very important reasons. I believe it is because of the incredible work and the history and relationship between Canada and the Ukraine.

I will be sharing my time with the member for Lakeland.

As has been pointed out, of our population in Canada of only 35 million people, 1.3 million have a Ukrainian heritage. I am one of those. I am greatly honoured that my grandparents, my baba and gido, from Brody, Ukraine, came to Canada and homesteaded, worked the land, built roads, cleared the land and worked hard to pay taxes. It was a very tough time but it was necessary. Different groups came from Europe to Canada to homestead and help build our great country.

That is the foundation on which we find ourselves in Canada. We have this heritage and this wonderful relationship between Canada and Ukraine.

The largest population of people with a Ukrainian heritage of course is in Ukraine. However, the second largest in the world is in Canada. That wonderful Ukrainian culture blesses us. The member across the way was so happy that perogies, cabbage rolls, borscht, kumasi were available. It is the wonderful food. We are also experiencing the wonderful dance at this important time of the year.

I also want to give huge thanks to the member of Parliament for Abbotsford who, in the last Parliament, was the minister of international trade. I have never seen somebody work as hard as he did. He was on the go, going all over the world. He accomplished free trade agreements that would create jobs and financial prosperity in Canada. He worked so hard for our country. I want to thank him for all the work he did.

In fact, I was able to go with him on one of his trade agreement trips. Senator Andreychuk was there as was the member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman. Again, we witnessed first hand how hard the member for Abbotsford, the former minister of international trade, worked.

I was also honoured to be with the former Prime Minister of Canada, Stephen Harper, on one of those trade agreement trips. Shortly after President Yanukovich was elected the president of Ukraine, the prime minister hosted a trade mission to build relations with Ukraine.

Government Orders

On July 14, 2015, Prime Minister Harper and the prime minister of Ukraine successfully completed the negotiations on the Canada free trade agreement. It was a lot of years and a lot of hard work, and it was concluded just before the last election.

● (1710)

I am very happy and thankful that the government has indicated this is also one of its priorities, to continue the work of the previous government and see this very important free trade agreement ratified. It will be good for Canada and for Ukraine.

I also want to give huge thanks to the member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman. He has been long an advocate for justice. He is our critic for defence and is doing a great job. He has been to Ukraine many times. I enjoyed being with him on one of those trips as election observers.

In the last election when President Poroshenko was elected, I was an election observer in western Ukraine. The member observed first hand the attacks of war coming from Russia, directed by Putin. He first took Crimea as we were celebrating the Olympics. Then he continued to try to take eastern Ukraine. That mentality of dominance is very reminiscent of the Stalin years, when they would try to expand the Russian borders through all forms of brutality.

Over the years we saw President Yushchenko poisoned. Then Yanukovich took over. Then there were the shootings in Maidan, Russian provocateurs working with President Yanukovich killing Ukrainians. After Maidan, there was the election when Poroshenko was elected president. He came to Canada and spoke to Parliament in the House. The member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman and the member for Abbotsford built an incredible relationship with the president of Ukraine. For him to come to Canada as one of his first state visits identified the wonderful relationship we had with Ukraine.

I want to thank the government for now moving ahead and ratifying this very important agreement. That shows support to Ukraine. It is a benefit to Ukraine and to Canada. Again, I thank all of those who have done so much work.

More needs to happen. The fix for Ukraine is not won. There is no one secret thing that we can do to support Ukraine as it is protects itself in a defensive mode from the attacks from Russia, wanting to take the eastern part of Ukraine. We need to continue in our support of Ukraine. How do we do that?

Russian aggression has to be identified for what it is. The House will be voting shortly on Bill C-306. Over generations, there have been Russian attacks, from Stalin on, against Crimean Tatars. It meets the definition of genocide. Therefore, Bill C-306 asks Parliament to show Ukraine its support and call genocide what it is in the face of the Crimean Tatars. I hope every member in the House will do the right thing.

The other thing is increasing youth mobility. We need Ukrainian interns to continue to come to Canada and work so they can learn how Parliament is to function, not learn from our bad examples, but from good examples, so they can build a strong, prosperous country. We also need to fund PTSD training so those who struggle from the Russian attacks will be able to get the appropriate treatment. If we train them how to fish, they can fish. If we train them how to treat

PTSD, they can meet those needs within their country, which are so important.

● (1715)

I am available to answer questions, but in the interest of time, I would ask members in the House not to ask me any questions so the member for Lakeland will be able to have her time. We are all anxious to hear her speak.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to speak to Bill C-31 in support of the free trade agreement between Canada and Ukraine on behalf of the thousands of Ukrainian Canadians who call Lakeland home.

As we have heard so often today, the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement, which was successfully negotiated and concluded in July 2015, will immediately eliminate duties on 99.9% of imports from Ukraine into Canada and 86% of Ukrainian tariffs on Canadian products, including industrial goods, forestry and wood products, fish and seafood products. This agreement will benefit both Canadian and Ukrainian exporters, businesses, and customers, and will continue to strengthen the Canadian Ukrainian partnership of peace and prosperity.

Ukraine and Canada have shared a strong and vibrant relationship for over a century. Important milestones for the Ukrainian community in Canada and in my home province of Alberta were marked in 2016. It has been deemed Alberta's Year of the Ukrainian Canadian, as we all celebrate 125 years of Ukrainian immigration into Canada. It also marks the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies. The year 2016 is the 25th year of Ukrainian independence.

Lakeland in particular has benefited from diverse and rich Ukrainian cultural traditions and practices. From Bruderheim to Vermilion, Radway to St. Paul, Vegreville to Lamont, around St. Michael and Andrew, Ukrainian immigrants came to Canada in the early 1890s, before Alberta even became a province, to seek a better life for their families. Vast farmland was sold in quarters to new Ukrainian Canadians for \$10. That is significant, considering many had to sell everything they owned in order to pay \$150 for a ticket to a new life.

By 1914, more than 250,000 Ukrainians called Alberta home. Alberta is where most new Ukrainian Canadians settled and where many of the earliest religious and cultural institutions were founded. Many of these new Canadians arrived with empty pockets, ready to take whatever job they could find, often making just enough to cover basic necessities. Anything extra was invested in cattle, horses, other livestock, and farm tools. Families were able to grow their farm operations and a tightly knit sense of community among all new Ukrainian Canadians, which endures today. The sacrifices that Ukrainian Canadian pioneers made and the hardships they overcame are ones that current generations cannot imagine and future generations will never know.

Government Orders

Agriculture in Alberta in the early 1900s was defined by the success and growth of this productive and generous community. It was Ukrainian immigrants who brought with them specific wheat grains developed to grow red fife wheat, which continues to be grown throughout Alberta today.

The Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement will help support agriculture in Alberta. Albertans will benefit from enhanced market access opportunities and reduced transportation costs. Agriculture and agrifood products are the top exports from western Canada to Ukraine, averaging \$78 million annually between 2011 and 2013.

In 2015, the previous government also established market access for beef, another top export to Ukraine. This sector remains an important and vital part of Canada's economy, especially in Lakeland.

In 2014, over half a million Canadians worked in agriculture, so successful trade agreements like this one will help sustain farmers and agricultural producers long into the future.

I was very lucky to grow up on a farm near Chipman, Alberta, surrounded by Ukrainian families, culture, and history. My husband's family, the Saskiws, came from Lviv, Ukraine just over a hundred years ago and settled in and between Innisfree and Two Hills. My father-in-law's second language is English, his first is Ukrainian. That is not unusual in rural Alberta communities.

As a community, Ukrainian Canadians exemplify the preservation of language and traditions and the passing on of cultural practices to future generations while being proud Canadians. They have helped to build Alberta and I have witnessed first-hand how they continue to contribute every day to Alberta and Canada.

Vegreville, Alberta is home to the world's largest Ukrainian Easter egg, the pysanka, which symbolizes the harmony, vitality, and culture of the community. It is also dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the RCMP, who brought peace and security to the largest multicultural settlement in all of Canada. The Pysanka Festival, held every summer in Vegreville, is the largest Ukrainian festival in Canada. It is an annual gathering for Albertans in Lakeland who come together to enjoy Ukrainian treats prepared mostly by local moms and babas, and to celebrate more than a century of family and community.

• (1720)

Just like the pysanka in Vegreville, the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement embodies the link between our two countries. Ukraine has struggled. The peace and calm we take for granted here in Canada is not the everyday reality for Ukraine. As an enduring partner, Canada has been there to help along the way.

Under the leadership of former Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Canada was able to negotiate the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement, and no government did more to support Ukraine during its crisis than the previous Conservative government. Former Prime Minister Harper was the first G7 leader to visit Ukraine at the beginning of the illegal occupation of Crimea, and travelled to Ukraine four times between 2013 and 2015.

Under former Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Canada was a committed, reliable ally in defence of Ukraine's security and

sovereignty. We are confident that partnership will continue. Canada can and should continue to be an unwavering partner of Ukraine, politically, socially, and economically. One out of every five Canadian jobs is tied to trade, so it is clear how important it is to continue to pursue free trade for Canada, for domestic job creation for Canadians, and because the world needs more of Canada.

To mark the 25th anniversary of Ukraine's independence, President Poroshenko granted the Order of Liberty, one of Ukraine's highest honours, to former Prime Minister Stephen Harper this past summer. This is testament to the long-standing relationship between Canada and Ukraine, and to Prime Minister Harper's dedication to Ukraine on behalf of all Canadians, particularly when they needed it the most.

Today, the Ukrainian people continue to face enormous security and economic challenges. The teaching of Ukraine's culture and heritage bolsters the Ukrainian-Canadian community at home. Since 1976, the University of Alberta has housed the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies. Since then, they have added the Kule Folklore Centre and the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies.

One in five Albertans is of Ukrainian ancestry. The community remains committed to passing on its rich cultural heritage and practices to future generations.

Here in Ottawa, parliamentarians can offer learning opportunities for university students from Ukraine to study here through the Canada-Ukraine parliamentary program. I want to thank the member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman for encouraging me to participate.

Last session, I was honoured to host a Ukrainian student named, Nazar, also from Lviv. He was an active and engaged member, and contributed in many ways to our team every day. He told me, when he completed his term with us, that having learned here in Canada, one of the freest democracies in the entire world, he was determined to continue to contribute to a brighter, stronger future in Ukraine. This program is essential to supporting and enhancing democracy and liberty in Ukraine, just like the Canada-Ukraine free trade agreement is essential to furthering Ukraine's economic stability and independence.

Today, the Ukrainian culture and Ukrainians remain important pillars of many rural and urban Alberta communities. Edmonton houses the largest Ukrainian community, and Alberta has the largest number of Ukrainian communities outside of Ukraine itself.

I am proud to represent thousands of Ukrainian-Canadians who will benefit from this historic agreement. This bill will strengthen our ties, grow both economies, and ensure that Canada and Ukraine remain steadfast partners long into the future.

• (1725)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

Government Orders

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

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

Some hon. members: Nay.

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

And five or more members having risen:

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

• (1805)

[*Translation*]

Before the Clerk announced the results of the vote:

The Speaker: The hon. member for Jonquière is rising on a point of order or perhaps she wishes to clarify her vote on the motion.

Ms. Karine Trudel: Mr. Speaker, I would like to know if the vote of the hon. member for Surrey Centre will count because he returned to his seat after you were standing and had begun reading the motion.

[*English*]

Mr. Randeep Sarai: Mr. Speaker, I was here before the clock had officially begun, but you may have risen and it was before the counting of the vote. I have clarified my position and will leave it up to you.

The Speaker: It sounds like the hon. member may not have been here when I read the question. Members have to be here when I begin to read the question, so I am afraid his vote will not count.

[*Translation*]

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

(*Division No. 176*)

YEAS

Members

Albas
Aldag
Alleslev
Ambrose
Anandasangaree
Arnold
Arya
Aubin
Badawey
Bains
Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu
Bennett

Albrecht
Alghabra
Allison
Amos
Anderson
Arseneault
Ashton
Ayoub
Bagnell
Barlow
Baylis
Beech
Benson

Bergen
Bezan
Bittle
Blair
Boissonnault
Boucher
Boulerice
Brassard
Breton
Brosseau
Caesar-Chavannes
Cannings
Carr
Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Chagger
Chan
Chong
Christopherson
Cooper
Cullen
Dabrusin
Davies
Deltell
Dhillon
Dion
Doherty
Drouin
Dubourg
Duguid
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Duvall
Easter
Ehsassi
Ellis
Eyking
Falk
Fillmore
Finnigan
Fonseca
Fortin
Fraser (West Nova)
Fuhr
Gameau
Généreux
Gerretsen
Gladu
Goldsmith-Jones
Gould
Graham
Hajdu
Harder
Harvey
Hoback
Housefather
Hussen
Iacono
Jones
Jowhari
Kang
Kent
Khera
Kmiec
Lake
Lamoureux
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Laverdière
Lebouthillier
Leitch
Levitt
Lightbound
Long
Ludwig
MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacKenzie
Maguire
Maloney
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)
Mathysen
May (Cambridge)
McCallum
McColeman
McDonald
McKay
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)

Berthold
Bibeau
Blaikie
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Bossio
Boudrias
Boutin-Sweet
Bratina
Brisson
Brown
Calkins
Caron
Carrie
Casey (Charlottetown)
Champagne
Chen
Choquette
Clarke
Cormier
Cuzner
Damoff
DeCoursey
Dhaliwal
Di Iorio
Diotte
Dreeshen
Dubé
Duclos
Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dusseault
Dzerowicz
Eglski
El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith
Eyolfson
Fergus
Finley
Fisher
Foote
Fragiskatos
Fry
Gallant
Garrison
Genius
Gill
Godin
Goodale
Gourde
Grewal
Hardcastle
Hardie
Hehr
Holland
Hughes
Hutchings
Jeneroux
Jordan
Julian
Kelly
Khalid
Kitchen
Kwan
Lametti
Lapointe
Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
LeBlanc
Lefebvre
Leslie
Liepert
Lobb
Longfield
Lukiwski
MacGregor
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Malcolmson
Masle (Windsor West)
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McCauley (Edmonton West)
McCrimmon
McGuinty
McKenna
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)

Routine Proceedings

McLeod (Northwest Territories)	Mendicino
Mihychuk	Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)
Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Sœurs)	
Monsef	
Moore	Morneau
Morrissey	Motz
Mulcair	Murray
Nassif	Nater
Nault	Nicholson
Nuttall	O’Connell
Oliphant	Oliver
O’Regan	Ouellette
Paradis	Paul-Hus
Pauzé	Peterson
Petitpas Taylor	Philpott
Picard	Plamondon
Poilievre	Poissant
Quach	Qualtrough
Ramsey	Rankin
Rayes	Reid
Rempel	Richards
Rioux	Ritz
Robillard	Rodriguez
Romanado	Rota
Rudd	Ruimy
Rusnak	Saganash
Sahota	Saini
Sajjan	Samson
Sangha	Saroya
Scarpaleggia	Scheer
Schieffe	Schmale
Schulte	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Shields
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sikand	Simms
Sohi	Sopuck
Sorbara	Spengemann
Stanton	Ste-Marie
Stetski	Stewart
Strahl	Stubbs
Sweet	Tabbara
Tan	Tassi
Thériault	Trost
Trudel	Van Kesteren
Van Loan	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Vaughan
Vecchio	Viersen
Virani	Wagantall
Warawa	Warkentin
Watts	Waugh
Webber	Weir
Whalen	Wilkinson
Wilson-Raybould	Wong
Wrzesnewskyj	Young
Yurdiga	Zahid
Zimmer — 303	

NAYS

Nil

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on International Trade. (Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

ELECTORAL REFORM

The House resumed from December 8 consideration of the motion.

The Speaker: It being 6:10 p.m., pursuant to order made on Thursday, December 8, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion to concur in the second report of the Special Committee on Electoral Reform.

● (1815)

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

(Division No. 177)

YEAS

Members

Albas	Albrecht
Allison	Ambrose
Anderson	Arnold
Ashton	Aubin
Barlow	Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu	Benson
Bergen	Berthold
Bezan	Blaikie
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)	Boucher
Boudrias	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brassard
Brousseau	Brown
Calkins	Cannings
Caron	Carrie
Chong	Choquette
Christopherson	Clarke
Cooper	Cullen
Davies	Deltell
Diotte	Doherty
Dreeshen	Dubé
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)	Dusseault
Duvall	Eglinski
Falk	Finley
Fortin	Gallant
Garrison	Généreux
Genius	Gill
Gladu	Godin
Gourde	Hardcastle
Harder	Hoback
Hughes	Jeneroux
Julian	Kelly
Kent	Kitchen
Kmieć	Kwan
Lake	Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Laverdière	Leitch
Liepert	Lobb
Lukiwski	MacGregor
MacKenzie	Maguire
Malcolmson	Masse (Windsor West)
Mathysen	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McCaughey (Edmonton West)	McColeman
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)	Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)
Moore	Motz
Mulcair	Nater
Nicholson	Nuttall
Paul-Hus	Pauzé
Plamondon	Poilievre
Quach	Ramsey
Rankin	Rayes
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Ritz
Saganash	Saroya
Scheer	Schmale
Shields	Sopuck
Stanton	Ste-Marie
Stetski	Stewart
Strahl	Stubbs
Sweet	Thériault
Trudel	Van Kesteren
Van Loan	Vecchio
Viersen	Wagantall
Warawa	Warkentin
Watts	Waugh
Webber	Weir
Wong	Yurdiga
Zimmer — 131	

Government Orders

NAYS

Members

Aldag
 Alleslev
 Anandasangaree
 Arya
 Badawey
 Bains
 Beech
 Bibeau
 Blair
 Bossio
 Breton
 Caesar-Chavannes
 Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
 Chagger
 Chan
 Cormier
 Dabrusin
 DeCoursey
 Dhillon
 Dion
 Dubourg
 Duguid
 Dzerowicz
 Ehsassi
 Ellis
 Eyking
 Fergus
 Finnigan
 Fonseca
 Fragiskatos
 Fry
 Garneau
 Goldsmith-Jones
 Gould
 Grewal
 Hardie
 Hehr
 Housefather
 Hutchings
 Jones
 Jowhari
 Khalid
 Lametti
 Lapointe
 LeBlanc
 Lefebvre
 Levitt
 Lockhart
 Longfield
 MacAulay (Cardigan)
 Maloney
 May (Cambridge)
 McCrimmon
 McGuinty
 McKenna
 McLeod (Northwest Territories)
 Mihychuk
 Soeurs)
 Monsef
 Morrissey
 Nassif
 O'Connell
 Oliver
 Oueltette
 Peterson
 Philpott
 Poissant
 Rioux
 Rodriguez
 Rota
 Ruimy
 Sahota
 Sajjan
 Sangha
 Scarpaleggia
 Schulte
 Sgro
 Sheehan
 Sidhu (Brampton South)
 Simms

Alghabra
 Amos
 Arseneault
 Ayoub
 Bagnell
 Baylis
 Bennett
 Bittle
 Boissonnault
 Bratina
 Brison
 Carr
 Casey (Charlottetown)
 Champagne
 Chen
 Cuzner
 Damoff
 Dhaliwal
 Di Iorio
 Drouin
 Duclos
 Duncan (Etobicoke North)
 Easter
 El-Khoury
 Erskine-Smith
 Eyolfson
 Fillmore
 Fisher
 Foote
 Fraser (West Nova)
 Fuhr
 Gerretsen
 Goodale
 Graham
 Hajdu
 Harvey
 Holland
 Hussen
 Iacono
 Jordan
 Kang
 Khera
 Lamoureux
 Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
 LeBouthillier
 Leslie
 Lightbound
 Long
 Ludwig
 MacKinnon (Gatineau)
 Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)
 McCallum
 McDonald
 McKay
 McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
 Mendicino
 Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-
 Morneau
 Murray
 Nault
 O'iphant
 O'Regan
 Paradis
 Petitpas Taylor
 Picard
 Qualtrough
 Robillard
 Romanado
 Rudd
 Rusnak
 Saini
 Samson
 Sarai
 Schiefke
 Serré
 Shanahan
 Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
 Sikand
 Sohi

Sorbara
 Tabbara
 Tassi
 Vandenbeld
 Virani
 Wilkinson
 Wrzesnewskyj
 Zahid — 173

Spengemann
 Tan
 Vandal
 Vaughan
 Whalen
 Wilson-Raybould
 Young

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion defeated

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

**COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC AND TRADE
 AGREEMENT**

The House resumed from December 12 consideration of the motion that Bill C-30, An Act to implement the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement between Canada and the European Union and its Member States and to provide for certain other measures, be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the motion that this question be now put.

The Speaker: The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-30.

The question is on the motion that the question be now put.

[*English*]

Hon. Andrew Leslie: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I believe if you see it, you would find unanimous consent to apply the result of the previous vote to this one, with Liberals voting yea.

The Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Gordon Brown: Mr. Speaker, Conservatives agree to apply, and we will be voting yes.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet: Mr. Speaker, the NDP agrees to apply the vote, but this time we are voting no.

Mr. Luc Thériault: Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois agrees to apply the vote, but we are voting no.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, I think that everyone forgets about me. The caucus is absolutely unanimous and votes no.

● (1820)

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

(*Division No. 178*)

YEAS

Members

Albas
 Aldag
 Alleslev
 Allison
 Amos
 Anandasangaree
 Arnold

Albrecht
 Alghabra
 Amos
 Anderson
 Arseneault

Government Orders

Arya	Ayoub	Ouellette	Paradis
Badawey	Bagnell	Paul-Hus	Peterson
Bains	Barlow	Petipas Taylor	Philpott
Baylis	Beech	Picard	Poilevre
Bennett	Bergen	Poissant	Qualtrough
Berthold	Bezan	Rayes	Reid
Bibeau	Bittle	Rempel	Richards
Blair	Boissonnault	Rioux	Ritz
Bossio	Boucher	Robillard	Rodriguez
Brassard	Bratina	Romanado	Rota
Breton	Brison	Rudd	Ruimy
Brown	Caesar-Chavannes	Rusnak	Sahota
Calkins	Carr	Saini	Sajjan
Carrie	Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)	Samson	Sangha
Casey (Charlottetown)	Chagger	Sarai	Saroya
Champagne	Chan	Scarpaleggia	Scheer
Chen	Chong	Schiefke	Schmale
Clarke	Cooper	Schulte	Serré
Cormier	Cuzner	Sgro	Shanahan
Dabrusin	Damoff	Sheehan	Shields
DeCoursey	Deltell	Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Dhaliwal	Dhillon	Sikand	Simms
Di Iorio	Dion	Sohi	Sopuck
Diotte	Doherty	Sorbara	Spengemann
Dreeshen	Drouin	Stanton	Strahl
Dubourg	Duclos	Stubbs	Sweet
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Tabbara	Tan
Dzerowicz	Easter	Tassi	Van Kesteren
Eglinski	Ehsassi	Van Loan	Vandal
El-Khoury	Ellis	Vandenbeld	Vaughan
Erskine-Smith	Eyking	Vecchio	Viersen
Eyolfson	Falk	Virani	Wagantall
Fergus	Fillmore	Warawa	Warkentin
Finley	Finnigan	Watts	Waugh
Fisher	Fonseca	Webber	Whalen
Footé	Fragiskatos	Wilkinson	Wilson-Raybould
Fraser (West Nova)	Fry	Wong	Wrzesnewskyj
Fuhr	Gallant	Young	Yurdiga
Garneau	Généreux	Zahid	Zimmer— 256
Genuis	Gerretsen		
Gladu	Godin		
Goldsmith-Jones	Goodale		
Gould	Gourde		
Graham	Grewal		
Hajdu	Harder		
Hardie	Harvey		
Hehr	Hoback		
Holland	Housefather		
Hussen	Hutchings		
Iacono	Jeneroux		
Jones	Jordan		
Jowhari	Kang		
Kelly	Kent		
Khalid	Khera		
Kitchen	Kmiec		
Lake	Lametti		
Lamoureux	Lapointe		
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)		
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier		
Lefebvre	Leitch		
Leslie	Levitt		
Liepert	Lightbound		
Lobb	Lockhart		
Long	Longfield		
Ludwig	Lukiwski		
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacKenzie		
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maguire		
Maloney	Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)		
May (Cambridge)	McCallum		
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McColeman		
McCrimmon	McDonald		
McGuinty	McKay		
McKenna	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)		
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)	McLeod (Northwest Territories)		
Medicino	Mihychuk		
Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)	Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Sœurs)		
Monsef	Morneau		
Morrissey	Motz		
Murray	Nassif		
Nater	Nault		
Nicholson	Nuttall		
O'Connell	Oliphant		
Oliver	O'Regan		

*Government Orders***NAYS**

Members

Ashton	Aubin
Barsalou-Duval	Beaulieu
Benson	Blaikie
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)	Boudrias
Boulerice	Boutin-Sweet
Brosseau	Cannings
Caron	Choquette
Christopherson	Cullen
Davies	Dubé
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)	Dusseault
Duvall	Fortin
Garrison	Gill
Hardcastle	Hughes
Julian	Kwan
Laverdière	MacGregor
Malcolmson	Masse (Windsor West)
Mathysen	May (Saanic—Gulf Islands)
Moore	Mulcair
Paupé	Plamondon
Quach	Ramsey
Rankin	Saganash
Ste-Marie	Stetski
Stewart	Thériault
Trudel	Weir— 48

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.*[English]*

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.**Some hon. members:** No.

Government Orders

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:

• (1825)

[*Translation*]

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

(*Division No. 179*)

YEAS

Members

Albas	Albrecht	Housefather	Hussen
Aldag	Alghabra	Hutchings	Iacono
Alleslev	Allison	Jeneroux	Jones
Ambrose	Amos	Jordan	Jowhari
Anandasangaree	Anderson	Kang	Kelly
Arnold	Arseneault	Kent	Khalid
Arya	Ayoub	Khera	Kitchen
Badawey	Bagnell	Kmiec	Lake
Bains	Barlow	Lametti	Lamoureux
Barsalou-Duval	Baylis	Lapointe	Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Beaulieu	Beech	Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)	LeBlanc
Bennett	Bergen	Lebouthillier	Lefebvre
Berthold	Bezan	Leitch	Leslie
Bibeau	Bittle	Levitt	Liepert
Blair	Boissonnault	Lightbound	Lobb
Bossio	Boucher	Lockhart	Long
Boudrias	Brassard	Longfield	Ludwig
Bratina	Breton	Lukivski	MacAulay (Cardigan)
Brisson	Brown	MacKenzie	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Caesar-Chavannes	Calkins	Maguire	Maloney
Carr	Carrie	Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)	
Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)	Casey (Charlottetown)	May (Cambridge)	
Chagger	Champagne	McCallum	McCaughey (Edmonton West)
Chan	Chen	McColeman	McCrimmon
Chong	Clarke	McDonald	McGuinity
Cooper	Cormier	McKay	McKenna
Cooper	Dabrusin	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
Cuzner	DeCoursey	McLeod (Northwest Territories)	Medicino
Damoff	Dhaliwal	Mihychuk	Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)
Deltell	Di Iorio	Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Sœurs)	
Dhillon	Diotte	Monsef	
Dion	Dreeshen	Morneau	Morrissey
Doherty	Dubourg	Motz	Murray
Drouin	Duguid	Nassif	Nater
Duclos	Dzerowicz	Nault	Nicholson
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Eglinski	Nuttall	O'Connell
Easter	El-Khoury	Oliphant	Oliver
Ehsassi	Erskine-Smith	O'Regan	Ouellette
Ellis	Eyolfson	Paradis	Paul-Hus
Eyking	Fergus	Pauzé	Peterson
Falk	Finley	Petitpas Taylor	Philpott
Fillmore	Fisher	Picard	Plamondon
Finnigan	Footte	Poilievre	Poissant
Fonseca	Fragiskatos	Qualtrough	Rayes
Fortin	Fry	Reid	Rempel
Fraser (West Nova)	Gallant	Richards	Rioux
Fuhr	Généreux	Ritz	Robillard
Garneau	Gerretsen	Rodriguez	Romanado
Genuis	Gladu	Rota	Rudd
Gill	Goldsmith-Jones	Ruimy	Rusnak
Godin	Gould	Sahota	Saini
Goodale	Graham	Sajjan	Samson
Gourde	Hajdu	Sangha	Sarai
Grewal	Hardie	Saroya	Scarpaleggia
Harder	Hehr	Scheer	Schieffe
Harvey	Holland	Schmale	Schulte
Hoback		Serré	Sgro
		Shanahan	Sheehan
		Shields	Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
		Sidhu (Brampton South)	Sikand
		Simms	Sohi
		Sopuck	Sorbara
		Spengemann	Stanton
		Ste-Marie	Strahl
		Stubbs	Sweet
		Tabbara	Tan
		Tassi	Thériault
		Trost	Van Kesteren
		Van Loan	Vandal
		Vandenbeld	Vaughan
		Vecchio	Viersen
		Virani	Wagantall
		Warawa	Warkentin
		Watts	Waugh
		Webber	Whalen
		Wilkinson	Wilson-Raybould
		Wong	Wrzesnewskyj
		Young	Yurdiga
		Zahid	Zimmer — 266

Private Members Business

NAYS

Members

Ashton	Aubin
Benson	Blaikie
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brosseau
Cannings	Caron
Choquette	Christopherson
Cullen	Davies
Dubé	Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Dusseault	Duvall
Garrison	Hardcastle
Hughes	Julian
Kwan	Laverdière
MacGregor	Malcolmson
Masse (Windsor West)	Mathysen
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	Moore
Mulcair	Quach
Ramsey	Rankin
Saganash	Stetski
Stewart	Trudel
Weir— 39	

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on International Trade.

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

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

CRIMINAL CODE

The House resumed from December 6 consideration of the motion that Bill C-235, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Corrections and Conditional Release Act (fetal alcohol disorder), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Speaker: Pursuant to an order made on Thursday, December 1, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-235 under private members' business.

- (1840)

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

(Division No. 180)

YEAS

Members

Albrecht	Aldag
Allison	Amos
Anandasangaree	Arseneault
Ashton	Aubin
Ayoub	Badawey
Bagnell	Baylis
Benson	Blaikie
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)	Bossio
Boulerice	Boutin-Sweet
Bratina	Brosseau
Calkins	Cannings
Caron	Chan
Chen	Choquette
Christopherson	Cullen
Dabrusin	Damoff
Davies	Dhaliwal
Dubé	Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Dusseault	Duvall

Easter	Ehsassi
Ellis	Erskine-Smith
Eyking	Eyolfson
Fergus	Fillmore
Fry	Garrison
Genuis	Gerretsen
Godin	Graham
Hardcastle	Hardie
Harvey	Housefather
Hughes	Hussen
Iacono	Jones
Jordan	Jowhari
Julian	Kang
Khalid	Kmiec
Kwan	Lake
Lapointe	Laverdière
Lefebvre	Liepert
Lockhart	MacGregor
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Malcolmson
Maloney	Masse (Windsor West)
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)	
Mathysen	
May (Cambridge)	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McCaughey (Edmonton West)	McColeman
McCrimmon	McKay
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendicino	Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Sœurs)
Moore	Morrissey
Mulcair	Nault
O'Connell	Oliphant
Ouellette	Paradis
Peterson	Quach
Ramsey	Rankin
Rioux	Romanado
Rota	Rusnak
Saganash	Sahota
Saini	Samson
Scarpaleggia	Schieffe
Schulte	Sgro
Shanahan	Sikand
Sopuck	Sorbara
Spengemann	Stetski
Stewart	Strahl
Tabbara	Tan
Trost	Trudel
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Vaughan	Viersen
Wagantall	Weir
Whalen	Wrzesnewskyj
Zahid— 133	

NAYS

Members

Alghabra
Ambrose
Arnold
Barlow
Beaulieu
Bennett
Berthold
Bibeau
Blair
Boucher
Brassard
Brison
Caesar-Chavannes
Carrie
Casey (Charlottetown)
Champagne
Clarke
Cormier
DeCourcey
Dhillon
Dion
Doherty
Drouin
Duclos
Duncan (Etobicoke North)
El-Khoury
Finley
Fisher

Private Members Business

Fonseca	Foote
Fortin	Fragiskatos
Fraser (West Nova)	Fuhr
Gallant	Garneau
Généreux	Gill
Glada	Goldsmith-Jones
Goodale	Gould
Gourde	Grewal
Hajdu	Harder
Hehr	Hoback
Holland	Hutchings
Jeneroux	Kelly
Kent	Khera
Kitchen	Lametti
Lamoureux	Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)	LeBlanc
Lebouthillier	Leitch
Leslie	Levitt
Lobb	Long
Longfield	Ludwig
Lukiwski	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacKenzie	Maguire
Marcel	McCallum
McDonald	McGuinty
McKenna	McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
Mihychuk	Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)
Monsef	Morneau
Motz	Murray
Nassif	Nater
Nicholson	Nuttall
Oliver	O'Regan
Paul-Hus	Paupé
Petitpas Taylor	Philpott
Picard	Plamondon
Poilievre	Poissant
Qualtrough	Rayes
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Ritz
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rudd	Ruimy
Sajjan	Sangha
Sarai	Saroya
Scheer	Schmale
Serré	Sheehan
Shields	Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Simms
Sohi	Stanton
Ste-Marie	Stubbs
Sweet	Tassi
Thériault	Van Kesteren
Van Loan	Vecchio
Virani	Warawa
Warkentin	Watts
Waugh	Webber
Wilkinson	Wilson-Raybould
Wong	Young
Yurdiga	Zimmer— 170

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion defeated.

Mr. Larry Miller: Mr. Speaker, I have been in this place for 12 and a half years—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Larry Miller: Mr. Speaker, I could never understand how anyone could actually vote twice, but I did vote twice. I meant to vote against the bill, which I did the second time, but I hope you understand, Mr. Speaker, that I was talking to the member for Chatham-Kent—Leamington. I have four grandchildren, and he was telling me that he has 35. I was in such disbelief that I accidentally voted for the bill.

The Speaker: That has to be the best explanation I have ever heard.

The hon. member for Chatham-Kent—Leamington.

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren: Mr. Speaker, I too was led down the garden path. This too is the first time I have misstepped in this direction. I certainly hope this will not develop a pattern, but I intend to vote against the motion.

The Speaker: The record will be corrected accordingly.

* * *

[Translation]

CRIMEAN TATAR DEPORTATION (“SÜRGÜNLIK”) MEMORIAL DAY ACT

The House resumed from December 7 consideration of the motion that Bill C-306, An Act to establish a Crimean Tatar Deportation (“Sürgünlik”) Memorial Day and to recognize the mass deportation of the Crimean Tatars in 1944 as an act of genocide, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Speaker: Pursuant to an order made on Thursday, December 1, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-306 under private members' business.

● (1850)

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

(Division No. 181)

YEAS

Members

Albas	Albrecht
Allison	Ambrose
Anderson	Arnold
Ashton	Aubin
Barlow	Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu	Benson
Bergen	Berthold
Bezan	Blaikie
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)	Boucher
Boudrias	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brassard
Brousseau	Brown
Calkins	Cannings
Caron	Carrie
Chong	Choquette
Christopherson	Clarke
Cooper	Cullen
Deltell	Diotte
Doherty	Dreeschen
Dubé	Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Dusseault	Duvall
Egliniski	Falk
Finley	Fonseca
Fortin	Gallant
Garrison	Généreux
Genius	Gill
Glada	Godin
Gourde	Hardcastle
Harder	Hoback
Hughes	Jeneroux
Julian	Kelly
Kent	Kitchen
Kmieciak	Kwan
Lake	Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Laverdière	Leitch
Liepert	Lobb
Lukiwski	MacGregor

Private Members Business

MacKenzie
Malcolmson
Marcil
Mathysen
McCauley (Edmonton West)
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
Moore
Mulcair
Nicholson
Ouellette
Pauzé
Poilievre
Ramsey
Rayes
Rempel
Ritz
Saroya
Schmale
Sopuck
Ste-Marie
Stewart
Stubbs
Thériault
Trudel
Van Loan
Viersen
Wagantall
Warkentin
Waugh
Weir
Wrzesnewskyj
Zimmer — 137

Maguire
Maloney
Masse (Windsor West)
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McColeman
Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)
Motz
Nater
Nuttall
Paul-Hus
Plamondon
Quach
Rankin
Reid
Richards
Saganash
Scheer
Shields
Stanton
Stetski
Strahl
Sweet
Trost
Van Kesteren
Vecchio
Virani
Warawa
Watts
Webber
Wong
Yurdiga

MacKinnon (Gatineau)
May (Cambridge)
McCrimmon
McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
Mendicino
Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Sœurs)
Monsef
Morneau
Murray
Nault
Oliphant
O'Regan
Petipas Taylor
Picard
Qualtrough
Robillard
Romanado
Rudd
Sahota
Sajjan
Sangha
Scarpaleggia
Schulte
Shanahan
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
Sikand
Sohi
Spengemann
Tan
Vandal
Vaughan
Wilkinson
Young
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)
McCallum
McDonald
McKenna
McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Milychuk
Morrissey
Nassif
O'Connell
Oliver
Paradis
Philpott
Poissant
Rioux
Rodriguez
Rota
Ruimy
Saini
Samson
Sarai
Schieffe
Serré
Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Simms
Sorbara
Tabbara
Tassi
Vandenbeld
Whalen
Wilson-Raybould
Zahid — 160

NAYS

Members

Aldag
Alleslev
Arseneault
Ayoub
Bagnell
Baylis
Bennett
Bittle
Boissonnault
Bratina
Brisson
Carr
Casey (Charlottetown)
Champagne
Cormier
Dabrusin
DeCoursey
Dhillon
Dion
Dubourg
Duguid
Dzerowicz
Ehsassi
Ellis
Eyking
Fergus
Finnigan
Foote
Fraser (West Nova)
Fuhr
Gerretsen
Goodale
Graham
Hajdu
Harvey
Holland
Iacono
Jordan
Kang
Khera
Lamoureux
Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
Lebouthillier
Leslie
Lightbound
Long
Ludwig

Alghabra
Amos
Arya
Badawey
Bains
Beech
Bibeau
Blair
Bossio
Breton
Caesar-Chavannes
Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Chagger
Chen
Cuzner
Damoff
Dhaliwal
Di Iorio
Drouin
Duclos
Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Easter
El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith
Eyolfson
Fillmore
Fisher
Fragiskatos
Fry
Gameau
Goldsmith-Jones
Gould
Grewal
Hardie
Hehr
Hutchings
Jones
Jowhari
Khalid
Lametti
Lapointe
LeBlanc
Lefebvre
Levitt
Lockhart
Longfield
MacAulay (Cardigan)

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion defeated.

* * *

[English]

GERMAN HERITAGE MONTH

The House resumed from December 9 consideration of the motion.

The Speaker: Pursuant to an order made on Thursday, December 1, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division.

● (1900)

[Translation]

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

(Division No. 182)

YEAS

Members

Albas	Albrecht
Aldag	Alghabra
Alleslev	Allison
Ambrose	Amos
Anandasangaree	Anderson
Arnold	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Aubin	Ayoub
Badawey	Bagnell
Bains	Barlow
Barsalou-Duval	Baylis
Beech	Bennett
Benson	Bergen
Berthold	Bezan
Bibeau	Bittle
Blaikie	Blair

Private Members Business

Blaney (North Island—Powell River)	Boissonnault	Morrissey	Motz
Bossio	Boucher	Mulcair	Murray
Boudrias	Boutin-Sweet	Nassif	Nater
Brassard	Bratina	Nault	Nicholson
Breton	Brison	Nuttall	O'Connell
Brosseau	Brown	Oliphant	Oliver
Caesar-Chavannes	Calkins	O'Regan	Ouellette
Cannings	Caron	Paradis	Paul-Hus
Carr	Carrie	Paupé	Peterson
Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)	Casey (Charlottetown)	Petitpas Taylor	Philpott
Chagger	Champagne	Picard	Plamondon
Chan	Chen	Poilievre	Poissant
Chong	Choquette	Quach	Qualtrough
Christopherson	Clarke	Ramsey	Rankin
Cooper	Cormier	Rayes	Reid
Cullen	Cuzner	Rempel	Richards
Dabrusin	Damoff	Rioux	Ritz
Davies	DeCoursey	Robillard	Rodriguez
Deltell	Dhaliwal	Romanado	Rota
Dhillon	Di Iorio	Rudd	Ruimy
Dion	Diotte	Rusnak	Saganash
Doherty	Dreeshen	Sahota	Saini
Drouin	Dubé	Sajjan	Samson
Dubourg	Duclos	Sangha	Sarai
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Saroya	Scarpaleggia
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)	Dusseau	Scheer	Schiefke
Duvall	Dzerowicz	Schmale	Schulte
Easter	Egliniski	Serré	Shanahan
Ehsassi	El-Khoury	Sheehan	Shields
Ellis	Erskine-Smith	Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Eyolfson	Falk	Sikand	Simms
Fergus	Fillmore	Sohi	Sopuck
Finley	Finnigan	Sorbara	Spengemann
Fisher	Fonseca	Stanton	Ste-Marie
Footé	Fortin	Stetski	Stewart
Fragiskatos	Fraser (West Nova)	Strahl	Stubbs
Fry	Fuhr	Sweet	Tabbara
Gallant	Garneau	Tan	Tassi
Garrison	Généreux	Thériault	Trost
Genuis	Gerretsen	Trudel	Van Kesteren
Gill	Glada	Van Loan	Vandal
Godin	Goldsmith-Jones	Vandenbeld	Vaughan
Goodale	Gould	Vecchio	Viersen
Gourde	Graham	Virani	Wagantall
Grewal	Hajdu	Warawa	Warkentin
Hardcastle	Harder	Watts	Waugh
Hardie	Harvey	Webber	Weir
Hehr	Hoback	Whalen	Wilkinson
Holland	Housefather	Wilson-Raybould	Wong
Hughes	Hussen	Wrzesnewskyj	Young
Hutchings	Iacono	Yurdiga	Zahid
Jeneroux	Jones	Zimmer — 301	
Jordan	Jowhari		
Julian	Kang		
Kelly	Kent	Nil	NAYS
Khalid	Khera		
Kitchen	Kmieciak		
Kwan	Lake		
Lametti	Lamoureux		
Lapointe	Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Nil	PAIRED
Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)	Laverdière		
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier	The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.	
Lefebvre	Leitch		
Leslie	Levitt		* * *
Liepert	Lightbound		
Lobb	Lockhart		
Long	Longfield		
Ludwig	Lukiwski		
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacGregor		
MacKenzie	MacKinnon (Gatineau)		
Maguire	Malcolmson		
Maloney	Maril		
Masse (Windsor West)	Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)		
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)		
May (Saanic—Gulf Islands)	McCallum		
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McColeman		
McCrimmon	McDonald		
McGuinty	McKay		
McKenna	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)		
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)	McLeod (Northwest Territories)		
Medicino	Mihychuk	● (1910)	
Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)	Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Soeurs)		
Monsef	Momeau		

NAYS

PAIRED

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

INCOME TAX ACT

The House resumed from December 12, 2016, the motion that Bill C-301, an act to amend the Income Tax Act and to make a related amendment to another Act (registered retirement income fund), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Speaker: Pursuant to an order made on Thursday, December 1, 2016, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-301 under private members' business.

● (1910)

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

*Private Members Business**(Division No. 183)*

YEAS

Members

Albas	Albrecht
Allison	Ambrose
Anderson	Arnold
Ashton	Aubin
Barlow	Benson
Bergen	Berthold
Bezan	Blaikie
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)	Boucher
Boulerice	Boutin-Sweet
Brassard	Brosseau
Brown	Calkins
Cannings	Caron
Carrie	Chong
Choquette	Christopherson
Clarke	Cooper
Cullen	Davies
Deltell	Diotte
Doherty	Dreeschen
Dubé	Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Dusseauult	Duvall
Eglinski	Erskine-Smith
Falk	Finley
Gallant	Garrison
Généreux	Genuis
Gladu	Godin
Gourde	Hardcastle
Harder	Hoback
Hughes	Jeneroux
Julian	Kelly
Kent	Kitchen
Kniec	Kwan
Lake	Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Laverdière	Leitch
Liepert	Lobb
Lukiwski	MacGregor
MacKenzie	Maguire
Malcolmson	Masse (Windsor West)
Mathysen	May (Saarnich—Gulf Islands)
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McColeman
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)	Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)
Moore	Motz
Mulcair	Nater
Nicholson	Nuttall
Paul-Hus	Poilievre
Quach	Ramsey
Rankin	Rayes
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Ritz
Rota	Saganash
Saroya	Scheer
Schmale	Shields
Sopuck	Stanton
Stetski	Stewart
Strahl	Stubbs
Sweet	Trost
Trudel	Van Kesteren
Van Loan	Vecchio
Viersen	Wagantall
Warawa	Warkentin
Watts	Waugh
Webber	Weir
Wong	Yurdiga
Zimmer— 125	

NAYS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Alleslev	Amos
Anandasangaree	Arseneault
Arya	Ayoub
Badawey	Bagnell
Bains	Barsalou-Duval
Baylis	Beech
Bennett	Bibeau
Bittle	Blair
Boissonnault	Bossio

Boudrias	Bratina
Breton	Brison
Caesar-Chavannes	Carr
Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)	Casey (Charlottetown)
Chagger	Champagne
Chan	Chen
Cormier	Cuzner
Dabrusin	Damoff
DeCoursey	Dhalawal
Dhillon	Di Iorio
Dion	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dzerowicz	Easter
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Ellis	Eyking
Eyolfson	Fergus
Fillmore	Finnigan
Fisher	Fonseca
Foote	Fortin
Fragiskatos	Fraser (West Nova)
Fry	Fuhr
Gameau	Gerretsen
Gill	Goldsmith-Jones
Goodale	Gould
Graham	Grewal
Hajdu	Hardie
Harvey	Hehr
Holland	Housefather
Hussen	Hutchings
Iacono	Jones
Jordan	Jowhari
Kang	Khalid
Khera	Lametti
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)	LeBlanc
Lebouthillier	Lefebvre
Leslie	Levitt
Lightbound	Lockhart
Long	Longfield
Ludwig	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Marcil	Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)
May (Cambridge)	McCallum
McCrimmon	McDonald
McGuinty	McKay
McKenna	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod (Northwest Territories)	Mendicino
Mihychuk	Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Érables)
Soeurs)	
Monsef	Morneau
Morrissey	Murray
Nassif	Nault
O'Connell	Oliphant
Oliver	O'Regan
Ouellette	Paradis
Paupé	Peterson
Petitpas Taylor	Philpott
Picard	Plamondon
Poissant	Qualtrough
Rioux	Robillard
Rodriguez	Romanado
Rudd	Ruimy
Rusnak	Sahota
Saini	Sajjan
Samson	Sangha
Sarai	Scarpaleggia
Schiefke	Schulte
Serré	Shanahan
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Sidhu (Brampton South)	Sikand
Simms	Sohi
Sorbara	Spengemann
Ste-Marie	Tabbara
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Wrzesnewskyj	Young
Zahid— 179	

PAIRED

Nil

Adjournment Proceedings

The Speaker: I declare the motion 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.

• (1915)

[English]

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured once again to convey my personal hope and New Democrats' hope that the national inquiry into the issue of murdered and missing indigenous women and girls is successful and does the work for the country for healing to end violence against indigenous women and girls forever and to root out its root causes. However, we need the inquiry to work well, and we need it to do its work. I ask these questions in that context.

Last month the United Nations committee to end discrimination against women expressed serious concerns with Canada's inquiry as it is now envisioned. It says it is not taking a human rights approach. It does not have the explicit mandate to review policing or look into unresolved cases. It says specifically that the committee is concerned about the lack of an explicit assurance of adequate support and protection provided to witnesses, and about the lack of sufficient cooperation with indigenous women's organizations in the process of establishing the inquiry.

When the United Nations committee weighs in like this, we should pay attention; and so in that constructive spirit, I would like to flag that those concerns cited by the United Nations fly very much with what we heard directly from the families of murdered and missing women and girls.

Right here on the front steps of the Hill at the Sisters in Spirit vigil on October 4, we heard the great frustration of the mothers of missing daughters in particular. One Algonquin woman, Bridget Tolley, said:

We're back again. We want justice. We don't want to be here anymore. We shouldn't have to be here. We shouldn't have to beg for justice.

She has been fighting to pursue the case of her mother for 15 years.

Another Mohawk woman, Beverley Jacobs, former president of the Native Women's Association of Canada, said:

I'm tired of government. I'm tired of their words.

I want to see something done for families. Something that they can feel that something is being done and their own justice is being addressed.

I have heard this repeatedly from advocates for murdered and missing indigenous women. They feel that their voices were not heard in the formation of the inquiry and in its terms of reference.

They felt frustrated as the opening date of the inquiry, September 1, passed without receiving any details of how they would be included. The inquiry only provided the loved ones of the murdered and missing with contact information just last week.

We have fantastic organizations that can identify the needs of those participating in the inquiry and can really help make a difference and make it work.

I ask the government this directly. Will it follow the United Nations recommendation that the government ensure support and protection to witnesses and strengthen the inclusive partnership with indigenous women's organizations and national and international human rights institutions and bodies during the conducting of the murdered and missing indigenous women's inquiry and its implementation process?

Ms. Yvonne Jones (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise here today, on traditional Algonquin territory, to respond to the question posed by the hon. member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith.

We have followed through on our commitment as a government to launch a truly national, independent inquiry into the ongoing tragedy of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. It is an important step in our journey of reconciliation with indigenous people in Canada.

Last winter and last spring, we listened to ideas on how the inquiry should be designed. There were 18 face-to-face meetings that involved one or more of the ministers of this government. They involved more than 2,000 survivors, and we received another 4,100 responses online.

In August, we named five members to the commission of inquiry, with Judge Marion Buller as the chief commissioner.

The independent commission is authorized to examine and report on systemic causes of all forms of violence that indigenous women and girls experience and their greater vulnerability to that violence. The commission will be looking for patterns and underlying factors that explain why the higher level of violence occurs.

The commission is also directed to examine and report on institutional policies and practices implemented in response to violence experienced by indigenous women and girls, including police conduct.

The commission is directed to make recommendations on concrete and effective action that can be taken to remove systemic causes of violence and to increase the safety of indigenous women and girls in Canada. It is also directed to make recommendations on ways to honour and commemorate the missing and murdered indigenous girls and women in our country.

The commission began its work in September 2016, as set out in the Government of Canada Order in Council.

Adjournment Proceedings

The commission of inquiry is one step, albeit one very important step. While the commission is doing its work, we must continue to make lives better and make lives safer for indigenous women and girls. We will help first nations, Inuit, and Métis people secure the foundation of healthy and safe communities.

We took immediate action this year on root causes, with investments in women's shelters, housing, education, and child welfare. Across the country, \$89.9 million will be spent over two years for the construction and renovation of shelters and transition houses for victims of violence in provinces and territories.

Our government made a commitment to launch the inquiry and ensure that it was independent. That is exactly what we are doing. The commission has a mandate to proceed with the work that is required. It is doing that. At the same time, we are investing to ensure safer communities for women and girls across Canada. We are doing everything we need to do to ensure that women and girls are safe in this country in all indigenous regions, in all indigenous communities.

When we hear from the commission of inquiry, we will have more ideas on ways to remove the systemic problems that have contributed to the loss of so many women and girls. In the meantime, we are taking action on all fronts, and we will continue to do that.

Our government this year was not only proud to meet our commitment to indigenous communities and Canadians on the inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women and girls but was proud to make investments, investments that were long overdue, for women and girls in our communities so that they can have hope for a future where they will be safer and more secure.

● (1920)

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson: Mr. Speaker, with respect to the parliamentary secretary, we want the inquiry to work well, and we are glad that the government launched it, but building one violence-against-women shelter on reserve, one a year for the next five years, is not enough, because we are so far behind. There is nothing offered in the Far North for the Inuit. The families are not being included in this process.

Here is another quote from the vigil in October:

I'm tired; I want justice for my daughter, for Shannon, for all of these women: our sisters, our children...our loved ones. We are living through this..... Yet they throw us promises. Well, you know what? We haven't heard anything yet. Nothing from this inquiry.

That is the mother of Shannon Alexander, who went missing in 2008.

If the government does not listen to the families, it will not get this inquiry right. Last week, on Friday, the government refused to include the Native Women's Association of Canada at its first ministers' conference. We must treat these advocates, these women and mothers, with respect. We must include them in the solutions.

The government must lead on this. Will it?

Ms. Yvonne Jones: Mr. Speaker, we understand the real concern that exists across Canada with respect to the impact on families of

the missing and murdered women in Canada. Family members had been very close to them.

I, the minister, and many others in our government sat in rooms across Canada with over 2,000 families and survivors who had been impacted. We heard their strong messages. That is why we have designed an inquiry that will get to the root of the issues they have brought forward.

The inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women in our country is critical. It is critical for us to move forward with our relationship with indigenous people and to reconcile that relationship with all Canadians.

Our commitment to have an inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women in our country was a solid commitment. We made the commitment based on what we knew was the right thing to do for Canadians. We have ensured the independence of this inquiry and the commissioners will now do the job they have been mandated to do.

Hopefully, at the end of the day, we can provide not only hope for families, but a safer community for all indigenous women and girls in Canada.

● (1925)

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Ms. Sheri Benson (Saskatoon West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as we draw ever closer to the holiday season and the end of the year, there is still no end in sight for public service workers who have been caught up in the boondoggle known as Phoenix.

The government has missed its own deadline of October 31, and 15,000 cases still have not been resolved.

On September 19, at the government operations committee, the minister said that she was confident the October 31 deadline was realistic and that her department reassured her it would be met. Now that we are quite a long way past the October 31 deadline, the government still has not given a new timeline for when it expects the remaining cases to be resolved.

According to the last update given by the deputy minister, we now know the Phoenix pay system is behind on 200,000 compensation transactions, the equivalent of two month's work.

We have heard a lot of rhetoric, or should we say wishful thinking, about getting to a steady state, but all we see is a system that continues to fall behind. New pay requests are supposed to be met within 20 days, but only 20% to 30% of this service standard is currently being met.

There is another growing concern now as we approach the end of the year and the government has to start issuing T4s to its employees. The government has given no reassurances that the T4s will be correct. This will put an additional burden on employees who will have to sort out their own T4s with no help from government. This can only add to the confusion and chaos.

Adjournment Proceedings

This state of affairs is not only troubling and stressful for employees who are not getting paid; it is also an embarrassing fiasco for the minister and the government. They have repeatedly stated that this situation is unacceptable. However, it is unclear what unacceptable means to the minister. It certainly does not mean that thousands of employees will finally be paid properly. It does not mean that the T4s will be accurate. It does not mean that workers who still show up to work every day will be able to make ends meet, let alone celebrate the holidays.

If the minister truly finds this unacceptable, then why does she not do something about it? It clearly is not unacceptable enough, because 15,000 cases are still unresolved and new ones are still being logged.

I have a suggestion for the minister. Perhaps in solidarity with the employees who have not been paid she would defer her own salary until the debacle is finally fixed. This gesture would signal that the minister does take this problem seriously. I am sure the affected employees would appreciate the minister walking a mile in their shoes. Will the minister do this?

Ms. Leona Alleslev (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is completely unacceptable for any employees not to receive the pay they earn. While problems still exist with the pay system, we have taken a number of steps to better support our employees.

[*Translation*]

We have taken many steps to better support our employees. We created a new call centre and a Phoenix feedback form so that employee can easily contact us and inform us of any problems with their pay. We are regularly informing employees that they can request emergency salary advances in order to get the money they are owed.

[*English*]

Four satellite offices were set up and staffed in Gatineau, Shawinigan, Winnipeg, and Montreal to handle employee cases, and we are committed to keeping these offices open until the backlog is eliminated and the issues are resolved.

Each month, our pay centre receives a steady stream of new pay transactions from the 46 departments it services. As a result, at any given time there are more than 80,000 pay requests in the system awaiting processing.

[*Translation*]

After rolling out Phoenix, our processing speed dropped sharply as employees adjusted to the new system. This slowdown caused our queue to expand so that we now have more than two months of additional work to process. This is over and above the new transactions that are always entering the system.

Over the next several months, we will return to normal processing times. At that point, we will be consistently meeting our service standards and employees will see transactions processed more quickly. We will also continue to work closely with all of our partners. For example, the Canada Revenue Agency website provides information and a 1-800 number for employees who have concerns about the tax implications of their pay problems.

The Treasury Board Secretariat set up a claims office for employees who have incurred expenses as a result of problems related to Phoenix, and we will continue to work with the unions on many levels, particularly on the recent agreement to have government IT experts help improve Phoenix.

[*English*]

Additionally, we continue to resolve the remaining cases in the backlog, which are extremely complex and require a number of time-consuming manual calculations. A dedicated group of expert compensation advisers are working as quickly as possible to resolve the approximately 11,000 employee cases that remain in the backlog. To date, we have closed pay transactions for over 86% of the employees in our backlog.

Our government recognizes the significant impact that issues stemming from the Phoenix pay system have had on the hard-working employees of the public service. These problems are totally unacceptable. With the last pay period before Christmas occurring tomorrow, we strongly encourage any employee who is not being paid or who has not been paid the proper amount and is facing financial hardship to let us know immediately and request emergency pay. No family should have its Christmas impacted irreparably by a Phoenix pay issue.

• (1930)

Ms. Sheri Benson: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for her comments, but we still have not heard when the situation will be resolved. We have heard all of the earnest platitudes before. Fixing Phoenix was to be a top priority. However, the government's own deadline has come and gone, it is still not fixed, and we still do not know when that will happen.

In a few days, members will head home to their ridings and spend the holidays with their family and friends. What do families who are affected by Phoenix have to look forward to? More bills that they have no way of paying, and more financial headaches down the road, with T4s and a looming tax bill that may or may not be accurate. It certainly will not be a merry Christmas or a happy holiday for these families.

The minister should not rest until employees are paid properly. If that means setting aside her own salary until this fiasco is fixed, then so be it, because that would be the honourable thing to do.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Leona Alleslev: Mr. Speaker, obviously, the pay problems being experienced by the public service are unacceptable. We are making progress. However, there is still a lot of work to be done.

[*English*]

Particularly during this holiday season, we want to recognize how important the tireless work of our public service employees is, and recognize that no employees should go without the pay they have earned. We remain unwaveringly committed to resolving these pay issues as our top priority.

Adjournment Proceedings

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to talk about the auto industry. I was in the chamber during question period and I asked the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development about our auto industry. In particular, I was calling for a recognition and support for a national auto strategy.

Canada has gone from second in the world in terms of auto manufacturing to 10th. We have slipped behind Brazil, India, China, and a series of different nations that now occupy the space that Canada used to have. It is interesting, because as we have signed more trade agreements, the current government and previous governments have used auto as basically the canary in the coal mine for many other industries.

I would point to the most recent agreement, the TPP, where the auto industry would be getting only a five-year window of transition, whereas the United States would be getting a 25-year transition, despite our having basically unified auto manufacturing and regulatory practices, and integrated industries to combine themselves to actually produce and manufacture cars, which creates an untold precedent of problems. It is sad that even Malaysia out-negotiated us. It has a 12-year exemption for integration versus Canada's five years and the United States' 25 years. Malaysia, being the powerhouse negotiator that it is versus Canada, apparently, has more than doubled its integration into this new system.

Thank goodness the TPP looks as if it is doomed because of the concerns of both the Democratic and Republican presidential candidates—and now, unfortunately, the Republican who won. However, it was a doomed trade agreement for many reasons. How could an issue like this ever take place?

I want to point toward a national auto strategy, because we know that the industry is calling for it; manufacturers are calling for it, which goes beyond the assemblers; and the unions have been calling for it for more than a decade—in fact, the CAW formerly and now Unifor. I want to thank its members and negotiators, Jerry Dias and his group, which goes all the way to my local community, for creating an opportunity for \$1.3 billion of auto investment.

It is important that we recognize what the workers—the men and women who create the product and actually do the work necessary—chose at negotiations. They said they didn't want a pay increase at the expense of getting further investment into their communities. They did not ask for an immediate return. They asked for an opportunity for more Canadians and more investment for the future, and not just for themselves. They turned away an opportunity basically for self-greed, to create this \$1.3 million opportunity for economics. For one auto job, we get nine other jobs. This creates a windfall for others.

Therefore, I ask that the government consider continuing the auto strategy that we used to have. We need a national auto policy for that, and the government should come along and do that, because it has been long sought as the last chapter to actually get us back in the game. We cannot get back in the game without a plan, and a national auto policy would do just that.

● (1935)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Greg Fergus (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to respond to the comments made by the hon. member for Windsor West regarding Canada's automotive industry.

Our government values the hard work and important contributions of Canadians in our automotive sector. Our automotive industry is the largest contributor to Canada's manufacturing GDP and plays a key role in maintaining our strong economy. This one sector alone employs over half a million Canadians.

I am pleased that the unions and industry members have reported successful negotiations and I see this as a positive sign for the future of this key sector. Building on the partnership between industry and labour, our government remains committed to being a full and active partner in strengthening Canada's automotive footprint.

Our government is taking clear actions to support the growth of this key sector. We have heard from our stakeholders that securing Canada's assembly plants and attracting new ones are the foundations of success for the future of this industry. Recognizing the importance of the sector, budget 2016 extended the automotive innovation fund through to the end of 2020–21. I think my colleague will be very interested to hear that.

We are also in the midst of carrying out the government's innovation agenda. Our vision is to make Canada a global centre for innovation. Our mission is to create good-paying jobs that will grow the middle class and support those working hard to join it. The automotive industry is an important contributor to innovation in Canada. We are entering an exciting time with the emergence of new and innovative technologies. Canada has a mature automotive cluster that aligns with the future of the industry.

Our strengths in R&D and supplier innovation include information technologies, sensors, network security, lightweight materials, and alternative powertrains.

In terms of the impacts, investing in the automotive industry benefits Canadians across the country.

Stakeholders, including the Canadian Automotive Partnership Council, cite the need to focus on encouraging innovation and attracting strategic, long-term investments as the most critical strategy to support competitiveness.

Our government's actions to support strategic investments in advanced manufacturing, innovative technologies, and cleaner vehicles will help Canada reap the benefits of growth across the economy.

Adjournment Proceedings

● (1940)

[English]

Mr. Brian Masse: Mr. Speaker, the reality is that we are getting our clocks cleaned internationally on this file, even under the agreements we have signed. For example, in the last three years Mexico has created five separate new plant developments. Meanwhile in Canada, we do not have a greenfield site in the last decade.

That is an important fact, because we do not have these opportunities despite, I would argue, our being in the dawn of a new age for the automotive sector with the advancements the parliamentary secretary noted. Yet as he said, we are just continuing the auto innovation fund. We are not even putting the money into the fund like we should.

That is just a continuation of the Conservatives, and Harper's policies. If the Liberals are happy to keep Harper's policies on a lifeline to 2021, that is not enough for the industry. That is not enough for workers. That is not enough for Canadians.

I would say that when we look at our competition and what is happening, we are being negligent. I would point more recently to Volkswagen, which is influenced and financed by the German state. It is getting an advantage and Volkswagen is in lawsuits right now in the United States because of the products being sold when they should not have been, similar to the situation with other products being dumped into Canada.

We need a national auto policy, a national auto strategy. Workers are paid throughout for their fine work and they have negotiated that opportunity, but seize it now while we can.

[Translation]

Mr. Greg Fergus: Mr. Speaker, my NDP colleague knows full well that Canada is attracting new investments in the automobile sector and even right in his very own riding. In fact, he surely knows that two corporations established in Windsor, namely Landau Gage and Electromac Group, received financing thanks to the program he just criticized.

Moreover, this year, General Motors announced that a new Canadian research centre would be established in Oshawa, which will create 1,000 jobs. These are not just any jobs, as 1,000 engineers will be hired to find new ways to manufacture cars based on advances made in the automotive industry.

I am convinced that Canada is on the right track. We will make investments to modernize our economy, especially the manufacturing sector, which is very important for all Canadians.

● (1945)

The Deputy Speaker: The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7:45 p.m.)

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