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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Monday, September 18, 2017

—

Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, September 18, 2017

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayer

● (1100)

[*Translation*]

VACANCIES

STURGEON RIVER—PARKLAND, ROBERVAL—LAC-SAINT-JEAN,
SCARBOROUGH—AGINCOURT

The Speaker: It is my duty to inform the House that vacancies have occurred in the representation, namely the Hon. Rona Ambrose, member for the electoral district of Sturgeon River—Parkland, by resignation effective Tuesday, July 4, 2017; the Hon. Denis Lebel, member for the electoral district of Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean, by resignation effective Wednesday, August 9, 2017.

Pursuant to paragraph 25(1)(b) of the Parliament of Canada Act, I have addressed my warrant to the Chief Electoral Officer for the issue of writs for the election of new members to fill these vacancies.

[*English*]

It is also my duty to inform the House that a vacancy has occurred in the representation in the House of Commons for the electoral district of Scarborough—Agincourt, in the province of Ontario by reason of the passing of Arnold Chan.

Pursuant to subsection 28(1) of the Parliament of Canada Act, I have addressed a warrant to the Chief Electoral Officer for the issue of a writ for the election of a member to fill the vacancy.

* * *

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

The Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that Mr. Strahl, the member for the electoral district of Chilliwack—Hope, has been appointed a member of the Board of Internal Economy in the place of Mr. Brown, the member for the electoral district of Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, for the purposes and under the provisions of section 50 of the Parliament of Canada Act.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*Translation*]

NATIONAL SICKLE CELL AWARENESS DAY ACT

(Bill S-211. On the Order: Government Orders)

March 30, 2017—Consideration at report stage of Bill S-211, An act respecting national sickle cell awareness day—Mr. Fisher

The Speaker: On Thursday, September 14, 2017, the hon. member for Dartmouth—Cole Harbour informed me in writing that he would be unable to move his motion during the hour provided for private members' business. Since it was not possible to arrange an exchange of positions in the order of precedence, I am directing the clerk to drop that item of business to the bottom of the order of precedence. Private members' hour will therefore be suspended.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

CUSTOMS ACT

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.) moved that Bill C-21, An Act to amend the Customs Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, may I begin by welcoming you and all other members back to the House of Commons to our business on behalf of Canadians.

Reflecting on the announcements that you just made at the opening of this session, members will obviously see behind me the vacant desk that was formerly occupied by the member for Scarborough—Agincourt, adorned today with flowers in his memory. We all think very fondly of our friend and colleague who passed so suddenly just a few days ago. We all share the grief of his loss.

However, if there is one bit of advice that Arnold Chan would give this House, it would be to proceed with the public business of Canada and to do so with substance, civility, and strength. We will all strive to do that in his memory.

Government Orders

Today we are beginning this fall sitting of the House with a debate on Bill C-21, legislation that will amend the Customs Act to enable the collection of certain basic exit information when someone crosses the border to leave our country. This bill will close a gap in our security and administrative framework by giving a clearer picture of who is actually exiting Canada at any given moment in time so that we can better ensure the efficient movement of legitimate trade and travel and keep our border secure.

[*Translation*]

Every day, around 400,000 people and \$2.5 billion in bilateral trade cross the Canada-U.S. border in both directions. We and our American counterparts have frequently reiterated our shared commitment to creating an even safer border that promotes even greater prosperity, two goals that go hand in hand. The bill before us today is a big step toward achieving those goals.

● (1105)

[*English*]

It would likely come as a surprise to most Canadians that basic exit information is not collected already. We do, of course, take careful note of people arriving in Canada, but until now, we have only collected exit data on foreign nationals and permanent residents leaving the country. By contrast, most other countries keep track of who leaves as well as who arrives. We need to address this security loophole and in effect catch up to the rest of the world.

The exit information that will be collected is brief, basic, and unobtrusive. It is the name, nationality, date of birth, gender, and the issuing authority of the travel document—in other words, nothing more than what is found in the normal course on page 2 of one's passport, along with, of course, the time and the place of one's departure. This information will be gathered without imposing any new requirements on the travelling public.

When a person leaves Canada by land, they will, as usual, show their passport to a U.S. border officer and the U.S. will automatically send the information on page 2 back to Canada. For those leaving by air, air carriers will collect the basic passport data from passenger manifests and provide it to the Canada Border Services Agency before departure.

As a result, Canadian authorities will be better able to manage our border, combat cross-border crime, respond to national security threats, prevent the illegal export of controlled goods, ensure the integrity of our immigration system, and protect taxpayer dollars against the abuse of certain government programs.

As an example of how the bill would help with police investigations, take the case of Amber Alerts. When an alert is issued, the RCMP would ask the Canada Border Services Agency to create a lookout for the missing child or for a suspected abductor.

If information relayed to CBSA by U.S. border officials matched that lookout, CBSA would alert the RCMP that the person had left the country. The RCMP could then coordinate with its American counterparts to locate the child and apprehend the offender, knowing precisely when and where they left Canada. If the lookout matched someone on the passenger manifest of an imminent outbound flight, police could intercept the abductor at the airport and rescue the child before departure.

This is also useful retrospectively if an abductor has taken a child out of the country. For example, if a child is discovered missing in the afternoon and the exit data show that the child crossed into Vermont that morning, that is obviously extremely helpful for investigators in both countries as they work together to bring the child home safely and to apprehend the abductor.

The same principle would apply in the case of known high-risk travellers, such as fugitives from justice or radicalized individuals. Combatting the phenomenon of Canadians participating in terrorist activities abroad is a key priority for our government and, I am sure, for Parliament. The collection of basic exit information would be an important new tool for our national security agencies in this regard.

It would also be useful in Canada's efforts to combat human trafficking. It could help police determine the location of a suspect or a victim of human trafficking. It could help determine the travel patterns of suspects or victims, which in turn makes it easier to identify human smuggler destinations or implicated criminal organizations, and it could help police to identify other suspects or victims by learning who is travelling with the individual in question. All of this information is invaluable not only for the advancement of human-trafficking investigations but also later in the criminal justice process in support of ensuing prosecutions.

Bill C-21 would also help immigration officials to make better-informed decisions and better use of their resources. With access to reliable exit data, immigration officials would be able to base their decisions on a more complete and accurate picture of an applicant's travel history. When conducting investigations, they would be able to prioritize activities and resources by focusing on people who are actually still in Canada rather than wasting time looking for someone who has already left.

Bill C-21 would also help to protect taxpayer dollars by reducing fraud and abuse of certain federal programs with residency requirements. By establishing when people leave Canada, we would be able to better determine who is and who is not eligible for certain benefits. Of course, when people are entitled to benefits based on their residence in Canada, those benefits are properly and generously provided by Canadian taxpayers, but eligibility criteria exist for a reason, and Canadians expect the government to administer these programs accurately.

Government Orders

Let me be clear: people collecting benefits in accordance with the law would not be affected in any way. People currently receiving old age security would not be affected, because once they have 20 years in residence in Canada as an adult, their OAS is fully portable wherever they may choose to live in their golden years. Medicare eligibility would also not be affected, because the exit information that we're talking about today would only be used in the administration of federal programs, and the administration of medicare is at the provincial level. However, by helping to identify fraud and abuse, Bill C-21 would help ensure the integrity of benefit programs and the responsible use of taxpayer dollars.

The bill also includes measures to strengthen the ability of the Canada Border Services Agency to deal with smuggling and the illegal movement of goods out of Canada. Hon. members may well remember that the Auditor General published a report in the fall of 2015 finding that improvements were needed to combat the unlawful export of controlled goods or dangerous goods, including illegal drugs and stolen property.

• (1110)

Bill C-21 would help address that situation, as identified by the Auditor General, by providing CBSA with authorities regarding the export of goods similar to the authorities that already exist with respect to imports.

As with any measure that involves the collection and sharing of information, privacy considerations must be paramount. Our government takes this very seriously. We have an obligation to protect the privacy of Canadians, and privacy protections have been built into the core of this initiative, as reflected in Bill C-21.

To begin with, the government has engaged proactively on this matter with the Office of the Privacy Commissioner, and we will continue to do so. Privacy impact assessments have already been completed for the current and previous phases of implementation, involving the collection of basic exit data for non-citizens. Summaries of those assessments are available on CBSA's website. An additional assessment will be done once this new legislative framework is enacted and put into place. We will ensure that we protect the privacy of Canadians.

It is important to note that before any information can be shared between CBSA and any other federal agency or department, a formal information-sharing arrangement must be established. Such an arrangement would include information management safeguards and privacy protection clauses.

The exchange of information with the United States would likewise be subject to a formal agreement to establish a framework governing the use of the information and to set up the mechanisms necessary to address any problem that might arise.

At all times, exit information would only be disclosed in accordance with Canadian law and CBSA employees would continue to receive training to ensure they would be aware of their privacy responsibilities with respect to accessing and disclosing personal information.

Crucially, as I said before, the only information we are talking about in Bill C-21 are the basic facts, as laid out on page 2 of one's passport, which, of course, is the document one hands to the foreign

border service officer whenever one seeks to enter another country. It is that basic information that would be transferred back to Canada so Canadian authorities would know when a person left the country. It is nothing more than that.

As I mentioned at the outset, our government is committed to ensuring the efficient flow of trade and travel essential to our country's prosperity, while keeping our border secure at the same time. It is in furtherance of this dual objective that I introduce Bill C-21. I look forward to the constructive engagement of all hon. members as we discuss the bill in the chamber and then proceed to consider it in further detail in committee.

I thank members for their attention. My only regret today is my friend Arnold Chan is not here to participate in this debate.

• (1115)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as the new public safety critic for the official opposition, I look forward to asking my hon. friend some questions in the House.

The first question I would like to ask this morning after listening to his speech pertains to his perception of the issue of declaring marijuana use, should the drug become legal in Canada. As we know, our American neighbours have a different perspective on the issue. We are looking at a bill that, incidentally, was prepared by the previous Conservative government and one that I fully support.

However, since the proactive disclosure of information is the intent here, can the minister tell us what Canadians are supposed to do with regard to disclosing their marijuana use when crossing the border?

[*English*]

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Mr. Speaker, with respect to the export or import of marijuana, carrying that drug across the border, it is illegal now in both directions to export or import, and it will continue to be illegal under the new legislation. There is no change in that regard whatsoever. Obviously, the Canada Border Services Agency will take all the normal precautions when the new regime is changed in Canada, following approval in the House, to ensure Canadians are fully informed of their border rights and responsibilities.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Beloeil—Chambly, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for his speech.

[*English*]

Some of the most egregious human rights violations Canada has, unfortunately by proxy, been a part of have often had to do with information sharing. One particular case, the most infamous, is the Maher Arar case. When we look at Bill C-21, the minister might say that it is only what is on page 2 of one's passport. What he is forgetting to talk about is the fact that this information is then being handed over to the U.S. government in a context where executive orders have been adopted, removing privacy protections from the information that is not of an American citizen.

Government Orders

I want to understand why the minister thinks we can start sharing exit information with our American counterparts in that context, especially given some of the discrimination that has been going on at the border lately.

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. gentleman may be misunderstanding the facts. When Canadians cross the border into the United States, they show their passports. Travellers disclose the information. They hand their passports to American border control officers and they run it through their database system to determine if there are any flags, warnings, or whatever. The traveller discloses the information in order to gain permission to enter the United States.

What this new system means is that the Americans will then transmit that data instantly back to Canada so we will have that information on the Canadian side and can know that a particular person left Canada at this departure point at this time. The system will work the other way around, for people crossing from the United States into Canada. The person would show his or her travel documents to the Canadian border officer and the Canadian border officer would, in addition to doing the normal checks on the Canadian side, send that information back to his or her counterparts in the United States.

Indeed, the only information that is involved is that basic ID data contained on page 2 of a person's passport. People should not have any elevated fears about any incursion into their privacy as a consequence of this. There will be among all government departments formal information-sharing agreements that will specify precisely the limits that will pertain to the use of this information.

• (1120)

Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC): Mr. Speaker, first, I want to pass on my condolences to members across the aisle on Mr. Chan's passing. It is a great loss, and we feel their pain.

Bill C-21 is legislation that we can all support. It would modernize our border. It would allow the free flow of goods back and forth even more effectively. If we could even move beyond this into some new type of agreement with the U.S. so we could even speed up the crossing of commercial goods across the border, that would be positive too.

What people in Saskatchewan really want to know from the minister, and it is a very important and simple question, is with respect to the proposed tax changes coming down the pipe, which are going to affect farm families and make it impossible for a family farm to pass on to the next generation. Where does he stand on these proposed tax changes?

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. gentleman for his kind remarks with respect to our late colleague Arnold Chan.

On the issue of commercial goods, the key legislation in respect to speeding the movement across the border has already dealt with by the House in Bill C-23, the whole issue around pre-clearance. The House has given its approval and that bill is now in the Senate waiting approval. It provides the framework within which we could extend pre-clearance of passengers to pre-clearance of cargo. The President and the Prime Minister specifically agreed to pursue that when they met in the spring, and it is very high on the agenda for both countries.

With respect to tax matters, which has nothing directly to do with this legislation, the fact is that the government is in pursuit of two very key priorities: to ensure our economy grows and succeeds and to ensure the tax system is fair to all Canadians in every part of the country.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham (Laurentides—Labelle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the minister for his kind words with respect to the passing of our friend and colleague Arnold Chan, who I very much miss already. However, that is not the topic of today's debate. Could the minister tell us what current systems exist today to find out who is leaving the country? What information do we have today, if anything?

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Mr. Speaker, we have systems in place that collect and provide that information with respect to foreign nationals and permanent residents. However, the legal authority has never existed to collect and make use of that information with respect to Canadian citizens. That is the critical change involved in Bill C-21 for everyone leaving the country. We have the information on foreign nationals. We have the information on permanent residents. However, we do not have that information with respect to Canadian citizens. By changing the Customs Act, we will give ourselves the legal authority to collect that data and ensure the picture is complete with respect to all persons leaving the country.

It is a bit ironic that we have forever collected the data with respect to people coming into the country but never leaving the country. Many people have observed that as a major gap in border security, which needs to be fixed. I hope the House can move quickly in order to get it done.

• (1125)

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we are saddened by the passing of Mr. Arnold Chan. Our condolences to his family, his friends, and the Liberal Party.

One of the concerns in my riding with respect to the bill is with the sharing of information in the U.S. Patriot Act and the potential sharing of information with American border crossing operators. Matty Moroun owns the Ambassador Bridge. The minister and his government chose to give this private American billionaire, who was incarcerated for state and federal issues related to government funding in that area, a new border crossing through a cabinet order.

Why did a private American business person, who has a current border crossing that has a daily exchange of 25% of Canadians with the United States, get a new border crossing in such a manner and guarantees about personal identity and protection, given that U.S. customs is integrated with this private enterprise? Does he have any concern that this private American citizen, a billionaire, has a criminal record and has been granted a new border crossing?

Government Orders

Hon. Ralph Goodale: Mr. Speaker, the border between Canada and the United States is a hugely important international asset. It is some 9,000 kilometres long. There are 117 border crossing points. It is a border where 400,000 people and \$2.5 billion in trade crosses every day. It is obviously a hugely important international asset and is the longest, most open, most prosperous, and most successful border in the history of the world. We are working very hard to ensure that the border functions successfully, that it is safe and secure, and at the same time that goods and services move effectively and efficiently. We will take all necessary steps in that process to enhance Canadian prosperity and connect and protect Canadian public safety and security.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I stand in the House today to speak to Bill C-21, an act to amend the Customs Act.

Before I go any further, I would like to once again thank the leader of the Conservative Party for appointing me to his shadow cabinet as critic for public safety and emergency preparedness. I look forward to working with our leader, my cabinet colleagues, and our entire caucus so as to ensure that the concerns of all stakeholders within the public safety and emergency preparedness portfolio are heard and addressed.

I also hope to work productively with the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness. I am very pleased that we can begin today by discussing a bill that we believe is a step in the right direction for Canada's public safety.

[*English*]

One of the major stakeholders in public safety is the Canada Border Services Agency. This is an agency, as I will explain later, that will be directly affected by the bill we are discussing today.

CBSA employs nearly 14,000 individuals, including 6,500 uniformed CBSA officers who provide services at approximately 1,200 points across Canada and at 39 international locations. While most Canadians will be familiar with this agency from the interactions they have with its officers at the border crossings on land, air, and sea, they may not know just how busy this agency really is.

[*Translation*]

The CBSA's responsibilities include detaining those people who may pose a threat to Canada and removing people who are inadmissible to Canada, including those involved in terrorism, organized crime, war crimes or crimes against humanity. The CBSA also stops illegal goods from entering the country, and protects food safety, and plant and animal health.

I want to thank the people at CBSA for the hard work they do every day. I thank them for everything they do and for the work that happens behind the scenes that international travellers are unaware of. We certainly know that the CBSA agents are there working hard to protect us.

Given the state of the world today there is no role more important than to work every day on finding the best ways to enhance public safety for all Canadians.

With terrorism on the rise in many countries around the world, including Canada, unfortunately, the unspeakable crimes involving human trafficking and the pain and suffering of the victims' parents, and organized crime destroying individuals and entire families, we cannot afford to be lax in our efforts to keep Canadians safe.

What is human life worth? What lengths should we go to in order to protect our sons and daughters? How far should we go to make our children and families feel safe at home and in their community day and night?

• (1130)

[*English*]

We know that our Constitution affords rights to criminals, but it also provides rights to law-abiding citizens. Can we not balance the two?

I sometimes feel that in dealing with criminals, the rights of law-abiding citizens are taken lightly and justice is not properly served. Recently we saw the current government bend over backwards to provide long-term financial support to a young man who gladly and passionately fought against our allies. The government gave him up to \$10 million for his trouble but had very little to say about the soldier's widow or her children.

I raise this point because from time to time, the Prime Minister speaks more passionately about non-Canadians and acts in ways that make every Canadian stop and think to themselves: is this Prime Minister speaking for me or for someone halfway around the world? Who does he really care about?

We agree and share the compassion of many Canadians who follow current events and see the struggles of people in faraway lands. We can never agree, though, that their interests, desires, or even hopes can be placed above the Canadians who fulfilled their duty and elected us to office to come to this place and speak on their behalf. We must remember that we speak on their behalf, so it worries me when we have cases like the recent payout to Mr. Khadr. We find the Prime Minister absent, the details of the payout secret, and Canadians left feeling uncomfortable living out their daily lives knowing that the government has made a criminal wealthy and free to walk the streets of our compassionate country.

[*Translation*]

I am all for gathering together, as we are today, to talk about bills that will make criminals and smugglers think twice about their activities. I am also strongly in favour of any bill that will make it difficult or even impossible for people to abuse or illegally benefit from our generous benefit programs.

Government Orders

Bill C-21 is part of a broader initiative called beyond the border, which was created in 2011 by our previous Conservative government. It is good to see that the Liberals are following in our footsteps and making this action plan a reality. The action plan includes key areas of co-operation, such as addressing threats early; trade facilitation, economic growth, and jobs; cross-border law enforcement; and critical infrastructure and cyber security, which is very important.

This bill is part of an action plan that seeks to maximize the benefits we derive from our close relationship with the United States. By moving forward with a perimeter-based security approach and by working together both inside and outside the borders of our two countries, we can improve security and expedite the legitimate flow of people, goods, and services between the two countries.

• (1135)

[*English*]

The declaration made in 2011 includes the establishment of an entry-exit system for the two countries. Bill C-21 is an important part of the initiative I just mentioned. To make such an entry-exit system possible, it must include the exchange of relevant entry information by the relevant government so that documented entry into one country serves to verify exit data from the other country.

While at this time the Government of Canada currently collects biographical information about travellers entering Canada, it has no reliable way of knowing when and where travellers leave the country. Bill C-21 would help Canada implement phases 3 and 4 of the entry-exit initiative. It would help Canada and the U.S. exchange basic biographical data on all travellers, including Canadian and American citizens using land ports of entry.

The CBSA already collects biographical exit data on all air travellers leaving Canada by obtaining electronic passenger manifests from air carriers. Such practices are not uncommon around the world. In fact, the Australian government uses movement records to track arrivals and departures at its borders. Movement records may include name, date of birth, gender, relationship status, country of birth, departure and arrival dates, travel document permission, and travel itinerary.

In 1998, the U.K. government ended its collection of paper-based exit controls and in 2004 introduced a more sophisticated approach by collecting advance procedure information for inbound and outbound air passengers. In 2015, the government also introduced embarkation checks, which are to take place at all ports to the U.K. Information collected under this legislation includes passports or travel documents and biographical information.

[*Translation*]

The Government of New Zealand has a passenger departure card system in place for outbound travellers. Before going through customs, travellers have to fill out a departure card under the country's 2009 immigration legislation. These cards are used to collect information such as a passenger's travel itinerary, nationality, passport information, date of birth, occupation, country of birth, and current address.

Since 2008, the United States has been requiring air and marine carriers to provide border police with an electronic list of all

passengers and crew members before any international flight or departure under the advance passenger information system. This information must be provided before departure so that the manifests can be compared to the terrorist watch list and the information can be added to the data base.

The bill we are looking at today, which I am proud to say was originally introduced by the Conservatives, is first and foremost aimed at combatting terrorism. That is why we must not oppose it. We believe this bill will build on the good work we have already started with our American partners.

That being said, I must ask the minister to clarify one thing. Over the past year, a troubling trend has emerged. We are seeing more and more people entering Canada through unofficial crossing points, coming through fields or forests, in the depths of winter and the height of summer, steering clear of Canada's official ports of entry. We therefore welcome this bill for what it will do to strengthen border security. The border is not just a single crossing with a lineup of people waiting; it stretches from one end of the country to the other.

Our concern is that other topics like unofficial ports of entry are also relevant to our discussion today. Although this government is implementing some excellent border security initiatives that originated under the Conservative government, it does not seem to care about securing the border between official ports of entry.

I hope the minister plans to clarify this contradiction, not only for us in the House, but also for the men and women who work for CBSA and the RCMP. We have always known that the Prime Minister was not too concerned about the danger posed by criminals, and now he appears even less worried. The Prime Minister recently ordered budget cuts at the Canada Border Services Agency, and did so very quietly. On the one hand, the Liberals talk about increasing security, but on the other, the Prime Minister quietly orders budget cuts.

I recently received a call at my office from a woman who told me that CBSA services at the Oshawa airport and at the commercial office in Barrie have been completely eliminated. The Liberals are just talking out of both sides of their mouths. On the one hand, they say they are here for Canadians, but on the other hand, they make cuts.

An hon. member: And love photo ops.

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus: That is right.

I asked my staff to call the office of the Minister of Public Safety to get some information about that decision. We have yet to get a response. I understand that he was on vacation, so I expect to get a response fairly quickly now.

Government Orders

This is 2017, and the world is becoming increasingly unstable. This is certainly not the time to be making cuts to the Canada Border Services Agency and chipping away at our border controls. I have a number of questions about that, and these are things we will be discussing, so I would appreciate the people opposite paying close attention. What are their thoughts on everything that happened with illegal migrants this summer? On the one hand, here they are with a very positive bill, but on the other, they are cutting services. Earth to the Liberals.

I should add that we did not get this information from the minister's office or through official channels. People in Oshawa and Barrie called our office to ask why those offices were closed. That just does not work. We know where the criminals go. People who want to smuggle drugs and other stuff go through small airports in small towns. They do not go through Toronto or Montreal airports with their cargo. They use small airports, which is why it makes no sense to cut border services in small airports.

Honestly, what I am afraid to ask the minister today is whether we can expect other budget cuts that will affect Canadians' security. Are we going to be seeing even bigger cuts to organizations responsible for ensuring the security of Canadians as they go about their day-to-day lives? Will Canadians have even more reason to be concerned about their security? Will these agencies have to do even more work with less money, which will put more pressure on the front-line men and women? Is the minister planning other nationwide cuts?

• (1140)

[*English*]

We have already said that the Prime Minister was big on selfies and soft on crime. He is building on that reputation. Under his watch, our border agents and law enforcement officers have been sent two different messages. The first message is that they have to guard our border as if their lives depended on it. The second message is that guarding the border is overrated, that the CBSA agents and the RCMP should relax a little and allow the world to enter Canada unchecked.

[*Translation*]

We are definitely going to support Bill C-21. We must enhance security, not reduce it. In my riding and in all the beautiful regions in Canada, Canadians deserve the best security service possible. I feel very strongly about that. It is why I am here.

Like the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, I take my mandate very seriously. We must work more closely together to ensure that terrorists, organized crime, and those who cheat our immigration system cannot continue unimpeded.

• (1145)

Mr. David de Burgh Graham (Laurentides—Labelle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate some of what my colleague has said, but I want to confirm that the Conservative Party is indeed fully supporting this bill. If so, we are very pleased to hear that.

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus: This bill was originally introduced by the Conservatives. We are very pleased to see that the Liberal government is moving forward with it. However, it is important to us that we keep moving in this direction in the context of security today and managing the problems at our borders. This bill is the first

step. Make no mistake, we must go even further and ensure that our border services, including customs officers and the RCMP, can do their job properly.

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Beloeil—Chambly, NDP): Mr. Speaker, during the Conservative government's last term in office, 1,200 border services jobs were eliminated. What is more, from 2013 to 2015, border services received incomplete information regarding passengers on over 3,000 flights. We will come back to those cuts and the impact that they have had on national security, given the Conservatives' hypocrisy on this issue.

I want to talk about Bill C-21, which is now before us. Obviously, the Conservatives' track record on privacy leaves much to be desired, particularly considering the passage of Bill C-51 and all of the resulting privacy breaches that occurred as a result of information sharing.

I would like to know how my colleague can support an initiative that will make it possible to share more information with the United States government, when the current President has signed an order under which American privacy laws no longer apply to non-U.S. citizens. It will be difficult to move forward with this bill given Canadians' current lack of confidence in the information-sharing system established by the Conservative government and the fact that the proper safeguards are not in place.

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus: Mr. Speaker, with all due respect to my NDP colleague, it is hard to take a stand and offer comment when you have never been in government. The fact is that the Conservative government of the day made security its priority. The Conservatives' foremost concern is the defence and security of Canada. I think my colleague will agree with me there. We often take steps they disagree with, but the fact remains that defending Canadians is important to us. That being said, this is a bill we agree with. What we need to do now is put it in place, pass it in the House, and implement it. The measures related to protecting Canadians must take precedence. The planned information sharing is a good initiative. I would therefore ask my NDP colleague to rethink his strategy and put the safety of Canadians first.

Mr. Alupa Clarke (Beauport—Limoilou, CPC): Mr. Speaker, earlier the member pointed out a certain contradiction in the Liberals' approach to border security. My colleague said that the aim of bill C-21 was to protect the safety of Canadians without impeding the flow of trade. However, he also mentioned that the budget for border security had been cut. I would like to know more about these budget cuts and about the border crossings that have been closed.

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague from Beauport—Limoilou for his question.

Government Orders

That is precisely the question we are currently asking the government. Last week the people of Oshawa and Barrie informed us that CBSA checkpoints have been cut in their communities. These are some of the issues we need to address immediately with the government so there are no contradictions. On the one hand, we need to keep Canadians safe, and on the other hand, we need to be careful not to cut key border services.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham: Mr. Speaker, I would like to follow up on what our colleague from Beloeil—Chambly was saying about giving information to the United States. Our bill is very clear: it will make it possible to get information from the United States, but it does not allow sending information to the United States.

I would just like to know if my colleague agrees with that statement.

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus: Mr. Speaker, it feels like I am defending the bill. The principle is very clear: it is about the transfer of information to ensure that both countries are properly linked and have some basic information on people who are travelling from Canada to the United States as well as on Americans, as the minister mentioned in his speech on the bill. This is basic information that already exists, that is, personal information about each American or Canadian. This information is simple. This is simply about managing movements in and out of the country. It also allows us to have better control over what goes on at our borders.

• (1150)

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Beloeil—Chambly, NDP): Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to join the minister in expressing my condolences to the family of our esteemed colleague Arnold Chan. His death was a great loss to everyone in the House, regardless of their party. We stand in solidarity with the Liberal caucus and Mr. Chan's constituents, family, and friends at this difficult time.

We are here today to talk about Bill C-21, which the government introduced in June 2016. The government is very enthusiastic about this bill. It is now September, and we are finally talking about it, so we can see how enthusiastic the government is about this bill. Perhaps the purpose of the bill is to pander to the Americans during the NAFTA negotiations. Who knows.

It is important to understand the context here. The minister, in answer to my question, and the member for Laurentides—Labelle in his comments talked about the bill as though it was a piece of stand-alone legislation, when in actual fact it is part of an information-sharing agreement between the Canadian and American governments. We can look at the measures set out in the bill, but they are part of a broader agreement and broader operational practices that are beginning to be implemented for our services at the border.

Things are very different now, and if we take a big-picture view of border issues, Canadians are clearly concerned. The same issues come up over and over. Take cellphones, for example. There is a glaring lack of protection when it comes to cellphone searches and what we call the briefcase law. People surrender a certain degree of privacy at the border. That interpretation of the law is fine if we are talking about someone seeing our unmentionables in a suitcase, but a cellphone that contains vast amounts of information about an individual is something else entirely. That is just one of the concerns we have about the border.

Things have changed now that Donald Trump is in office. In recent months, there has been discrimination at the border. Everyone knows that. The minister says that, statistically, fewer Canadians are being turned away at the border than in previous years. That is not an acceptable answer when people are being subjected to degrading treatment by U.S. border officers who ask them questions about their religious beliefs, their country of origin, and the colour of their skin.

This context is extremely important for understanding where our concerns for this bill are coming from. The minister tells us not to worry, that it is basic information that will be shared, information that is found on page 2 of one's passport. In reality, subclause 92(1) of the bill states that:

the Agency may collect, from a prescribed source, in the prescribed circumstances, within the prescribed time and in the prescribed manner...

It goes on to describe what the Agency is authorized to do. The key phrase I want to draw to the attention of the House is “the Agency may”. It is left to the discretion of border services whether to keep the information or not. At a place like customs, where discrimination is on the rise because people are judged by their destination and their origins, this is quite problematic. This could lead to increased profiling. God knows that there is too much of that already at the border.

Let me go back to the agreement that led to this bill.

[English]

The entry/exit program is only just beginning and will grow. Despite the enthusiasm that Liberals and Conservatives might have for it, we are going down a very slippery slope here. Before we continue, someone needs to put on the brakes because what we are seeing here is further integration at the border. That might seem great if all that we are considering is efficiencies, but we want to consider people's rights at the border, but that is lacking in the conversations that are happening.

Where does it end? When we talk about the context that I described with regard to cellphones and the lack of legislation as to what people's rights are when they are asked to unlock their cellphones and provide that information, and when it comes to the profiling that is happening at the border, that also applies to what new tools we have brought into place. The current U.S. President has floated the idea of using biometrics at the border. Will that end up becoming part of this kind of entry/exit agreement on top of the biographical information that would be provided? We do not have answers to these questions.

Government Orders

The fact of the matter is that any information that is being collected and shared will lead us down a path that we have seen before, because, quite frankly, as I said in my question for the minister, some of the most egregious human rights violations that Canada has been a part of, even if by proxy, have happened because of the sharing of information. That is something we are doing more and more in a post-Bill C-51 world, which, by the way, was a bill that the Liberals supported. That is the reality that we have to take into account when we consider increasing the amount of information we are sharing. It is not only biographical information, but also about where people are going to and coming from. While that might seem fine for someone who is not being profiled at the border, there are certainly many law-abiding Canadians who know what the experience is like, who because of where they are going to or where they are originally from; because they might be dual citizens and because of the country from where other citizenship is from; because of the colour of their skin and their religious beliefs, suddenly that basic biographical information being collected and shared with the U.S. government takes on a whole different context despite the fact they are law-abiding Canadians. That is very troubling, and even more so when I hear the minister talk about the fight against radicalization.

Certainly it goes without saying that we all agree that radicalization is an issue that needs to be tackled. Here, I would add that we are still waiting to hear more about what the government is going to do with its grassroots approach to taking on the fight against radicalization. We have not heard much about that in a little while, but that is a sidebar.

The reality is that when I hear things like that and the Conservative member who just spoke, and this bogeyman that is raised of how we are going to go after terrorism, there is a code there and we know what that leads to at the border and the treatment that people go through afterward. That is not something we want to see happen. Sure, we can have faith in our CBSA officers, the men and women who do extraordinary work despite limited resources because of successive Liberal and Conservative governments, but we are also looking at what the U.S. is going to do with that information. That is where the danger lies.

● (1155)

[*Translation*]

President Trump has signed an executive order explicitly stating that persons who are not U.S. citizens are now excluded from the protections offered by United States privacy legislation.

That is extremely dangerous, considering that the Canadian government is rushing to partner with the U.S. government to increase the amount of information it shares with the Americans.

Given that the President of the United States says he may consider torture acceptable and given that Canada has a ministerial directive in place allowing for information to be shared with countries that engage in torture, we are facing a big problem. I am not saying that this is exactly what the bill says, but the upshot of this bill is that we will be sharing more and more information.

It is a very slippery slope, since we keep sharing more and more information with other countries, including the United States. Even though the U.S. is an ally, the statements coming from the current

administration are cause for concern and make the idea of sharing information about public safety and national security extremely troubling.

In a post-C-51 world, the accountability procedures are wholly inadequate. Let us look at the facts. An article published by the *Toronto Star* in August said the following:

[*English*]

CBSA has quietly started receiving and sharing some information with the U.S. government.

[*Translation*]

That means some information sharing was already allowed even without this bill being passed. The bill will just settle things for good.

The risk is that this may be done more covertly, without proactive transparency. At the end of the article, it says that Canada Border Services Agency plans to update the privacy assessment once the bill comes into force.

● (1200)

[*English*]

It is far from reassuring that we are talking about doing another privacy impact assessment after the bill is adopted. In that spirit, the role we have as parliamentarians is to protect Canadian safety, but also their rights, and their right to privacy more specifically. As far as this bill is concerned, we should look at how much is left up to regulation in the bill. For example, under "Regulations", the bill states:

The Governor in Council may make regulations for the purposes of this section, including regulations

- (a) prescribing the information that must be given under paragraph (1)(a);
- (b) respecting the conveyances in relation to which information must be given under subsection (1);
- (c) prescribing the persons or classes of persons who must give the information under subsection (1);
- (d) respecting the circumstances in which the information must be given under subsection (1); and
- (e) respecting the time within which and the manner in which the information must be given under subsection (1).

Those are all things that the Governor in Council can do through regulations. That essentially means, for the people listening at home, that those are things that the minister can decide to do all on his own, without a proper vote in the House of Commons on a piece of legislation. That is extremely troubling. If we go back to the debate on Bill C-23, which is the sister legislation in the context of this more integrated border with the U.S., in committee, I asked public safety officials which regulations would be changed, as that bill also opened the door to all of the regulatory changes that could potentially change the scope of the bill. That certainly concerned New Democrats. I will give the Liberals credit. They got back to us and provided a list of regulations that may change, but the list was not exhaustive.

Government Orders

As parliamentarians voting on a bill and trying to protect Canadians' rights in the context of sharing more of their information with the American government, especially under the current circumstances or regime, if I can use that term, it is extremely troubling that there is so much latitude allowed for regulatory changes. We certainly understand that there is a place for regulatory changes in the way that our government functions, but when it comes time to prescribe what information is shared, who is sharing it, and how they are sharing it, which is the core of the issue with this bill, that cannot be left out of the accountability process, which obviously includes debate in the House and study at committee.

[*Translation*]

When I was in Washington with the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, I learned about some new tools, such as digital fingerprinting and facial recognition, that the U.S. may begin using at its border. Those things are still in development, but they are getting to the point that the U.S. government will be looking to deploy them.

The minister is trying to reassure us by saying that he is in constant contact with his American counterpart, but people at Homeland Security envision using exactly those kinds of tools in the context of this information sharing agreement. We could very well see a higher level of integration. In the statement on greater integration of border operations that came out of the meeting between the Prime Minister and President Trump in Washington, they talked about the possibility of our border officials hosting American border officials.

Forget about all of the problems that co-locating two agencies from two different countries could cause, if only in terms of collective agreements and working conditions. Let us just talk about training. The minister took the time to point out that officials would be trained to protect Canadians' privacy and would always act in accordance with the law. I am not questioning the work that is going to be done, but when we debated Bill C-23, which would allow American officials on Canadian soil, we asked Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness officials what the plan was for delivering that training while ensuring respect for the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, privacy laws, and even Bill C-23 itself, and we were not remotely satisfied with the answers.

● (1205)

The minister can be as reassuring as he wants, but it takes more than that. We need something tangible that truly outlines the process that will be put in place for protecting people's privacy. Even if the process is clearly spelled out to us, in an agreement like this with a bill like this, given the way in which Canadians' information will be shared with the U.S. government the minister must admit that the information will not enjoy the same protection in American hands, even if we have the best men and women working as Canadian border officers and the best legislation in place and if we are making every effort to protect people's privacy.

The minister can reassure us all he wants, but, as he so often says, the Americans can do what they want. That is reason alone to not only oppose the bill, but, as I said, to also rethink the agreement.

[*English*]

As I have said time and again, we are seeing a troubling tendency with the new information related to the public safety file globally, whether it is the Justice Noël decision related to illegal collection of metadata by CSIS; the Privacy Commissioner reporting last week that the RCMP has illegally obtained information from cellular phones six times in the last year; racial profiling at the Canada-U.S. border; people being asked to unlock their cellphones and provide social media passwords at the border, without clear legislation in that sense; or whether it is the fact that two years in we still have not seen any changes to Bill C-51. We finally tabled a bill in the dying days of the last sitting of the House, which does not go nearly far enough.

It is a troubling tendency we are seeing that is undermining the confidence and trust that Canadians have in their national security agencies and in the approach that successive Conservative/Liberal governments have had. There is a lack of understanding that rights and security are not a zero-sum game, and that the word "balance" implies that there is sacrificing of part of one or the other. We need to do both. Unfortunately, that is not the report card that the government can have.

We look at a bill like this, at these kinds of agreements more broadly, as we decide to share more and more information with a U.S. government that is being led by a president who has opened the door to the use of torture, and has removed privacy protections on information, not only for his own citizens but even more importantly for non-Americans. For Canadians, in that specific context the government cannot ignore it. Whether it is trying to fast-track this bill that was tabled in the House in June 2016, maybe to make nice for NAFTA negotiations, the fact is, it is about time that the government started to hit the brakes on this willy-nilly sharing of information.

I want to end on one piece. If the government is so proud of this agreement, if it really thinks it is doing the right thing, I have one question to ask. Unfortunately, I will not get to ask it, so I will ask it rhetorically. Why is it that on the first day back in the House of Commons, after a great summer of work that we all spent in our constituencies, that we are hardly going to hear any Liberal speakers? The minister has spoken, and there will maybe be a handful more speakers. However, it is mostly New Democrats and Conservatives who will be carrying the debate.

Government Orders

Maybe my Conservative friends can tell me what is so great about this bill, because, sadly, I do not think I am going to hear about it from the Liberals. They have certainly not made the case for it. The “just trust me” approach by the minister is not good enough when it comes to protecting Canadians' rights and privacy.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey—Newton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I also express my sadness on the passing of our esteemed colleague, Arnold Chan.

I was listening carefully to the debate by the hon. member on the other side of the House. The hon. member mentioned that it is our duty to protect the safety of Canadians. I have not heard a single thing about how this bill does not protect the safety of Canadians.

I have had the opportunity to travel across the globe. All major countries have a system in place to help monitor the exit of travellers. We did not have a mechanism in place. I am proud that this minister is putting that mechanism in place to protect the safety of Canadians.

I would like to ask the hon. member if he would agree that this bill improves the safety of Canadians and if he would be able to support this.

• (1210)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Matthew Dubé: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question.

Despite what the Liberals and the Conservatives might say, just because the NDP stands up for Canadians' rights and privacy does not mean that we do not take the government's responsibility for ensuring public safety seriously.

Let us look at the current state of affairs. Take CSIS or the RCMP for example. They already have legal mechanisms and agreements in place with their U.S. counterparts for sharing information in the context of a criminal investigation, for example. The same problem comes up every time. We saw that in the debate on Bill C-51. We are told that these changes need to be made in order to ensure Canadians' safety. However, existing legislation does that already. In the meantime, the government proposes signing agreements that would make the border more seamless and allow more information to be shared, which threatens the rights and privacy of Canadians.

This creates a situation where information is exchanged with the American government, which does not seem to take seriously its responsibility to store and use that information appropriately. This is taking place within a context of profiling regarding people's country of origin or religious beliefs, despite the fact that legal provisions are already in place.

We in the NDP might be open to another proposal. However, the fact remains that, for us, any exchange of information that happens with no accountability and no mechanism to protect the rights of Canadians is unacceptable.

The time has come for the accountability, review and oversight mechanisms used by our national security agencies to take into account any and all exchanges of information that happen freely, not only here in Canada, between government agencies, but also with other governments, including the American government.

[*English*]

Ms. Filomena Tassi (Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking the member and other members who have spoken in the House this morning for expressing condolences with respect to our beloved Arnold Chan. As a new MP, Arnold was a perfect role model for me. He will be sorely missed, and today will be a sombre day in this House. I am thankful to all who have expressed their condolences.

As Arnold would like me to do, I will return to what we are debating today in the House, which is Bill C-21. We are talking about disclosing who comes in and out of Canada so that we have a better idea as to whether someone is leaving the country. The information being shared is that which appears on the second page of the passport: name, date of birth, citizenship, date of issue, and date of expiry. In terms of safety, it is reasonable for us to know who is leaving the country.

The member was referring to us giving the U.S. information. Actually, the U.S. is giving us information on who is leaving Canada. This already applies to foreign nationals and permanent residents. With this legislation, that will now apply to Canadian citizens. This is the sharing of information about people leaving the country.

It already applies to certain groups but does not apply to Canadian citizens. Does the member not believe that it is important for the safety for our country to know who is leaving Canada and when they are leaving?

• (1215)

Mr. Matthew Dubé: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member's words about her late colleague. Certainly he will be missed by all of us. On that we can certainly agree.

On a lighter note, and with the member being from Hamilton, I would like to thank her city for the warm welcome we received there this weekend when the NDP caucus was in town.

On a more serious note, and to my colleague's question, as I said in my remarks, the fact is that this bill does not exist in a vacuum. It is part of a larger agreement between the Canadian government and the U.S. government to start sharing more information. It is only a first step in a larger program that is going to be rolled out over the next few years.

More specifically, proposed subsection 93(1) of the bill, “Information given to the Agency”, states:

(a) in relation to the conveyance or its travel route, the last place inside Canada from which it departed, regardless of whether the persons boarded the conveyance at that place, the date and time of that departure and any prescribed information

It goes on to talk about “the type of travel document that identifies the person,” and “the name of the country or organization that issued the travel document”.

Government Orders

Let us think about things like that. Say we have a Canadian citizen who is a dual citizen. This is a hypothetical example. Hypotheses are never very safe in politics, but for the sake of debate, let us use one. It is someone from a country that is a target of Mr. Trump's travel ban who uses his or her passport from that country to travel. Now we are sharing information with the U.S., telling it where that document is from and things like that. We are going down that rabbit hole, down that slippery slope. With all this profiling we are seeing based on religious beliefs or country of origin, that is where we start opening Pandora's box.

I have said a few times in my remarks that if we want to go down this path with these agreements with other countries, all the mechanisms that require the accountability of these agencies have to catch up, and they have not, whether it was Bill C-51 or the bills tabled by the government. We are not going in the right direction at all with regard to protecting Canadians' rights and privacy.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is nice to see you again as a new session of Parliament begins.

I want to thank my colleague, because it is refreshing to see a member who has the courage to rise in the House to protect the privacy of Canadians. Listening to the debate today, it seems to me that most members are blinded by the word “security” and can no longer make a distinction between the privacy of Canadians and the importance of protecting our country.

Would my colleague agree that the direction we have been taking in recent decades will eventually lead to Canadians losing basically any right to privacy they once had? The government will know about every trip taken by Canadians and know everywhere they have gone in the past year. Part of the motivation behind this definitely has to do with social programs. The Liberals did not even try to hide that earlier. Indeed, the minister said that Service Canada would have access to that information to administer the EI program.

Does my colleague think this is heading in a dangerous direction, that it seems as though Canadians will soon lose all right to privacy and that the government will know everything about their day-to-day activities?

Mr. Matthew Dubé: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

That is exactly what is happening. I remember what the Conservative member for Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound often said when he was asking witnesses questions in committee. He often said that he was prepared to sacrifice some of his privacy for the sake of national security and that he was not too worried about it.

That is easy to say when one is not the victim of discrimination. Once again, I am hearing the Liberals reassure us that we are talking about the basic information that is found on page 2 of one's passport. However, the problem with information sharing, when we create opportunities for privacy violations and we share more and more information within the various government agencies in Canada and with other foreign governments, in this case the U.S. government, is that it becomes possible for officials to sometimes jump to erroneous conclusions based on that small amount of information.

Information such as a person's country of origin, date of birth, or even gender may seem inconsequential, but that may be all it takes in the hands of a discriminatory government agency. When discrimination is involved, even basic information can lead to unfortunate consequences. That is why we need to take the responsibility to protect that information very seriously, and we do not believe that the Liberals or the Conservatives are doing that.

• (1220)

[*English*]

Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East—Cooksville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to be back in the House of Commons and in this chamber to be able to speak to and debate important pieces of legislation, as we are doing here today on Bill C-21.

I know I speak for all of us when I say, with a very heavy heart, that I am very saddened that one of our colleagues, the member for Scarborough—Agincourt, Arnold Chan, has passed away and I send condolences to his wife, Jean, and their three kids.

I will be splitting my time today with the member for Vaughan—Woodbridge.

I will be supporting Bill C-21, an act to amend the Customs Act, because it is really about safety and security for Canadians. It is about respect for our laws and accountability and ensuring that we keep a safe and smart border.

In simple terms, the proposed changes would provide the Canada Border Services Agency with the legislative authority to collect basic exit information on all travellers leaving Canada. In so doing, these changes would further advance two of the government's most important priorities: ensuring Canada's national security and its economic prosperity.

As hon. members well know, the women and men of the CBSA play a critical role in keeping our borders secure and in facilitating the flow of legitimate trade and travel. They are highly trained professionals on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. At the same time, no matter how well we train our border services officers, and regardless of how vigilant they are, we must recognize that they cannot be fully effective in the performance of their duties if they are not equipped with the tools they need to do the job, the job we expect of them.

That is what the bill is about, ensuring that Canada's border services officers have the tools they need, namely, more complete and more accurate information about who is crossing our borders and when they are doing so.

Government Orders

Today, on entry into our country, this information collection and exchange happens for approximately 80,000 travellers a day, with no impact on their travel experience. While this information is useful, it does not provide a complete picture, because while entry data is collected for all travellers, exit data is collected only for people who are not Canadian citizens who leave the country by land. This creates a number of problems. For example, with no means of identifying precisely who is exiting our country, we cannot know if wanted individuals are fleeing Canada to escape prosecution, if an abducted child who is the subject of an Amber Alert is being snuck out of the country, or if a radicalized individual is leaving Canada to participate in terrorist activities abroad.

Bill C-21 would ensure that Canada, like most of our allies, knows when someone leaves the country. It is pretty straightforward. It is pretty standard around the world. This is a big step toward safer and more successful border management.

Expanding our collection of exit information would offer a range of benefits. For instance, with access to exit information from airline passenger manifests prepared up to 72 hours in advance, the CBSA and its law enforcement partners would have a new capacity to respond to the outbound movement of known high-risk travellers and goods prior to their actual departure from Canada, and they would become aware very quickly if such a traveller crossed by land into the United States.

In a contemporary environment, where criminal activity frequently crosses international boundaries, I am especially encouraged by how this legislation would help combat human trafficking and exploitation.

There are a great many things we are already doing to pursue the perpetrators and rescue the victims of human trafficking. Other legislation is before the House, such as Bill C-38, which would give police and prosecutors important new tools to facilitate human trafficking investigations and prosecutions. The government has been partnering since last year with major financial institutions to track financial transactions related to human trafficking. Millions of dollars are being invested through the national crime prevention strategy to support programs in communities across the country that help people exit exploitative situations. Fifty-three law enforcement partners across nine provinces participated in the most recent operation, Northern Spotlight, which identifies and helps people who are being exploited or who are at risk of exploitation. However, if Canadian authorities do not know when a human trafficking suspect or victim is leaving the country, that is a significant blind spot for investigators.

• (1225)

With Bill C-21 in place, law enforcement would be better able to work with international partners to locate traffickers and their victims and to identify travel patterns, human smuggling destinations, and implicated criminal entities. This would help investigators break up a human trafficking operation and help prosecutors secure convictions in court.

As well as being very useful for criminal investigations, knowing who has left Canada and when would help immigration officials identify people who have remained in the country beyond their authorized periods of stay. It would also help protect the integrity of

benefit programs with residency requirements by allowing officials who administer those programs to make eligibility decisions on the basis of information that is more reliable and complete.

To be clear, everyone collecting benefits in accordance with the law would continue to receive them. For example, this would not affect snowbirds collecting old age security, because anyone who has lived in Canada as an adult for 20 years can collect OAS, regardless of where a person lives. It would not have any impact on medicare eligibility, because the information would only be used at the federal level. I am sure that all Canadians want to know that eligibility requirements for benefit programs are being respected, and the bill would help ensure that they are.

Also, Bill C-21 would address a problem highlighted by the Auditor General in the fall 2015 report. At that time, the Auditor General found that the Canada Border Services Agency, “did not fully have what it needed to carry out its enforcement priorities” related to the export of controlled or illegal goods. He recommended strengthening CBSA’s export authorities, information, practices, and controls to better protect Canada and its allies, fight organized crime, and meet its international obligations.

Bill C-21 is a major advance in that direction. It would give Canadian border services officers authorities with regard to the export of goods similar to the authorities they have when goods are imported into Canada. It would make it an offence, under the Customs Act, to smuggle prohibited or controlled goods out of the country.

We will achieve the advantages I have outlined, and my examples are by no means an exhaustive list, without any additional burden or requirements imposed on travellers. Under Bill C-21, people would continue to simply show their passports when crossing the border. Their basic information, such as name, date of birth, and nationality, would be collected, just as it is now, at land ports of entry for all travellers entering the U.S. from Canada and all travellers entering Canada from the United States. Each country would share that information with the other. In other words, when people told the U.S. that they were coming in, the U.S. would let Canada know that they had left. For travellers leaving Canada by air, the same basic biographic information would be obtained through electronic passenger manifests received directly from air carriers. Information collected in this way would not be shared with the U.S.

I emphasize that these changes would not be felt by travellers. They would, however, strengthen our border security and integrity and thereby improve the security of Canada as a whole.

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At its core, Bill C-21 is about keeping Canadians safe and about having a border that is secure and efficient. Given the extent to which our prosperity relies on the movement of people and goods across the border, Canada must be a world leader when it comes to border security. At the moment, when it comes to maintaining awareness about who and what is leaving our country, we are at the back of the pack. The measures proposed in Bill C-21 would serve to align Canada with international partners that have implemented, or are in the process of implementing, such systems, such as New Zealand, Australia, the U.K., the European Union, and the United States. We need to keep pace, and we need to ensure that the women and men of the Canada Border Services Agency have the tools they need to carry out the vital work we expect of them.

• (1230)

I urge all hon. members to join me in supporting this important bill.

Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am curious to know the member's opinion on how this legislation would affect those individuals who are entering Canada now at unofficial border crossings in both Quebec and Manitoba.

Mr. Peter Fonseca: Mr. Speaker, that is an important question. We do not condone in any way anyone entering Canada illegally. Those who have crossed the border as asylum seekers may have circumvented the third country agreement that we have with the United States, but they will have to go through due process if they are seeking refugee status, and those who do not meet the very high test we have for refugees will be sent back.

[*Translation*]

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

I will return to what I was saying earlier about privacy. I am concerned about the path we have been on these past few years. Canadians enjoy less privacy with each passing year, because their government, be it federal, provincial or municipal, has more and more information about their private lives, their lifestyles, and their travel habits, which we are talking about today.

Does my colleague give any thought to Canadians' privacy when he studies a bill like this? Does he realize that this is yet another step on this increasingly perilous path, the one that brings governments to know more and more about people's habits and movements?

Does the member see a problem there at all?

[*English*]

Mr. Peter Fonseca: Mr. Speaker, the member may have heard me say in my remarks that the information to be shared at the border is what is found on the second page of any of our passports. We are talking about the name of the individual, nationality, and age. This is the information that is being shared.

What I have heard from Canadians is that they expect respect and accountability when it comes to our customs and duties, our laws, and when it comes to ensuring the integrity of our social system programs. All of that is something I find Canadians value dearly. They want to ensure the integrity of those programs and make sure they are accountable.

We are also keeping in line with our partners from around the world in providing the tools to the CBSA that it requires. The Auditor General spoke of the gap that exists today, such that the CBSA women and men are not able to do the job we have empowered them to do to keep us safe. Safety is paramount to the citizens of Mississauga East—Cooksville, as I am sure it would be to the citizens of the member's riding.

[*Translation*]

Mr. David de Burgh Graham (Laurentides—Labelle, Lib.): This past weekend, Mr. Speaker, an Amber Alert was issued in the Laurentian region when Louka Fredette and his father went missing.

If they had crossed the American border, we would never have known. If the bill before us was law, however, we would have that information.

Does my colleague believe that to be an important change?

• (1235)

[*English*]

Mr. Peter Fonseca: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for that very important and very emotional and heart-rending question, because I know that when we all see an Amber Alert go up, as the member said just happened in his area, we are all vigilant. We all want to ensure that we can bring that child back to safety. These amendments to the legislation would enable someone who tried to abduct a child across the border to be caught very quickly, because that information would be shared.

The Deputy Speaker: Usually at this time we would continue with questions and comments, but that time has expired. We always want to leave enough time for the next hon. member who is speaking to take his seat and continue.

We will now resume debate with the hon. member for Vaughan—Woodbridge.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is great to be back here in the House to do the nation's work.

I would be remiss if I did not take two seconds to pay tribute to my colleague and friend from Scarborough—Agincourt who sadly is no longer with us today. My sincerest condolences to his children and family. He will be deeply missed. I will miss having breakfast with him at the Marriott, which is where we stay and where I got to develop a friendship with the hon. member. God rest his soul and God bless.

[*Translation*]

I am pleased to support the legislative provisions in Bill C-21 that would amend the Customs Act to authorize the Canada Border Services Agency to collect personal information on all persons leaving the country.

We all understand the importance of obtaining basic biographical information on people arriving in Canada. Who are they? Where are they from? How long do they intend to stay? These are all basic security questions. That said, it is just as useful to keep track of people leaving the country, and on that front, Canada lags far behind.

Government Orders

While most every other country collects basic information on travellers on their way in and out of the country, Canada only collects data on a small subset of people leaving the country. That means that we can never really know who is in our country. We know someone has come into Canada but cannot know for certain if they have left.

At this time, since we lack the means to precisely identify every person leaving our country, we have no way of knowing whether dangerous individuals are leaving Canada to evade justice. We also have no way of knowing whether, for example, we are wasting the immigration department's valuable resources trying to track down a person who was ordered to leave Canada but who may already have left of their own accord. The fact that we do not collect exit data also limits our ability to react swiftly to Amber Alerts or suspected abductions.

This is a blatant and unacceptable security gap, one that many of our international partners have already rectified. We need to catch up. To be clear, we are not talking about collecting reams of personal information about people leaving Canada. We are talking about the "basic" biographical data that appear on page 2 of a person's passport, meaning their name, date of birth, citizenship, and gender, the type of travel document, the document number, and the name of the country that issued the document.

The only other information that would be collected would be the location and time of departure, and flight number in the case of people leaving by air. In other words, this is the same information that travellers voluntarily provide when they enter Canada or any other country. That is all. No new information would be collected. Of note, no biometric data, such as photographs or fingerprints, would be collected or exchanged as part of the entry-exit initiative, and travellers will not notice a difference.

This is how it would work: for people crossing the Canada-U.S. border by land, border officers in the country they enter will simply send that passport information and departure details back to the country they just left. In this way, one country's entry is the other country's exit and vice versa. The exchange of information in the land mode would occur on a near real-time basis following a traveller's entry into either country, usually within fifteen minutes.

• (1240)

The exchange would take place through an existing secure electronic channel between Canada and the U.S., the same channel that is used to transfer information between Canada and the United States under the NEXUS, FAST, and enhanced drivers' licence programs.

For air travellers, no new exchange of information between nations would be required. The information comes directly from airline passenger manifests. To obtain an exit record in the air mode, for example, the CBSA would receive electronic passenger manifests directly from air carriers with information on all passengers scheduled to depart Canada aboard outbound international flights. This information would be received up to 72 hours prior to departure to facilitate the identification of known high-risk travellers attempting to leave Canada by air.

That is a key point for a number of reasons, not least of which is that it will help Canadian authorities recognize when someone drawn to violent extremism is preparing to leave the country and stop them from travelling abroad to participate in terrorist activity.

In fact, Bill C-21 will help border officials to deal with a number of threats that they currently lack the tools to address.

The CBSA is our first line of defence against threats originating overseas. It uses a system called lookouts to identify persons or shipments that may pose a threat to Canada. Lookouts are based on information in the CBSA's possession or that may come from sources including the RCMP, CSIS, immigration officials, and local or international law enforcement. While the lookouts system is effective for identifying inbound threats, the absence of exit information means that it is not effective for identifying outbound threats.

In a global threat environment, with dangerous individuals leaving or trying to leave peaceful, stable democracies to join extremist organizations, collecting reliable exit information has never been more vital to support Canada's national security. We must equip the Canada Border Services Agency with the statutory authority to collect the same information on outbound travellers that it does on inbound ones. With the passage of these legislative amendments, CBSA's lookouts system will be strengthened, allowing the Agency to notify partners if and when a known risk intends to leave, or has just left, Canada. This information closes the loop on an individual's travel history, and fills a gap which has been exploited by persons trying to avoid the law.

As a final note, it is important to recognize the care that has been taken to ensure this initiative is designed to respect and in fact comply fully with Canada's privacy laws and obligations. The communication and collaboration between the CBSA and the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada in the design and implementation of the Entry/Exit initiative has been extensive, productive and instructive in terms of protecting privacy rights.

There is no question this bill will enhance the security of Canada and its allies. I urge my colleagues to support its swift passage, and ensure the women and men of the CBSA have the resources they need to do their job of securing the border and facilitating bilateral trade and the free movement of legitimate travellers.

• (1245)

[*English*]

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, before I ask my question for my hon. colleague, I would like to say on behalf of my colleagues and the constituents of Kitchener—Conestoga that we extend our sympathies and condolences to the Chang family, and also to my colleagues on the other side of the House. We certainly share in their grief as we journey through this difficult valley.

Government Orders

I do not think it is a secret that we will be supporting this bill, including the aspects of increasing the safety and security of all Canadians. With the current reality of many individuals crossing our borders at so-called unofficial entry points, I think this question needs to be asked. How would this legislation affect those areas such as Manitoba and Quebec, where we are seeing many immigrants coming into Canada at these unofficial entry points?

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Kitchener—Conestoga for the comments he made in reference to the hon. member who, sadly, is no longer with us.

In terms of these amendments to Bill C-21, the bill strengthens our border security. It would take us in a step that we need to go in terms, not only of knowing people coming into our country—we do—but also when they are leaving. That can only further improve the information that is available to authorities, and also our knowledge that people are coming for the right reasons and that they leave at the time they say they will leave.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by extending my most sincere condolences to Arnold Chan's family and friends. He left us much too soon and will be missed. Next I would like to congratulate my colleague on delivering his speech in French.

We just spent nearly three months in our ridings. All summer long, I talked to my constituents in Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot. I talked to professionals who travel to the United States regularly on business, people who vacation there, and retirees who live there part-time.

In light of everything I have heard since we first started talking about this bill, what I would like to know on behalf of my Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot constituents is whether we, as citizens, are getting adequate information. People cross the border in good faith, but are they truly informed that their privacy can be violated? Do they truly understand that, once they are in the United States, they have little or no protection when it comes to their personal information and privacy?

That is the question on my mind. I would like my colleague to comment on that.

• (1250)

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Mr. Speaker, that was my first speech in French in the House, so I am a little nervous.

[*English*]

As for the member's concerns related to civil liberties or the use of information, obviously those concerns are taken fully into account with these amendments and in Bill C-21, such that Canadians going for their winter holiday in Florida from Quebec or Ontario, or anywhere else, would know that their information is guarded and is secure, and that it is not anything that would impinge on their civil liberties.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for my hon. friend across the way from Vaughan—Woodbridge, who is part of our party.

The trade zone in the EU follows something similar to this, and I wonder whether the member could comment on the importance of

having free movement of people across borders in trade jurisdictions such as we have in North America as compared to the EU.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Mr. Speaker, for an economy that is so interlinked as is the one with Canada and the United States, any issues that could threaten or add to border thickening are not good. Bill C-21 would allow for some reversal of that if that is the situation. It would allow for a greater movement of people and goods, and for a greater feeling of security between the two countries.

Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is good to be back in the House joining colleagues from all parties to debate the issues that are important to Canadians.

First, I want to take time to remember the member for Scarborough—Agincourt, Mr. Arnold Chan. I extend the most sincere condolences on behalf of my riding of Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, as well as members on this side of the House, to his family and colleagues opposite. In the little time I had to know him, he was a remarkable gentleman. He will be missed. May God rest his soul.

I will be splitting my time this afternoon with the member for Oxford.

I am pleased to rise today to speak to government Bill C-21, an act to amend the Customs Act. I would like to believe that all members of the House understand the importance of trade for Canada's economic prosperity and ultimately the quality of life and opportunity for today and into the future. This bill is in line with priorities that I hear from my constituents about their economic and safety concerns. Those are boosting jobs and opportunity, reducing regulatory burdens on honest and hard-working Canadians, safe and effective borders, and supporting Canadians who play by the rules and respect the rule of law.

First, boosting jobs and opportunity are critical. Our economy is highly interwoven with our largest trading partner, the United States. Despite recent political turmoil across our border, our relationship remains strong, and our trade continues as we work out a revised and hopefully mutually beneficial agreement on NAFTA. The start of this bill predates both current administrations and is a testament to the resiliency and efforts of our economic and political relations with our neighbours to the south. Under Prime Minister Harper and President Obama, Canada and the U.S. launched the beyond the border initiative that would work to address threats early, facilitate legitimate trade, integrate joint border enforcement efforts, and ensure appropriate infrastructure on both sides of the border. Under the beyond the border action plan that established a long-term partnership between our countries, Canada and the U.S. sought to deliver enhanced security on both sides of the border and accelerate the flow of legitimate goods and services. Continuing to move this agenda forward increases the ability for legitimate business to quickly and easily move goods across the border, and allows Canadians to move freely and easily through land and air travel.

Government Orders

My riding of Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner spans the majority of southern Alberta's Canada-U.S. border and is home to every border crossing in the province, except for one in Waterton Lakes National Park. These five crossings provide Alberta and Canada with a corridor to over 300 million customers in one of the largest markets in the world, which is critical for all types of industries. Thinning the regulatory burden and moving goods through the border more effectively means profits, jobs, and growth for Canadian farmers, manufacturers, and transportation firms, and it supports local economic growth.

For example, in my riding, there remains a push by local and provincial leaders to improve the crossing at the port of Wild Horse. As the crossing nearest to Medicine Hat, it received a \$2-million infrastructure boost in 2015 from the previous government to meet the very things this legislation is setting out: the effective and safe flow of goods and people across our borders while identifying those who are unwilling to abide by the law. I have heard loud and clear from businesses, the chamber of commerce, the Palliser Economic Partnership, and local leaders, all eager to see the border crossing hours expanded year-round as an initial first step. They note that this is an important trade corridor and that it will have huge economic benefits, not only for the local region but all of Alberta and western Saskatchewan.

The ability for goods to move across our border in both directions is part of a \$600-billion annual trade between our countries. We know that Canada is the second-largest purchaser of U.S. goods in the world, an important market for them, and that the U.S. is the top consumer for Canadian goods and services. Farmers in my riding gain hundreds of millions of consumers for their products, arguably the best in the world in my opinion, and for most small businesses, their only export market is in the U.S. For time-sensitive products, ensuring that these goods are moved through the border can be the difference between success and failure. That is why the beyond the border initiative is critical to the long-term success of our country and why this bill is important to moving forward with thoughtful debate and appropriate consideration.

● (1255)

An area that continues to be debated is the collection and use of personal information and how that information will be protected and used. It is important for our government to get accurate information about the flow of goods and people across the border, so it can invest in infrastructure and provide the appropriate hours of operation to support economic growth. As an example, in my riding, many local businesses are seeking the expansion of the border operations to support that growth. Having good and timely information about where Canadians are can also help with evacuation efforts. As we saw from the recent challenges in the Caribbean, the government was not sure how many Canadians were in the region. Exit information will not entirely solve this, but it could provide better immediate intelligence to the government in organizing a response to these sorts of issues.

As a former police officer, I know that tracking down offenders, suspects, witnesses, and, sadly, families of victims is an important part of everyday life in that world. Providing information on who enters and leaves the country will support national and local law

enforcement finding people quickly, to know if they have left the country and where they might be.

Having good information from our borders for our immigration system seems more important than ever. In various parts of the country, Canada has seen an influx of refugees from numerous countries, legitimate asylum seekers fleeing repressive regimes like ISIS or al Qaeda, where religious freedom is non-existent and those of faith are persecuted for not taking the extremist view that is pushed by militaristic regimes. Supporting those honest and hard-working people joining Canada, and providing them with the necessities to grow in their new country, is important.

We have also seen large numbers of people entering Canada illegally from the U.S. and jumping the line of other refugees and immigrants. It would be helpful to know from the government if any of the bill's measures that are proposed to increase coordination of entry and exit information would do anything to reduce the flow of asylum seekers from arguably the second-freest nation in the world. If programs and resources are diverted from honest, hard-working Canadians and legitimate refugee claimants, all Canadians begin to question how the government is managing taxpayers' money.

This updated tracking information will also make it easier for Canadians and permanent residents who frequently leave the country for work. Our government has been known to request proof of departures and arrival timelines for those who work overseas, something that should be available to it without asking honest Canadians to provide proof of their interactions with Canadian officials. I would seek to know from the government if it can assure us that immigration officials, border guards, and tax officials will ensure that they coordinate and share information appropriately.

In closing, I offer my reserved support, pending some further information from the government, expert witnesses, and officials with respect to how the new powers and information will be managed and safeguarded.

I would like to thank the minister for bringing this legislation forward, which, like much of our important trade work, was started by the previous government. I look forward to working with him and all of my colleagues in this House to advance this legislation.

● (1300)

Mr. David de Burgh Graham (Laurentides—Labelle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner for his remarks and for his support of this bill.

Government Orders

As I mentioned to my colleague earlier, I believe that this bill is important, in light of the Amber Alert that took place just outside of my riding a few days ago. Had that person gone across the border, we would still be looking for that person. I wonder if the member has any comments on how important this information is in that context.

Mr. Glen Motz: Mr. Speaker, as someone who in my previous life issued Amber Alerts, what is critical is the time it takes to get that information out to the public so that they can help us. It is important that proper information, as much as possible, be gathered from all avenues to know where suspects might be. Therefore, having this information available through our borders and other means is critical. It is critical to ensuring that information that is gathered by border security folks when people travel back and forth, such as what could be the case in an Amber Alert situation, is made readily available to national and local law enforcement officials. We have not figured out exactly how that will work, but we are looking forward to working out those details so that it can benefit all Canadians.

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to hear more with respect to the Wild Horse crossing. In my time at the Calgary chamber of commerce as the manager of policy and research, I remember that even back then, which was many years ago now, it was a big issue for the Medicine Hat community to be able to move goods across the border. Hopefully, this bill will some day make it easier to get a full border crossing there, with 24-hour service. I would like to ask the member what it would mean for his community to have that border crossing open 24-7, in allowing the flow of goods to cross when they need to cross.

Mr. Glen Motz: Mr. Speaker, it has been a decade since the Port of Wild Horse border crossing conversations had taken place. The importance of this crossing is understood by everyone. It is the easternmost port in Alberta to travel goods. It seems to be a natural corridor for a lot of the oil and gas activities in the eastern part of the province and in northern Alberta. Right now companies have to travel a long way out of the way in order to navigate around the Port of Wild Horse, because it is not open.

In speaking with the Palliser Economic Partnership, chambers of commerce, and local businesses that have lost business in the U.S., and Canadian consumers not able to trade, I know that having very limited border hours in the Port of Wild Horse, as well as having extremely limited equipment there so that goods can be pre-cleared, is having a huge economic impact on Medicine Hat as well as on the whole eastern Alberta corridor and all of Alberta and western Saskatchewan.

It is critical that the money that has been earmarked for this situation needs to start moving forward. I look forward to this particular bill making a difference for our local economy.

Mr. Dave MacKenzie: Mr. Speaker, this legislation is important to all of us. All Canadians stand to benefit when this legislation is ultimately passed. It is very important to my riding.

In my riding we have two automotive assembly plants, one of which is unfortunately on strike today. Traffic across the border, both ways, is crucial for all of our ridings for a variety of reasons.

In June 2016, the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness introduced Bill C-21, an act to amend the Customs

Act. The bill would amend the Customs Act to authorize Canada Border Services Agency to collect biographical information on all travellers, including Canadian citizens, as they leave Canada. CBSA will have a discretionary authority, which means it may collect the information; however, it is not required to do so.

This proposed piece of legislation is—

• (1305)

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Members will know that we do not like to interrupt hon. members when they are in the course of their remarks or presentations to the House, but I am thinking that maybe the hon. member has begun his intervention for the 10 minutes. We were actually just on the last portion of questions and comments to the hon. member for Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner. We will go to him, and then we will be right back to the hon. member for Oxford for his continuing thoughts on the matter.

Mr. Glen Motz: Mr. Speaker, to wrap up my time I would just like to add that this an important bill that will add to the security of our borders. It will also add to the ability for goods and services to flow more freely. I think it will benefit all Canadians.

Mr. Dave MacKenzie (Oxford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I apologize for being so anxious to speak in this session.

The proposed piece of legislation is part of the beyond the border action plan, which was jointly declared in 2011 by then Prime Minister Stephen Harper and then President Barack Obama to establish a long-term partnership respecting perimeter security.

For those in the House who are not aware, let me outline the key areas of co-operation between Canada and the U.S. as set out in that joint declaration. They are as follows: addressing threats early, trade facilitation, economic growth and jobs, integrated cross-border law enforcement, and critical infrastructure and cyber security.

This beyond the border action plan, also known as the entry-exit initiative, was to be implemented by June 2014 under the original mandate. Almost two years after this initiative was to be implemented, in March 2016, the current Prime Minister first announced the agreement with the United States to fully implement a system to exchange basic biographical information. It is good to see the Liberal government recognizing and following through on the hard work that began under the previous Conservative government in taking border security seriously.

According to the government, the entry-exit initiative will respond to the outbound movement of high-risk travellers and their goods prior to their actual departure from Canada by air; respond more effectively in time-sensitive situations, such as responding to Amber Alerts, which is very important in helping find abducted children and runaways; and help prevent the illegal export of controlled, regulated, or prohibited goods from Canada.

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If adopted, Bill C-21 will amend section 159 of the Customs Act to make it an offence to smuggle or attempt to smuggle out of Canada any goods that are subject to duties. The proposed amendments authorize officers to require goods exported from Canada to be reported despite exemptions and give CBSA the power to examine goods being exported. The Conservative Party recognizes that the potential to inspect goods actually in the country would deter criminals from smuggling illegal and controlled goods out of the country.

I am pleased to see the government move forward with this entry-exit initiative, as this piece of legislation addresses long-standing Conservative priorities focused on border security and on ensuring that entitlement programs are not abused.

If enacted, Bill C-21 would allow verification of travel dates to determine applicable duty and tax exemptions and continued entitlement to social programs. With the verification of travel dates, this legislation has the potential to save an estimated \$20 million per year from those who are unduly receiving entitlement programs while out of Canada.

Changes proposed to the Customs Act would support our law enforcement and national security operations through the exchange of traveller information. The Conservative Party knows how important and difficult it will be to ensure the information collected by federal officials reaches the national security and law enforcement officials throughout the country who need access to this information in a timely manner.

Our Conservative Party believes this initiative is good news for the hard-working taxpayer, as it will cut down on employment insurance and benefits cheats.

The Canada Border Services Agency will be able to identify individuals who do not leave Canada at the end of their authorized period of stay and provide decision-makers with an accurate picture of an individual's travel history. The legislation would focus immigration enforcement activities on persons still in Canada and eliminate wasted time and resources spent on issuing immigration warrants and conducting investigations on individuals who already have left the country.

The information collected on travellers would verify whether applicants for permanent residency or citizenship have complied with residency requirements.

While benefits of this program may include the strengthening of Canada's immigration border management, nation security, law enforcement, and program integrity, there are still a few details that need to be addressed. As one of the goals of these changes is to help prevent the legal export of controlled, regulated, or prohibited goods from Canada, it is key that we ensure CBSA has the resources required to carry out the inspection of goods exiting the country.

We recognize that it is important to Canadians that their personal information be secure and their privacy protected. While Bill C-21 would give CBSA direction to collect biographical data on travellers as they leave Canada, the government must take measures to ensure our agencies are not overloaded with too much data, rendering the data collection useless, despite the fact they must also ensure data protection and security.

● (1310)

Bill C-21 follows a path similar to the legislation put forward by the Conservative government in 2011.

These amendments are welcome improvements to the Customs Act and will raise the level of co-operation between Canada and the U.S. in order to address threats early, facilitate trade, and integrate cross-border law enforcement. If the Liberal Party wants to continue putting forward legislation from previous Conservative initiatives like the beyond the borders action plan, it will be welcome to it.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham (Laurentides—Labelle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have heard a number of concerns from members of another party that the bill is all about giving data to the United States, but the bill is really about finding out who is leaving the country not about giving information to other people.

Would the member like to expand on how this legislation would be a good thing for our country?

Mr. Dave MacKenzie: Mr. Speaker, there are a variety of good points in the legislation. The member asked a question a few minutes ago about one of those points, that being the Amber Alert and people who would cross the border. It is tremendously important that we know. From the criminal aspect, it is not about what we know about people but about where they are—for example, people who we think are still here but who have already left the country. We can determine that. The legislation would eliminate the need for warrants for the apprehension of people who are illegally in the country.

There are a whole raft of things in the bill in addition to being good for trade.

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I support the bill but I have concerns about some of the funding mechanisms that will be involved for CBSA officials as they carry out the tasks that are going to be assigned to them with the exit system that is proposed in the bill.

I am wondering whether the member shares my concerns that perhaps some of the funding has not been put in place to train CBSA officers and provide them with the facilities they may need in certain areas of the country to carry out the tasks that this legislation would entrust on them. Does the member share this concern?

Mr. Dave MacKenzie: Mr. Speaker, it is always a concern when we add additional duties to the responsibilities of those people who are tasked with keeping our country safe.

There is going to be some other legislation coming forward, and the police community has already expressed a real concern about the lack of training and so on. That would be the case with this legislation in some respects.

We should not hold up the legislation, but we should move forward in funding the things that are required.

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to join the debate on Bill C-21, and I have listened carefully to the debate so far.

Government Orders

Before I begin to speak to the substance of the matter, I want to express my condolences on the passing of Arnold Chan, the former member for Scarborough—Agincourt. I did not know him as well as some of the members on the other side of the House, but I did appreciate the great work he did on the procedure and house affairs committee. I was there for a long time during the filibuster, which is where I met him and talked to him on the side. I appreciated his innate respect for Parliament. The three things I most remember are that he would remind us all about dedication, duty, and devotion. I will also miss the breakfasts which I would share with him sometimes when I was at the Marriott, where he stayed and many members of Parliament stay. He was a great parliamentarian who will be sorely missed by many of us.

This legislation is in part related to the beyond the border action plan signed by the former prime minister, Mr. Harper, and the former president of the United States, Mr. Obama, back in 2012. It is nice to see more good work being implemented by the Liberal government, which was started by the Conservatives previously. I am sure there is much chagrin with respect to the implementation of a lot of the Conservative measures of the previous Conservative agenda when it comes to freeing up trade along the border. I hear many members around me sharing in that expression of joy, that the previous agenda is still being followed through.

It is good news that the government will cut down on some of the things that went on in the previous system that did not maximize trade opportunities, or the opportunity to reduce benefits and fraud especially in the bill. Perhaps with Bill C-21, we will be able to ensure those Canadians, whether corporations or individuals, can maximize opportunities when looking to find new suppliers or buyers. It is also an opportunity for immigration services and those men and women who work there to know who is actually leaving the country and have that information handy. They can use it to further the interests of Canada and track people much more effectively. Many members have spoken to this already about the opportunity that exists to tighten up the immigration system to know who has left the country, rather than expend time and resources tracking people who are no longer here simply because we did not have an exit control system.

Section 92 of the bill would collect information on people leaving Canada. There are many good measures in section 92 that will help track people when they are in Canada. It is not primarily for Canadians. I think of it as a way to track tourists and people who visit our country, to ensure they leave at the end of the day, that they do not stay and try to work here illegally whenever they come from other countries.

Section 94 creates an obligation for every person leaving Canada to truthfully answer the questions being asked of them, which is a reasonable measure to include. It is sad that we have to put it into legislation to compel people to tell the truth. If it were to happen and one appeared before a judge, one would have to squabble over whether the person did answer truthfully or lied when speaking to an officer at border control.

I know there has been a lot of concern expressed in the House about privacy measures with respect to the exchange of information and what type of information may be shared from the second page of the passport. Some members who participated in the debate

explained the kind of information that would be there, such as surname, first name, middle name, date of birth, potentially the citizenship or nationality, the sex of the person, the type of travel document he or she would be using, the issuing country or organization, the travel document, the date, and the time of departure. Much of this same information may be found when printing an airline ticket to present to officers, similar to much of the information found on a person's travel documents. I know many people who share much more personal information over social media and Facebook. There are a lot of pictures there. One can get to know a person better that way than by sharing this type of information.

I say this as someone who came here from another country. My family came to Canada in 1985, after being kicked out of Communist Poland. Canadian authorities already had a lot of this information as part of the spousal sponsorship that my father had made at the time in his application.

● (1315)

We reveal a lot of information today too through social media, Instagram, and a whole bunch of other applications that proliferate on our smart phones. People really have accepted that. The point of contention becomes how that information is used by governments.

I do not often hear people worrying about how Walmart or Amazon are using their information when they buy books from them and have them mail it to them. I do not hear that same type of concern. I do hear concern with large firms like Equifax, and we see the privacy breach that is affecting Canadians, Americans, and many others. It will be a problem for many years of people trying to unwind any type of fraud committed against them.

In a situation where it is the government exchanging this type of information, the airlines already have a lot of it. It is not just border services in different countries, the United States, or Canada, but the airlines carry a lot of this information too. I still do not hear people mentioning how Air Canada or United airlines are using or sharing their information is a concern for them. People are already sharing it on Facebook or Snapchat, and are already putting up videos of themselves on YouTube. People can see where they are working, what they are doing, or the name of their family members.

It is a concern I have heard before when it comes to counterterrorism measures. I have had people come to me expressing concern about broad based metadata gathering techniques by CSIS and other security agencies. I share some of those concerns. With metadata, it does not take a lot of effort to track down an individual to figure out who the person is. There is a balance that has to be reached at some point between zero privacy and zero data sharing at all in no place at no time.

Government Orders

Many people who say these things then go online to Indigo, order books, provide a whole bunch of information, use rewards cards that have additional information connected to them, and then mail them to their home addresses. All the information presumably needed to commit identity fraud is available there. They will use credit cards, will have accounts and plum rewards cards, and the information will all be there already. These are the same types of transactions we would make at a gas station, where we swipe our cards in order to purchase gasoline. A lot of people's private information is already located in their credit cards and is being exchanged through the point of sale device being used.

A lot of the information used on a day-to-day basis is exchanged with private companies. Those private companies exchange that information with their affinity partners. Many people accept those things. They read the terms and agreements, and accept those.

However, when it comes to the government, some people share some type of angst when it is being shared across the border. Oftentimes, the servers where this data is being collected happen not to be in Canada but might be in another country. In the terms of the agreements, people are saying it is okay to share it across the border.

We have to temper some of these concerns. I heard them too. Most of these people are worried about their privacy, but again they go onto social media and share far more information there.

• (1320)

[*Translation*]

I would also like to speak to some of the bill's benefits, like the exchange of information on travellers, which would help our border officers enforce the law and protect national security. Such a program could have many benefits, such as strengthening immigration, as I have said before, Canadian border controls, national security, law enforcement and the very integrity of our immigration program.

The potential for outgoing cargo being inspected will deter illegal smuggling, which will be more closely monitored outside of Canada. I think it bears repeating here, in the House, that at this very moment we have no effective means of curbing the exportation of contraband. I also think that this bill would bring potential savings of roughly \$20 million a year by targeting service recipients living outside Canada.

[*English*]

Something I have mentioned before is benefit fraud, people who collect benefits they are not entitled to since they are no longer residents of Canada or because they made an application in bad faith, left Canada, and receive benefits through some means involving a bank account here. However, they no longer reside here and are no longer eligible to receive them.

Saving \$20 million in the grand scheme of things when one is running a \$20-plus billion deficit is still important. Every little bit helps and gets one closer to the goal, which should be balancing the budget. Unfortunately, we know that in the last federal budget tabled in the House by the Minister of Finance, as well as in the previous budget, there was no table in the budget demonstrating a willingness or an intent of some day balancing the federal budget and ensuring

we would not be accumulating future debts that we would be passing on to the next generation.

Much of the debt we are accumulating is also squeezing out the private sector lending that could happen. If we borrow a lot on the public side, we inevitably squeeze the private sector side as interest rates go up. We have been seeing interest rates go up this year, and they may even go up again one more time if the central bank decides to do that. Twenty million dollars is a small amount of money, but it gets us toward that goal. I asked the question before of the member for Oxford.

I have some concerns with parts of the bill when it comes to the financing for some of these new tasks that will be assigned to CBSA. I support the bill. It is good that we are implementing the agreement, but I am concerned that perhaps there was not enough money set aside for training and potential new facilities in the previous budget. Some kind of explanation and extra attention should be paid to this. I hope to see that at the committee level. I hope it will really dig down into the costs associated with ensuring we have a proper exit control system on the visa tourist side, but also for the products and parcels that may be leaving our country that are going to be stopped. Do we have the facilities and manpower to ensure we can do all these extra tasks? If it requires 100 or 200 more hours at a certain control point, is that going to be overtime or extra officers being hired to shore up the resources in human capital now in CBSA?

Those questions about infrastructure spending and facilities for exit inspection points are open questions on the costing of these initiatives. I hope the committee takes a good, hard look at the costs associated with this and provides some feedback and recommendations to the government on what that would look like in the near future.

The bill also comes at the right time, when we have kicked off the really serious negotiations on NAFTA. We cannot ignore what is happening outside the House, across the border. We are negotiating with our biggest trading partner and attempting to ensure we maintain all the benefits Canadians receive from NAFTA. It is at a time when we are trying to indicate to Americans that it is our full intention to follow through with this agreement, which was signed by President Obama and our previous prime minister, Harper, and actually implement it, follow through with it, and maximize the benefits Canadians are receiving from our freer border trade. It is a good sign that we are proceeding with it. It is a good indicator to negotiators on both sides that it is our intention to provide Americans the certainty they require for their national security needs and trade needs, as well as our own. We are indicating to them that these are our expectations going forward, that we are going to maintain this free border trade. It is a sign of good faith that we are approaching negotiations with open eyes, but also with firm objectives and demands.

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I want to spend one moment on this. I really wish Parliament had stronger rules around knowing the types of negotiating objectives the Government of Canada has. I know the international trade committee met during the summer and much of that information was provided. However, I really wish it was a statutory requirement, more so than from the good graces of the government, that it was willing to share with members of Parliament and the Senate. It should be more like Congress works in the United States, where there is a statutory requirement to not only present objectives on NAFTA, but also have them confirmed by Parliament so we can then play an active role in ensuring the concerns of our communities and residents in our ridings are heard.

Even during the summer, many businesses and small business owners came to me with different concerns around the threshold, about their products being able to clear customs, and having some certainty. Sometimes some companies were having customs stop products instead of clearing them for different reasons because they were not meeting the requirements. At other times, the products were simply making it through. There was no rhyme or reason for when a product would clear or not. It had nothing to do with time of year, or the port of clearance it was going through.

That point of having stronger rules would apply to everything in the House. Parliament should have much greater control over the Government of Canada's objectives when it comes to international agreements, as well as free trade agreements, so we know not only what the negotiating objectives are but approve the negotiating objectives and amend them. I do not mean giving it an entirely new direction or wiping out the government's intent. After all the government should be judged according to its goals at the next election, and in-between, and whether we really should be playing a greater role.

● (1325)

The border insecurity issue caused by the Liberals with the increase in crossings at the borders between Quebec, Manitoba, and the United States is a cause for concern. I have heard from a lot of Canadians who doubt that the Liberals have mastered the situation or grasped the enormity of it. When we have people crossing the border illegally, seeking to take advantage of our very generous refugee system here, fleeing from the United States, the second-freest country in the world—we are definitely the first—that is a cause for concern to many Canadians. They want certainty that we have a handle on the border and that the Government of Canada is taking the issue seriously and not causing a situation in which even more people will try to cross illegally, especially now when we are moving into the winter.

Bill C-21 is a good bill. I would like to see more study at committee on the cost implications of some of this. If there is a connection to pieces in the budget or in the future, those should be indicated to the committee as well.

The timing is one thing that I judge. This is the first day that Parliament has returned. I would have thought that the first thing we would perhaps debate would be something to do with the small business tax proposal the Liberals have pushed forward. It is interesting that we are debating this bill, although it is important. The small business tax proposal by far is the number one issue I am

hearing from residents in my riding. I held a town hall on Saturday from 5 to 7. I was basically asking my constituents to miss dinner with their family and the Stamps game, which in Calgary is almost like a religious experience, and most people go to it. I had over 100 small business owners show up. They were farmers and physicians, and they were all passionately interested in the details. I had Kim Moody there from Moodys Gartner providing a technical explanation on the changes being proposed. That is the type of debate we should be having here in the House, having complete details provided to us by the Minister of Finance and the Minister of National Revenue on the implications of the small business tax changes they are proposing at this time.

We could have had a debate on border control issues specific to illegal crossings of our borders in Manitoba and Quebec. There could have been a great first day of debate on that, to really test the government to see whether it has mastery of the situation and understands what is going on.

We could also have had a debate on public debt management. With the interest rate increasing and future potential interest rate increases in store, the public debt management policy of the government and whether it has a handle on that are open questions. As interest rates go up, the costs of public debt financing in Canada will go up. How much more debt are we taking on? Is there a plan to reduce the deficit and start paying down the debt? Are they managing their outstanding bonds appropriately?

As I have done many times before and as we are back on the first day, I have a Yiddish proverb that I want to share with the House: things cannot be bad all the time, nor good all the time. Although this bill is good, there are lots of bad things that the Government of Canada is doing, and I think this Yiddish proverb definitely applies to the current situation. Although the Conservatives and the Liberals are having a tender, happy debate today on a bill that we agree with and are only just mentioning our concerns about, there will be days to come when we disagree. I am sure that during question period there will be extensive disagreement about the direction the Government of Canada has chosen to go on the small business tax, border controls, and on other matters affecting the public finances of Canada.

With that, I will end my intervention and look forward to questions and comments by my colleagues.

● (1330)

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Calgary Shepard for his intervention and his condolences for our joint friend and member of the Marriott breakfast club, the late member for Scarborough—Agincourt, Arnold Chan, who unfortunately is not with us now.

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The late member for Scarborough—Agincourt really called on us to listen to each other and not to talk over each other, but to really engage in debate through active listening. I have been listening to the debate today and in particular the comments by the member for Calgary Shepard on the costs of implementing this measure, for which we are already gathering information and that is already in systems that can be printed on tickets. I am having trouble finding the cost trail for this and what the cost is of complying with our Five Eyes commitments. Is there a point at which it is not worth it to implement this type of a security system that gets us in line with the Five Eyes, or is it something that we have to do as a country to invest in our safety and security?

Mr. Tom Kmiec: Mr. Speaker, I was a member of the Marriott breakfast club, now a member of the Delta breakfast club instead, so I guess the member is always welcome to come there to talk about Bill C-21 and other issues like the small business tax proposals.

When it comes to measures such as this, I would think the government had estimated ahead of time what the costs would, because say we are stopping items that should not be leaving the country, such as contraband products and parcels, they will have to be placed somewhere and kept temporarily in an area. If there is an increase in volume when doing so, or when there are extra detentions at the border because people are trying to leave when they should not be leaving, or individuals are illegally collecting benefits, there must be a cost-benefit analysis somewhere in government. I would hope it is not done afterward.

When it comes to our compliance with our Five Eyes commitments, a lot of that budgeting has already been done and is already being done. Absolutely, for some of this there will be no extra cost, but there is time involved in processing documents both in the intake when a person is entering the country and now when a person will be leaving the country. With those types of time delays, the officers involved in policing the system represent manpower hours and human capital at work. Those types of costs should and must be calculated. I would hope that the government has done that work.

● (1335)

[Translation]

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as NDP whip, I have already communicated with the Liberal Party whip to express our great sadness at the loss of their colleague, but I would like to express it again today publicly. We are all deeply saddened by the loss of this colleague, who was a great man.

Sadly, this great man's colleagues are not doing much to champion their bill, which is why I will direct my questions to the Conservatives, who seem to be the ones championing it.

Given President Trump's policies, many of which are anti-immigration and hostile to many groups, does my colleague believe that such a bill would give the Minister of Public Security the means to assure Canadians that expanding information exchange with a country like the United States will not adversely affect many Canadians belonging to many specific groups that are being discriminated against in the United States?

Mr. Tom Kmiec: Mr. Speaker, as the member certainly knows, the bill dates back to 2012, when President Obama and prime

minister Harper signed an agreement for the two countries to share more information. The agreement became the content of this bill.

Mr. Obama was viewed as progressive, and New Democrats liked him a lot when he was in office. Therefore, if he approved the content of the agreement that is now a bill in the House, it seems to me that New Democrats should agree with the government's proposal to have the bill passed in the Senate and the House of Commons.

[English]

Mr. David de Burgh Graham (Laurentides—Labelle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I was getting concerned toward the end of the speech that I had not yet heard a Yiddish proverb, so I want to thank the member for filling in that gap before invited him to do so.

I want to thank the member for his very kind comments with regard to our colleague, Arnold Chan. We had an interesting time in that very long procedure and House affairs committee meeting, so I wanted to thank the member for his presence at that 80-hour meeting on March 21.

The member referred a couple of times to exit control systems and I would like to take exception to that one perspective. I do not see it as an exit control system so much as an exit information system. It does not stop people from exiting the country. This is not a country that does that. We do not say people cannot leave, that they need an exit visa to depart. That is why I wanted to change that wording a little bit.

The bill does not create any new data. The data already exists, as the member knows. It improves our usage of the data and our access to that data. While I sympathize with the privacy concerns I am hearing from the other party, I do not agree with them because the bill does not create new data or new floppy disks. It improves our access to information, our public safety, and the situation for Amber Alerts, as we talked about earlier. I think overall it is a good bill. I wonder if the member has any further comments.

● (1340)

Mr. Tom Kmiec: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his questions and comments, as well as for surviving the filibuster at the procedure and House affairs committee. I know that I contributed a lot of hours to it.

Like the hon. member, I will miss the member for Scarborough—Agincourt and his contributions. I shared one thing in common with Arnold that we talked a little about. I am a Trekkie, a big fan Star Trek. I will miss those talks that we had.

The member is absolutely right. I used the exit control system parlance. I was educated in the United States, and I default to that wording. What I would say is that I would hope that all this information we are collecting goes to some use. Perhaps there may be a disagreement there, but if we are issuing Amber Alerts and using this information to catch people on the Amber Alert list, it would stop people from leaving the country who should not be leaving. Otherwise, why are we sharing this information that is already in existence, if we are not doing it for a good intent?

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[Translation]

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will share my time with the member for Beauport—Limoilou.

I am very glad to be back in the House today and to speak in my new role. In the shadow cabinet, I am now the cabinet secretary for rural affairs and economic development for the regions of Quebec. I thank my leader for the appointment and for his trust in me.

I am also pleased to speak to bill C-21. In my view, it is a very good bill. Let us not forget that this bill was part of the beyond the border action plan, which was jointly established in 2011 by prime minister Stephen Harper and President Barack Obama, in developing a long-term perimeter security partnership. I am very happy to see that the party opposite, the Liberal Party, showed good common sense and recognized that this is a very good bill for the two countries' borders. We hope that the bill is passed.

That being said, there has been some complacency of late with regard to this great piece of legislation. On the one hand, we have before us this excellent bill for our borders, and on the other, we have witnessed a surge in illegal migrants, mostly in the Montreal region, so we seem to have gone a little off track. In my riding, Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, this wave of illegal migration has really resonated with people—not so much with those born in Canada, but rather with the immigrants that came here legally and are now stuck with a bunch of people who arrived illegally and still get all of the same stuff they do.

Let us now turn to Bill C-21. This bill seeks to address threats as soon as they emerge. It is important to understand that, with the advent of terrorism, we are no longer safe. We may think that we are safe, but the obvious truth is that we live in a world where a lot can happen, even here at home. In comes this bill, which seeks to protect our borders. It deals with cross-border law enforcement, crucial infrastructure and cybersecurity. We do not talk about cybersecurity often enough. This is a new word that has been around for a very short time. There was a time when we felt safe, but now, thanks to our cellphones, for example, we are less safe. Bill C-21 will help a little in that regard.

This bill addresses long-standing Conservative priorities. I am glad to see the Liberal Party acknowledge, for once, that on this side of the House, we worked very hard on border security. I thank the Liberals. It is a rare thing for me to thank the Liberal Party. This moment will surely go down in history as the first and last time that I thank the Liberal Party, but I will venture to do so anyway.

This legislation is great news for information exchange on travellers. It will help border agents enforce the law, in particular national security legislation. We have a growing need for information. We need to know who leaves from where at what time, who is arriving in Canada at a given time, and all other relevant information. This is becoming increasingly important in light of the series of terrorist attacks we have seen around the world.

•(1345)

So far, we have come through it in relatively good shape here, but that does not mean that we are protected from everything; I hope Bill C-21 will deal with this problem.

The benefits of this approach could include strengthening immigration, helping secure Canada's borders, and enhancing national security, law enforcement, and the integrity of the program itself. We must also remember that, although this bill offers us some measure of protection, we must also monitor certain gaps that exist in small villages along the border, where migrants have easier access. We must also consider that aspect. I would ask the Liberal Party across the aisle to think about that issue. Bill C-21 is a first step. I hope that the Liberals will take other steps to enhance security along our borders.

What I would be interested to know now are the costs related to Bill C-21. We agree on the principle of the bill, but I would like to know if the minister plans to improve the associated infrastructure once the bill passes. Does the minister have any ideas to share with us on how to make our borders more secure? I hope we can examine them in committee.

We should also know that we will have to monitor everything that arrives here legally and illegally. I do not know about the other members here today, but I often watch the show *Border Security*, on Canal D. I find it very interesting, and it shows different airports around the world. Every country has its own laws, and yet, people still smuggle things illegally. Has the government decided how it intends to strengthen these laws?

In any case, I agree with the premise of Bill C-21. It is a very Conservative bill, and once again, for the very last time, I would like to thank the Liberal Party for understanding that, on this side of the House, we are guided by common sense, and the safety of Canadians is a priority for us.

Mr. David de Burgh Graham (Laurentides—Labelle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the member for Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix on her new role as critic for rural affairs. I am happy to see that the Conservatives have a critic for rural affairs. They love to talk up the regions, but the fact is that, when push comes to shove, they always end up taking them for granted. I represent a vast and rural riding for which the Conservatives have never done a single thing, and that is why I would like to congratulate my colleague.

I would like to get back to the bill itself. We talked earlier about its importance in the context of cases like the Amber Alert in the Lachute area last Thursday. We believe it is essential to realize that we would have had no way of knowing if Mr. Fredette had left the country. I think it is crucial that we bring in a bill like this to fix this kind of problem.

Does my colleague have any comments on that point?

•(1350)

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague. Rural affairs are very important to me, and if he thinks the Conservatives did nothing for rural communities, he should ask himself what the Liberals are doing for us: not a whole lot.

Still, I do agree with my colleague that information sharing is important. We should be deeply grateful to Quebeckers for everything they did to find Mr. Fredette. It was a crazy manhunt, but now it is over. If Bill C-21 can help with that kind of thing, then I will absolutely support the members opposite who want to make security the top priority.

[*English*]

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member mentioned a critical item. We have Bill C-21, Bill C-23, and a number of preclearance and customs acts before this place. We have thousands of illegal crossings of our border, yet we have seen no major funding initiative from the government to either empower what it intends to pass with Bill C-21 and Bill C-23 or any plan or funding to handle the significant illegal entries happening in Quebec and Manitoba. As our colleague, our shadow minister for immigration, has been saying, not having a plan is a failure.

Now we see tremendous changes to the preclearance and customs exchange of information yet no plan to fund that. I would ask the hon. member her thoughts on that lack of funding at a time when our border and changes to it are in crisis.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question, which is one I have been asking since the beginning. I hope they back this up with funding.

Bill C-21 is a good bill, but there are still some missing pieces when it comes to security and the illegal migrants streaming across our borders. We want to see more funding to handle those issues. I hope the members across the aisle will take that into consideration.

Mr. Alupa Clarke (Beauport—Limoilou, CPC): Mr. Speaker, thank you for granting me this speaking time.

On this morning of September 18 I am very happy to be back in the great democratic institution that is the House of Commons. I had an excellent summer. I struck a balance between work, activities, the office, and my family. My little six-month old son is becoming more and more aware of life around him. I am very happy to be back to discuss the many issues that concerned our offices this summer, as we saw in the media. Canada's official opposition and myself believe that, as usual, this government acted or reacted poorly to these many issues.

I also want to begin by extending my deepest condolences to the family of the hon. member for Scarborough—Agincourt. This is certainly a tremendous loss for the family. I have been a father for four years and I cannot imagine how painful this must be for his wife and children. We have also lost a great parliamentarian and hon. member here. It is a huge loss to Canadian democracy, but especially to his family. I wanted to say that and extend my condolences.

Today, we are discussing Bill C-21, an act to amend the Customs Act. I would like to get things started by explaining what constitutes a border for any country or administration. A border is not just something that goods, services, and people cross over. A border is also the ultimate symbol of our national sovereignty and the tangible presence of its protection. In our case, it is the sovereignty of the Canadian federation we are talking about.

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This sovereignty is guaranteed by our institutions, of course, as well as by law enforcement, our democratic representatives, and Canadians who go to work every day. Before all of that, however, one can say that it is guaranteed by our borders. How does sovereignty benefit us? It ensures the security of Canadians, as well as their prosperity. Indeed, it is thanks to our sovereignty that we can make our own choices on political, social, and economic issues.

I respect the subject of the debate. In case there could be any doubt, that was my introduction.

Sovereignty guarantees the democratic space we need in Canada. I recently heard a philosopher talking about the importance of the sovereignty of today's borders. We live in an age where certain small groups would have us believe, through a narrow ideological vision, that national sovereignty should not exist, that it is a challenge that must be overcome, that it is in decline and that we live in an increasingly borderless world.

According to that philosopher, whose name escapes me, borders that ensure sovereignty definitely ensure our democracy because no rights of any kind can survive if they are not attached to the democratic institutions that enforce those rights. That is one of the reasons why, when it comes to international relations, it would be anarchy, pure and simple. No institution exists at the international level that has that authority and could enforce those rights. In Canada, however, our rights are guaranteed first and foremost by the House of Commons, the Supreme Court of Canada and by cabinet or the executive. If not for borders, none of that would be possible.

● (1355)

In his speech, the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness criticized certain things that are in fact quite important. Some 400,000 people cross the Canada-U.S. border every day, which is a huge number, not to mention all the other nationalities. Two billion dollars worth of trade flows between Canada and the United States every day. Given that reality, we began putting this bill together. I hope to have the opportunity to tell the House more about it after question period.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Beauport—Limoilou will have four and a half minutes for his speech when the House resumes debate on this motion.

*Statements by Members***STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**

● (1400)

*[Translation]***GOVERNMENT OF CANADA'S SUMMER**

Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, fortunately for the Prime Minister, the House did not sit this summer because his government reached the level of its incompetence in almost every area. The fact that Canadian-made armoured vehicles are being used to attack Saudi civilians is unacceptable. The mismanagement of the refugee file and the complete about-face of the Minister of Canadian Heritage regarding *Historia* and *Séries+* are shameful. The lack of an emergency plan to help Quebeckers who were stranded by Hurricane Irma is unbelievable. The NAFTA negotiations are not going well, there is opposition to the tax reform, the parliamentary reform could end in a gag order, and the list goes on.

The Liberals have obviously reached their level of incompetence, as per the Peter principle. In any case, one thing is clear for Quebeckers: they can expect nothing from this incompetent government, nor from the 40 phantom Liberal MPs from Quebec.

When Quebec takes charge of its own destiny, it accomplishes great things. When Ottawa gets involved, everything goes off the rails. The lesson that we learned this summer and what we are going to continue to see in the coming months is that the interests of Quebeckers are best served when Quebec governs itself.

* * *

*[English]***TERRY FOX RUN**

Ms. Pam Damoff (Oakville North—Burlington, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, after losing his leg to osteogenic sarcoma, Terry Fox embarked on a cross-country Marathon of Hope to raise money for cancer research. Today, the Terry Fox Run is the largest single-day cancer fundraiser in the world, raising over \$750 million for cancer research to date.

Yesterday, Canadians participated in the 37th annual Terry Fox Run. In Oakville, brave Terry Foxer Teagan Walsh sounded the horn to start the run. She is being treated for the same cancer that Terry had. Teagan's progressive treatment has benefited from breakthroughs in cancer research, many made possible because of funds raised in Terry's name.

As we return to the House this week, our hearts are heavy with the loss of our colleague and friend, Arnold Chan. The Terry Fox Foundation is committed to funding leading-edge research and innovative treatments for cancers like Arnold's, Teagan's, and Terry's.

* * *

ADAMS RIVER SALMON RUN

Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is good to be back on this first day of the fall session, although the passing of the hon. member for Scarborough—Agincourt is a sad loss for all of us. I send condolences to his family and loved ones, and recognize his commitment to serving the people of Scarborough—Agincourt.

Parliament's return brings to mind another fall return that has been happening in the North Okanagan—Shuswap for millennia. The world-renowned Adams River salmon run is an annual event, with salmon that have travelled thousands of kilometres returning to lay their eggs and start a new generation before dying and giving their nutrients to the river.

This Friday, the Adams River Salmon Society will be holding the first annual gala fundraiser, with traditional Secwepemc food and storytelling. I salute the volunteers for organizing the gala, and their dedication to the health of Pacific salmon and all that depends on their return. I look forward to working with them in my new role as deputy shadow minister of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and Canadian Coast Guard.

* * *

CABLE PUBLIC AFFAIRS CHANNEL

Mr. Greg Fergus (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my congratulations to CPAC, the Canadian Cable Public Affairs Channel, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary.

[Translation]

I think we can all agree on how important CPAC is to Canadian democracy. Every day, this channel provides Canadians with direct access to democratic institutions, parliamentary debates and discussions, and the work of MPs.

CPAC goes beyond the headlines and always puts events in context in order to help Canadians better understand their democracy.

[English]

CPAC is providing Canadians with complete coverage of events as they happen, featuring the work of parliamentarians across party lines and allowing Canadians to participate in the process on the platform of their choice.

This year, CPAC is launching a digital democratic literacy project called Route 338, an innovative website that will make the institutions and the work of all MPs accessible to a younger, digital-native generation all across the country.

[Translation]

On behalf of all MPs, I wish CPAC a very happy anniversary.

* * *

● (1405)

*[English]***BRITISH COLUMBIA WILDFIRES**

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring the government's attention to the devastating impacts of wildfires on my province of British Columbia, the worst year for wildfires in six decades is 2017, the second-worst year in B.C. history. Over 1,200 wildfires burned 1.2 million hectares, over 5,000 square kilometres, and 155 fires still burn today.

This disaster has destroyed houses and hurt people all over B.C. It has critically harmed agriculture, forestry, and tourism, and caused profound damage to our environment, wildlife, and habitat, yet the Liberal government's response has been inadequate.

The Liberals refused to match private donations from individuals as it did for Alberta last year during the Fort McMurray disaster. They have failed to commit the same level of funds from the disaster financial assistance arrangements program as for previous disasters like the Quebec ice storms.

Today I call on the government to immediately match all private donations and commit full disaster relief funding to British Columbia citizens, communities, and businesses who have been so terribly affected by the 2017 wildfire disaster.

* * *

[Translation]

FRANCIS DESCHÊNES

Mr. René Arseneault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last week, Constable Francis Deschênes was providing assistance to some motorists near Memramcook, New Brunswick, when a collision took his life.

This is a huge loss, particularly for Nova Scotia RCMP, for New Brunswick, and for Constable Deschênes' hometown, Sainte-Anne-de-Madawaska.

[English]

Constable Deschênes joined the RCMP in 2004 and spent his career mainly in Nova Scotia, most recently in Amherst. He is remembered as a hero for using his vehicle to push a car out of the path of an oncoming train near Truro in 2008. He was awarded the Queen's Diamond Jubilee medal in 2013.

[Translation]

We extend our most sincere condolences to his family and friends, as well as to his colleagues and fellow RCMP officers, who had planned on joining him for Police and Peace Officers' National Memorial Day, this coming Sunday, to remember police officers fallen in the line of duty. They will be remembering him, instead, with sadness but also with pride—as will we all.

* * *

[English]

CABLE PUBLIC AFFAIRS CHANNEL

Mr. Kevin Waugh (Saskatoon—Grasswood, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to congratulate CPAC, the Cable Public Affairs Channel, as it celebrates 25 years of providing Canadians with quality coverage of the proceedings of this House.

As a former broadcaster, I recognize and appreciate the importance of a fair, balanced, unbiased, and independent media outlet like CPAC. This is paramount so that Canadians can form their own opinions on the issues of the day.

It has been 25 years since a group of Canadian cable companies took over the operation of the channel and expanded it into the country's only bilingual, commercial-free public affairs television station. On behalf of the Conservative caucus, I would like to

Statements by Members

acknowledge CPAC for a job well done and offer our wishes for continued success.

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TREVOR O'KEEFE

Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are mourning the loss of Corporal Trevor O'Keefe, a 17-year veteran of the RCMP. He served in Clarendville and Bell Island, and most recently was stationed in St. John's, where he was the public face and voice of the RCMP in our province.

During his career, Trevor dealt with some very difficult cases, and his tragic death is a reminder of the emotional and psychological toll police work can take. I know there are efforts already under way to try to understand whether he could have been better supported and to ensure that officers have the help they need so that this does not happen again.

At the memorial service in Bay Bulls on Friday, Trevor was remembered as a funny, generous, highly respected, much-loved man and a first-rate officer. His family, friends, and RCMP colleagues are in our thoughts and prayers. We offer them our deepest condolences, and we join them in remembering Corporal Trevor O'Keefe with pain and with great pride.

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● (1410)

BRITISH COLUMBIA WILDFIRES

Mr. Jati Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as we speak, the B.C. wildfires continue to burn across British Columbia.

In my riding of Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, as in many others across Canada, this summer's wildfires were a very real threat to many residents and posed a serious disruption for many businesses, and indeed for many communities' way of life. The destruction of homes was a serious concern for many in my riding, but for members of the Ashcroft Indian Band and Boston Flats communities, it was a reality.

As these fires continue to burn, I want to again acknowledge the hard work of the first responders, RCMP, volunteers, and local mayors and councils and the leadership of our first nations communities. It is in times like these that our communities come together, displaying what it means to be Canadian.

*Statements by Members***ATTACK IN LONDON**

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the relationship between Canada and the United Kingdom is one of uncommon depth. We share a sovereign, a language, parliamentary institutions, and common values. We share so much, and we also share deeply in the pain felt by the British people when their values, institutions, and citizens are attacked by terrorists. Last week, London went through another deplorable terrorist attack, this time at Parsons Green tube station. Daesh has claimed responsibility.

Terrorist attacks in the western world have become increasingly common, but they are nothing new to the people of London, who also remember the IRA period and the air raids of the Second World War. As before, Londoners and all Britons have met these events with courage, calmness, the steely determination to fight back against evil, and the continuing resolve to maintain and strengthen the values that have made Great Britain a great nation. As Canadians who share their values and institutions, today we share their pain and their resolve.

* * *

[Translation]

CHÂTEAUGUAY—LACOLLE

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay—Lacolle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise today to pay tribute to the people of the beautiful municipality of Saint-Bernard-de-Lacolle, which is home to the now-famous Lacolle border crossing.

It was already one of the busiest entry points in Canada, and this summer over 7,000 asylum seekers turned up there.

I proudly congratulate the people of Saint-Bernard-de-Lacolle; the mayor, Robert Duteau; the fire chief, Normand Faille; and especially the residents of the infamous Roxham Road, who worked closely with the RCMP and other officials to help set up emergency facilities and address security issues. They are also the ones who asked me on several occasions how we can help those individuals.

This is how we welcome and support newcomers to Châteauguay—Lacolle.

* * *

[English]

PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

Mr. Frank Baylis (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today we welcome the Right Honourable Theresa May, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

[Translation]

I am proud of the fact that the relationship between our two countries has always been positive and based on mutual trust. The United Kingdom is an important ally to Canada in all areas, including international relations, the environment, security, trade, and innovation.

[English]

With our shared traditions, history, and values, Canada and the United Kingdom are the best of friends. Following events such as

Friday's terrorist attack in London, the strength of this friendship is more important than ever. Canada has always stood shoulder to shoulder with the United Kingdom. We have done so in the past, and we will do so in the future.

On behalf of all members of this House, I welcome the Prime Minister and her colleagues. I trust that her visit to Canada will serve to further deepen our strong and historic bonds.

Welcome to Canada.

* * *

● (1415)

[Translation]

CANADIAN COAST GUARD

Hon. Steven Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today I want to acknowledge the delivery of the largest ship built in Canada by a Canadian shipbuilding yard in the past 20 years for our Royal Canadian Navy.

On July 20, the Davie shipyard in Lévis celebrated Project Resolve, an innovative and ingenious solution to help meet the urgent needs of our Royal Canadian Navy by transforming a container ship into a joint supply ship on the cutting edge of technology.

The report of the Senate Committee on National Security and Defence recommends that the government procure a second similar supply ship for our navy without delay, to say nothing of the pressing need for icebreakers for the Canadian Coast Guard, which is struggling to ensure the navigability of our waters, such as in Saguenay for Alcoa.

Our prosperity, security, and sovereignty depend on our ability to meet the urgent needs of the Royal Canadian Navy and the Canadian Coast Guard. The government must act without delay.

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[English]

ALLAN J. MACEACHEN

Hon. Mark Eyking (Sydney—Victoria, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, along with many of my colleagues and the Prime Minister, we attended a wonderful ceremony celebrating the life of the late Allan J. MacEachen, who passed away last week.

In the years after I was first elected, I had lots of advice from Mr. MacEachen. Over time I got to understand and respect the work. Whether it was people on the wharf, here in the halls of Ottawa, or in the international community, whether it was on medicare, labour laws, or charter rights, he was remembered by all.

Mr. MacEachen always told me to make it a priority to get home to listen to my constituents. While I was attending a trade meeting in San Francisco a few months ago, I heard a story about Mr. MacEachen arranging a Middle East peace conference to wrap up on a Thursday so he could be home Saturday to meet with his constituents.

May we never forget the great contributions Mr. MacEachen made to Cape Breton, Canadians, and the international community. His legacy and dedication will live on forever.

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[Translation]

CABLE PUBLIC AFFAIRS CHANNEL

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to congratulate CPAC, the Cable Public Affairs Channel, on its 25th anniversary. In 1992, several cable companies joined forces to ensure that Canadians would have access to full coverage of their representatives' work in the House of Commons.

[English]

This was and remains the core of the channel, but it has since grown to provide Canadians with a window on a vast array of political and public affairs events, from party and leadership conventions to grassroots federal election coverage to town hall debates about the issues that truly matter to Canadians.

[Translation]

On behalf of the New Democratic Party of Canada, I want to congratulate CPAC and thank the CPAC team for helping all political parties talk to all Canadians from coast to coast. It is a wonderful example of service to the public.

[English]

Happy anniversary, CPAC.

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NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Ron Liepert (Calgary Signal Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have some words for the member for Sydney—Victoria, who just talked about listening to his constituents. About 10 days ago, TransCanada announced that it had applied for a 30-day suspension of its energy east pipeline application. This suspension goes directly to the new regulatory hurdles the Liberal government has put in place.

I am afraid that this suspension is putting the government on notice that this project is going to be shelved, and that would be shameful. It would be even more shameful to continue to import one million barrels of oil a day from foreign countries. Now with the approval of the Keystone pipeline, those billion barrels of oil are going to go to the United States.

It is time for the 31 Liberal MPs, including you, Mr. Speaker, to talk to the Prime Minister to say get out of the way, let us get this project approved, and let us create jobs in the ridings of the member for Saint John—Rothesay and the member for Malpeque, not in Louisiana.

Oral Questions

ARNOLD CHAN

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree (Scarborough—Rouge Park, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on September 14, 2017, we lost our dear friend, the hon. member for Scarborough—Agincourt, Arnold Chan.

Arnold started his career as a political staffer in the 1990s. He had been engaged in the political process since the age of 13. He cherished being the member of Parliament for Scarborough—Agincourt, where he deployed a lifetime of experience, knowledge, and wisdom to serve his constituents and to elevate, in both tone and substance, the House.

Arnold loved democracy. For him, it meant listening and responding to every possible perspective, including those quiet voices that are seldom heard. He inspired and motivated everyone he met and worked with, guiding them on how they too could take their passions and create positive change in this world.

His world revolved around his family: his parents, Sandra and Anthony Chan; his brother, Dr. Kevin Chan; his boys, Nathaniel, Theodore, and Ethan; and his beloved Jean, his rock. I thank them for sharing Arnold with us. He inspired and challenged all of us to be better people and to think with our heads and follow our hearts.

Farewell, my friend.

He has earned his rest above the clouds.

ORAL QUESTIONS

• (1420)

[English]

TAXATION

Mr. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this summer I spent my time crossing the country talking to hard-working Canadians, job creators, and entrepreneurs, and I can tell the Prime Minister one very simple thing: they are not tax cheats. These are the people who mortgage their homes, who take an idea and create opportunities in their neighbourhoods.

My simple question for the Prime Minister is this: why is he hurting the very people he claims he wants to help?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is no suggestion that any Canadians are not following the rules. The problem is that the rules we have currently favour the wealthy over the middle class. We have a system right now that allows wealthy Canadians to use private corporations to pay lower tax rates than middle-class Canadians. That is not right.

We got elected on a commitment to change that system, which is why the first thing we did was raise taxes on the wealthiest 1% and lower them on the middle class, and why we are continuing to work on fairness every day.

[Translation]

Mr. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us talk about fairness.

Oral Questions

Can the Prime Minister tell us what is fair about preventing a mechanic from growing her business? Is it fair when restaurants lay off workers just because the owner has to pay more taxes to finance the Prime Minister's out-of-control spending? How is that even remotely fair?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians elected us because they knew it was not fair for the middle class to pay too much tax while the rich found ways to pay less tax. The current system lets rich people use private businesses to pay less tax than the middle class, which is not fair. That is why the first thing we did was raise taxes on the rich so we could lower them on the middle class, and that is why we are always looking for ways to help the middle class.

[English]

Mr. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, he clearly does not understand his own policies and he does not understand that small businesses do not use these tax measures to cheat the system. They use them to save money when times are good and to get them through when times are bad. Right now, a mechanic can save in these investments to save up for a new purchase, which will allow her to hire another worker. The Liberal plan will tax those investments twice: once they flow into the business and again when they flow to her. That will kill any opportunity for her to expand and hire more workers.

Once again, can the Prime Minister explain how that will make the middle class better off?

• (1425)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians sent us to government to make the tax system fairer, to make sure that everyone pays their fair share. That is why the very first thing we did was raise taxes on the wealthiest 1% and lower them on the middle class. We are now making sure that a system that currently allows wealthy individuals to use private corporations to pay lower tax rates than middle-class Canadians gets changed. That is something that the previous government allowed and encouraged to happen, but we know that we grow a strong economy by helping the middle class and those working hard to join it, not the wealthiest.

Mr. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, nobody in the last election asked the Liberal Party to attack job creators.

We have already established that this is not fair and we know that it is not compassionate, so why is the Prime Minister doing this? It is because he is drowning in debt, and a drowning man will reach out and grab on to anything and not care who he drags down with him. Who is he taking down with him? It is young Canadians looking for their first jobs, new Canadians looking to share in the prosperity in Canada, and women entrepreneurs who are hit disproportionately harder with these new tax measures.

Why is the Prime Minister hurting the—

The Speaker: Order. The right hon. Prime Minister.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite and indeed the entire opposition have been going around the country telling every doctor they meet that they stand with them, that they will defend their rights to pay

lower taxes than the nurses who work alongside those doctors. We do not think that is fair, but if the members opposite do want to stand with wealthy doctors, will they commit right now to restore the system of tax breaks for wealthy individuals after we make the changes that Canadians expect us to do?

Mr. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, he does not get it. These are not wealthy Canadians; these are hard-working, middle-class entrepreneurs planning and creating jobs.

The Prime Minister likes to talk about income sprinkling, and income sprinkling is a bit of a problem at big companies like Bombardier. The billionaire Bombardier-Beaudoin family sprinkles shares to its family members to keep itself in control and vote themselves big raises, even as their own government forks over \$400 million in taxpayer bailouts, yet massive public corporations like Bombardier will not pay a penny more.

Why is the Prime Minister taxing local businesses while big companies continue to get big bailouts?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we will continue to stand up for workers in the aerospace industry right across the country, who work very hard and create extraordinary products like the innovative, extraordinary C Series aircraft. We will continue to stand up and defend the hard-working Canadians who are building this country every single day. Our commitment is to the middle class and those working hard to join it, which means workers and which means small businesses that create opportunity and growth in their communities. Where we are changing the system is to prevent wealthy Canadians from using private corporations to get out of paying their fair share of taxes.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. It is good to see the members are enthusiastic coming back after the summer, but I ask them to contain their enthusiasm until it is their turn to speak.

The hon. member for Outremont.

* * *

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, at no time since the Cuban missile crisis has the world been more aware of the threat of nuclear weapons.

Oral Questions

I would like the Prime Minister to cast his mind back to last spring when I asked him about nuclear disarmament, and he told me that it would be well-intentioned but useless for Canada to be at the table for the UN talks. After the war of words between Donald Trump and Pyongyang over the summer, does the Prime Minister still believe that engaging in UN talks about nuclear disarmament is useless?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are committed to leading in ensuring that our children will inherit a world free of nuclear weapons. Our approach involves both nuclear- and non-nuclear-armed states. We have taken a leadership role on a UN high-level group that is preparing the way for a fissile material cut-off treaty to end the production of nuclear weapons. We are providing support to the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification to develop credible and innovative monitoring and verification capabilities. We believe this collaborative, measured, and determined approach is the most effective way forward on nuclear—

• (1430)

The Speaker: The hon. member for Outremont.

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the problem is of course that the UN talks are taking place without Canada. The Prime Minister talks a very good game when it comes to world peace, but he refuses to be at the table where we could be playing a role.

[Translation]

It is a good thing Lloyd Axworthy did not act this way.

As a Canadian, I am very proud that the Ottawa treaty to ban land mines has the word “Ottawa” in its title. Even if Canada was not planting the mines, we saved hundreds of thousands of lives.

Let me come back to the question instead of the non-answer that is really about something else: why are we not at the negotiating table for nuclear disarmament? That is my question.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we understand that the NDP is always ready for well-meaning platitudes, but Canada must be ready for concrete actions. This is exactly what we are doing by taking the lead on the fissile material cut-off treaty. We know it is essential to free the world of nuclear weapons to protect our children and future generations. That is what Canada has always done and what it continues to proudly do under this government.

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Saudi Arabia is another issue that this Prime Minister mishandled. Although he made an emotional promise to Ensaf Haidar to take action to help her husband, Raif Badawi, two years later, nothing has been done.

In the meantime, his government has allowed the sale of weapons to Saudi Arabia, a country with an abysmal human rights record. It has been proven that Saudi Arabia uses Canadian weapons against civilians.

The time for making speeches has passed. Will the Prime Minister act to prohibit the export of weapons to Saudi Arabia, yes or no?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are very concerned about the reports of Saudi Arabia's use of weapons against civilians. Obviously, we continue to ensure

that our partners respect all the rules much more openly and transparently than the previous government did.

I must remind the member from Outremont that it was a member of his party, the member from London—Fanshawe, who said that a contract is a contract, and that once it is signed, it must be honoured. Even the NDP knew that the contract the Conservatives signed had to be honoured.

[English]

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, does the Prime Minister really not understand the difference between a contract to manufacture and his responsibility to sign the export permits? That is what this is about. Canada has a rule under international law that we will not export to countries that are using arms manufactured in our country to attack civilians. That is what is happening in Saudi Arabia, a country with a horrible human rights record. The Prime Minister loves to talk a good game. We are increasing our greenhouse gases every year. He talks about the environment. We are exporting to Saudi Arabia to kill civilians.

When is the Prime Minister going to stop talking and start acting?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we take very seriously our responsibilities as a government. That is why we put in place a degree of transparency and openness, particularly with regard to arms sales, that the previous Conservative government never even went near. We will continue to ensure that all Canadian rules and regulations are responded to, and if they are not lived up to, there will be consequences in terms of how we move forward.

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[Translation]

TAXATION

Mr. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, all over Canada, people are expressing outrage over the Prime Minister's tax changes. Some of his own members share some of that outrage. The member for Malpeque, who also happens to chair the Standing Committee on Finance, has stated that he is not impressed. He said, and I quote, “The government really needs to step back.”

When will the Prime Minister listen to his own caucus and finally step back?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are a government that considers a diversity of viewpoints to be valuable to all, and we encourage our members to voice the concerns of their constituents, now and in the future.

We also know that Canadians put us in government specifically to bring fairness to the tax system. That means preventing wealthy individuals from using tax measures as a means to enjoy a lower tax rate than the middle class.

Mr. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal member for Halifax has said that, unless changes are made, he will not be able to support the Prime Minister's ill-advised plan. He is listening to the people in his riding who will be adversely affected by these changes: plumbers, electricians, fishermen, and the list goes on.

Oral Questions

When will the Prime Minister start listening to hard-working Canadians who will be hard hit by his tax plan?

• (1435)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for 10 years we had a Conservative government that focused on giving benefits to the wealthiest Canadians in the hopes of creating economic growth. That did not work for Canadians and that is why they elected a different government, our government, which promised to help the middle class and those working hard to join it.

We are doing that by making sure that they pay only the necessary taxes, by lowering taxes for the middle class, and by raising them for the rich.

[English]

Mr. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's front bench looks a little jittery today, but that is nothing compared to his backbench. Here is what another one of his own MPs said about these tax increases:

I believe in my heart that these proposed changes will discourage entrepreneurship and hurt the very people we want to help.

Does that sound familiar?

If the Prime Minister will not listen to farmers, small business owners, hard-working Canadians, will he at least listen to his own caucus and stop attacking job creation?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have been listening to Canadians all summer, and indeed for many years, Canadians who find it is unfair that our tax system, which was heartily endorsed by the previous government, gives advantages and benefits to the wealthiest that are not there for the middle class, including hard-working, middle-class small business owners and farmers. We are going to ensure that wealthy Canadians do not have the option of using private corporations to pay lower tax rates than middle-class Canadians. That is something Canadians expect in terms of fairness, and we will continue to support the middle class, including small businesses.

Mr. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister still does not get it, and his arrogance is astounding. He is attacking the entrepreneur who has to self-fund her maternity leave because she does not have a government-funded plan. She puts a little money away at the end of every month so she can afford to take time off when the baby comes. Right now, she pays 50% tax on any passive income she earns on those savings. The Prime Minister's plan will now tax her twice: once when it goes into the business and once when it flows to her.

Why is the Prime Minister forcing female entrepreneurs to choose between their business and their families?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is very clear that the members opposite do not actually understand this proposal, but that is no big surprise, because they did not understand for 10 years that giving tax breaks to the wealthiest does not help the middle class and does not grow the economy. That is what we saw from them in government for 10 years.

Even now when they are in opposition, they continue not to understand. They stood and opposed lowering taxes for the middle

class and raising them on the wealthiest 1%. They opposed ending the sending of child benefit cheques to millionaires so we could do more for nine out of 10 Canadian families. That is what we are focused on.

Mr. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, no one believes that raising taxes on job creators to fund billion-dollar bailouts will help the middle class.

He can stand with his wealthy friends, and I will always stand with hard-working Canadians who do not have government-funded maternity leave, that do not have access to EI, and who never ask for a bailout when times get tough.

When will the Prime Minister listen to tax experts, entrepreneurs, and even his own caucus, and stop this attack on the middle class?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what we have not heard in all the outrage and all the talk about these proposed changes from the members opposite is the member opposite committing to reversing these changes. He has not committed to restoring these benefits to wealthy doctors and private corporations.

They are happy to talk about outrage, but they are not proposing to keep this system. That inconsistency is the heart of the problem. They invent problems, exaggerate them, and then will not act, because they know that helping middle-class Canadians matters.

Mr. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after listening to the Prime Minister today, I have no doubt that he is just going to go ahead and ram through these tax hikes.

As Conservatives, we believe in raising people up, not tearing people down. We believe in ensuring that everyone can achieve prosperity, not in taking it away from anyone. Conservatives wake up every day trying to think of new ways to lower taxes. Liberals wake up every day trying to find new ways to raise taxes.

I want to take this opportunity to assure Canadians that the pain will only be temporary. We will fight these attacks on job creators. We will fight these every step of the way. We will save local businesses.

●(1440)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, the Conservatives talk a good game, but when it came time to actually lower taxes on the middle class and raise them on the wealthiest 1%, they voted against that. When it came time to deliver the Canada child benefit that helps nine out of 10 Canadian families with the high cost of raising their kids, and focuses on helping the middle class and the hard-working Canadians working to join it, they voted against it, because they wanted to keep sending the child benefit cheques to wealthy families. That does not work. We will always stand with the middle class in the country and defend Canadians.

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INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadians know that NAFTA's side agreement on labour standards is weak and unenforceable. The result is negative effects on workers' safety and fair wages, dragging down standards across North America. Today in southwestern Ontario Unifor Local 88 CAMI members are on strike, experiencing first-hand the effects of companies relocating production to exploit these weak labour rules.

Reports from the renegotiations indicate that the Americans are opposed to any changes to labour or their regressive right-to-work laws. How can the Liberals expect to achieve meaningful progress on NAFTA labour rights to protect Canadian jobs?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me be clear. We support NAFTA and believe that NAFTA has created jobs and growth in Canada and across North America. Having said that, we believe this modernization negotiation is an opportunity to make a good agreement even better, and I want to assure the member opposite that a very strong element of the Canadian negotiating position is to push for higher labour standards.

* * *

[Translation]

AEROSPACE INDUSTRY

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are having a hard time protecting our good jobs in the aerospace industry. Aveos and the 2,000 jobs that were lost at Bombardier are unfortunate examples of that.

When it comes time to stand up to our trade partners, whether it be Europe or Trump, the Liberals always end up dropping the ball. The complaint that Boeing filed against Bombardier is threatening over 6,000 jobs and the future of the C Series.

I attended a protest last week with members of Unifor and machinists. They are worried.

What is the Prime Minister going to do to protect these jobs and these families?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are concerned about Boeing's request for an investigation to determine whether anti-dumping charges and countervailing duties should be imposed in relation to imports of large civil aircraft from Canada.

Oral Questions

Our government will continue to raise this very important issue with Boeing at the highest level in order to defend the interests of Canadian aerospace workers. This is a very important issue for Canada and our government.

* * *

[English]

TAXATION

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, foreign investors are anxious to snap up world-famous Canadian farmland and rent it back to our farmers at exorbitant prices. They are getting help from the Liberal government.

The new tax changes will apply a 45% dividend tax on the sale of farmland from father to son, and zero tax on the sale to a foreign-owned conglomerate. Why is the government helping foreign businesses turn our farmers into tenants of foreign landlords?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our current tax system favours the wealthy over the middle class. We want to make sure that we address advantages that go only to the very wealthiest Canadians.

We know how important farmers are to this country. We are going to listen to farmers to make sure they continue to be advantaged and continue to be able to provide the goods that we need across our country.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is another double standard, just like this next one.

The average small business owner earns about \$73,000 a year. When they save money for a rainy day or their retirement, they will be taxed at a rate of 73% on their investment income as a result of these changes. Large, publicly traded companies, like Bombardier, will not.

Why is the government hitting our small business, middle-class entrepreneurs with a much higher tax rate than their billionaire friends in the biggest corporations in the land?

●(1445)

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again, he would like to deal with a system that favours the wealthy over the middle class.

We want to make sure that small and middle-sized businesses in this country can invest in their active business to create jobs and help to create a healthy economy. We are going to continue to listen to those owners of small and medium-sized businesses to make sure that we get this right.

Oral Questions

Make no mistake, we will ensure that we follow through on our commitment to make sure that our tax system is fair.

[Translation]

Hon. Maxime Bernier (Beauce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals decided to unfairly hurt small businesses that create wealth in this country. They are punishing these entrepreneurs for creating wealth and jobs.

Meanwhile, large corporations like Bombardier are getting huge subsidies and these corporate executives are padding their pockets with exorbitant bonuses while eliminating middle-class jobs.

I have a simple question for the Prime Minister. Will he choose to defend Canadian taxpayers and do away with these tax hikes or will he continue—

The Speaker: Order. The hon. Minister of Finance.

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have a tax system that favours the wealthy over the middle class. We are going to continue to listen to people across the country, as I did this summer, to make sure our measures truly change the system to make it fairer in the future. Naturally, small and medium-sized business owners will be able to continue to invest in their active businesses.

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as we all know, the current government has totally lost control of public spending. Not only is it approving deficits three times the size it had projected, but also it has no idea how to balance a budget, something that is frankly unthinkable to any entrepreneur.

To pay for its colossal spending spree, this government has decided to raise taxes on our job creators, our wealth creators, our entrepreneurs, the people creating Canada's true wealth.

Why has this government decided to attack our job creators instead of reining in its own spending?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, two years ago, we decided to invest in our country, invest in the middle class. Our growth is now the strongest in 10 years, and more than 400,000 new jobs have been created in the past few years. That is why it is so important to stay the course and carry on with a system that is working well for Canada and has made us the fastest-growing nation in the G7.

* * *

[English]

PENSIONS

Mr. Scott Duvall (Hamilton Mountain, NDP): Mr. Speaker, last Friday, New Democrats launched our end pension theft campaign. We believe it is time to introduce legislation to protect the pension for workers and retirees who have worked so hard for what they have earned. Currently, there is a long list of companies that have used Canada's inadequate bankruptcy and solvency laws to cheat workers out of their pensions and benefits.

Will the Prime Minister stick to his election promise, stand in the House today, and pledge to change the laws so that workers never get cheated again?

Hon. Navdeep Bains (Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government understands the importance of secure pensions and the impact of employer insolvency on Canadian workers and pensioners. Canada's insolvency laws, as the member mentioned, aim to strike that proper balance between the competing interests of debtors and creditors. They enable Canadian businesses to access credit, invest, and create jobs, while ensuring that stakeholders, including employees and pensioners, are treated equitably.

We will continue to examine our market framework laws, including insolvency laws, to ensure that they are up to date and effective and help pensioners and employees.

[Translation]

Ms. Karine Trudel (Jonquière, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in Quebec, many companies used unfair strategies to steal a portion of our workers' retirement plans in order to make their foreign parent companies richer. Cliffs Natural Resources, AbitibiBowater, White Birch Paper, and Nortel are prime examples. Now it is Sears that is using our flawed bankruptcy and restructuring laws to steal from our workers. Workers earn their retirement fund over a lifetime of hard work.

Why are the Liberals allowing these companies to steal from our workers and our retirees?

[English]

Hon. Navdeep Bains (Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we understand the challenges on employees and their families, and on their communities. We are monitoring the situation very closely.

Under the CCAA, companies can continue to operate and preserve jobs while negotiating a restructuring plan. It is currently under court supervision, including employees, pensioners, and suppliers.

As members know, proceedings are now before the courts and I am unable to comment on the specifics with respect to Sears Canada. However, we are monitoring the situation very closely and will continue to work with the employees and the pensioners.

Oral Questions

●(1450)

DISASTER ASSISTANCE

Mr. Dan Ruimy (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this summer, residents of British Columbia have been dealing with wildfires that have resulted in the evacuation of thousands of people and have burned over one million hectares of land. The thoughts and prayers of all Canadians are with residents who have borne the brunt of the fires, and with the courageous and dedicated first responders.

Can the minister please tell us how the government has been helping to protect and support residents of B.C. in this difficult time?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, people affected by wildfires and the first responders working to keep them safe have been our major priority all summer long. We have responded positively to every single request made by the Province of British Columbia, including with assets of the Canadian Armed Forces, supplies for evacuees, accommodation and transportation for firefighters, and helping to ensure public safety during evacuations. We have also made a major contribution to the Red Cross, which is more than matching.

While the state of emergency has been lifted, we will be keeping British Columbians very much in our thoughts and in our action plan throughout the recovery process. The disaster cost-sharing process has only just begun.

* * *

TAXATION

Ms. Rachael Harder (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have heard from thousands of people across my riding with regard to the Liberal tax hike on small businesses.

Nicole is 34 and a recent graduate. She is now working as a family physician in a rural area of Alberta. These changes will make it impossible for her to save towards maternity leave and start a family. Currently, there are provisions that support her as a woman by allowing her to save for parental leave, but the new changes will rob her of this very basic right. Nicole feels betrayed and left alone.

Why will the Prime Minister not do the right thing and stop his attack on young women entrepreneurs?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again, I want to be clear. The current system does favour the wealthy over the middle class. What we are going to do is ensure that we listen to people as we move forward on measures that take away tax advantages for the very wealthy. We will be listening to people like Nicole. I am committing that we will not put women in a situation where they are in any way having a worse situation than men through these measures.

If that member would like to give me Nicole's phone number, I would be happy to call her and listen to her and her concerns.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I just got back from Lac-Saint-Jean, and I can tell you that times are tough for local businesses, professionals, and farmers who are creating our jobs day after day. The Liberals are attacking them

directly with astronomical tax increases in order to finance their own deficit.

What does the Prime Minister have to say to Canadians, to Quebeckers and to workers in Lac-Saint-Jean who are going to lose their jobs because of this government's tax reform?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what I have been saying is that we do not want to have a tax system that favours the wealthy over the middle class. That is what I would say. The important thing is that I am going to listen to people to be sure that our measures will have the results we are looking for. We want a system where advantages are not reserved for the rich alone or are not greater for the rich. That is our goal. For small business owners, we will continue to have a tax system with the lowest tax rate among the G7 countries.

[*English*]

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Milton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, two weeks ago I was in Moncton talking to local businesses, and this past weekend I was in Perth—Andover talking to local potato farmers. These are not the wealthy Canadians that the government would have us think actually exist, the ones that the finance minister so glibly said he is going after.

We have only 10 days to have their questions put to the government in the House, and although it sure sounds like it has made up its mind already, based upon its answers today, I am wondering, out of decency, would it consider extending the consultation period?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we made a promise to deal with a system that provides an advantage for the wealthiest over the middle class. We have been working on this for the last two years. We reduced taxes on middle-class Canadians and raised them on the top 1%. We have moved forward on other measures that are having a huge impact on those who are in the middle class or struggling to get in it.

The measures we are putting forward here, the measures that we are listening to Canadians on the impact, are intended to make sure that we do not have tax advantages going to the very rich. That is what we are trying to achieve. We want to do this while ensuring that small businesses continue to invest to grow our economy.

●(1455)

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Milton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was also in Cape Breton and Digby, talking to fishermen on the wharf there.

Fishers work hard, 14-hour days, and at the end of the season all they want to do after they pay out their insurance, the repairs to their vessel, and maybe pay their crew their full amount, is to hope that they have a little put aside for their retirement. We all know there is no pension in fishing.

I spent my summer listening, and I understand the impact of these reforms on Canadians. Will the Minister of Finance come down to earth with the rest of us mortals and listen to what is going on in—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Finance.

Oral Questions

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, by following through on our promise to deal with a tax system that is creating advantages for the richest among us, we know we are going to make a positive impact on our economy.

We are listening. Like the member opposite, I have been out across the country listening to professionals, to fishers, listening to farmers about their issues. We are going to listen to those issues to make sure that the measures we put forward deal with what we are trying to do. We do not want to have a situation where people who earn \$300,000 might find themselves in a lower tax rate than people who earn one-third as much. That is what we are trying to get at, and that is indeed what we will achieve.

* * *

DISASTER ASSISTANCE

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, while the state of emergency in B.C. has ended, British Columbians are only now beginning to recover from the damage caused by the wildfires. Some of the 65,000 people evacuated returned to find their homes damaged or destroyed. Others came home to learn that they have been laid off from jobs in the hard-hit forestry sector. Like the strong people of Fort McMurray, British Columbians will rebuild, but they cannot do it alone.

Will the Prime Minister commit to providing ongoing full financial assistance to communities devastated by these wildfires?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has done three things in response to the fires: first, make sure that all of the assets and resources of the Government of Canada are available to the province of British Columbia and first nations of British Columbia to fight the inferno; second, make a major contribution to the Red Cross to assist with its immediate relief efforts; and, third, establish a special committee of cabinet to engage all of the assets of the Government of Canada in the recovery process.

The disaster financial assistance formula is there to help cost share the expenses over the long haul, and the Government of Canada will be—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith.

* * *

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the inquiry into murdered and missing indigenous women got more bad news this weekend. *Maclean's* reports that out of the \$5 million spent by the inquiry, \$2 million was taken completely by Privy Council Office bureaucracy, yet families needing extra help with travel and counselling for the inquiry are told that there is not enough for them. Can this really be true? Are the Liberals really spending 40% of the inquiry's budget on bureaucracy?

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to ending the ongoing tragedy of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. We have launched a truly national independent inquiry, and we are going to make sure that the voices of families are heard and that they get the answers they deserve. Our

government is also taking immediate action with investments on women's shelters, housing, education, child welfare, and improving the safety on the Highway of Tears. We expect the interim report of the commission to be on time in November.

* * *

[*Translation*]

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, where was the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food this summer when his colleague, the Minister of Finance, suggested doing away with the family farm model in Canada? The Minister of Finance's questionable decision to launch the consultation during harvest shows how little weight the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food carries in cabinet and how little agriculture seems to matter to the government.

Will the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food stand up today, take his cue from his colleagues, and do the only right thing, which is defend middle-class farmers?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we want a fair system that does not benefit the rich more than the middle class. We know it is very important for Canadian farmers to be able to keep doing business. That is important. I will be listening to what farmers have to say. That is very important. We will stick with our plan to ensure they can keep doing business.

● (1500)

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, not only did I listen to them, I went to meet with them.

The dairy farmers in Lac-Saint-Jean with whom I spoke last week are working hard to support their families and their region, just like grain farmers in Saskatchewan and ranchers in Alberta. Their job is to feed Canadians, not to pay down the Liberals' out-of-control deficit. The minister has said that these changes are merely proposals, and he is waiting for feedback.

The Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food has not said what he thinks of this full-on attack against farmers. Will he oppose these changes, or is simply going to sit back and watch Canada's family farms disappear?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know that the goal of our measures is really to continue to create a tax system that is as fair as possible. I will listen to farmers. If there is a farmer in Lac-Saint-Jean I can speak with, the member can pass along his phone number and I will call him myself, because I want to listen and make sure that the situation continues to benefit Canada's farmers.

Oral Questions

[English]

TAXATION**TAXATION**

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are working awfully hard to take away every opportunity for Canadian farm families: imposing a carbon tax, eliminating the deferral on cash grain tickets, and now these punitive tax changes, which will make it almost impossible for Canadian farm families to sell their farms to their own children. They will be having to sell them to multinational firms. As Conservatives, we know that hard-working Canadian farm families do not use their land as a tax shelter. In fact, they use it to feed the world.

Will the Liberals abandon these tax changes, or will they saddle Canadian farm families with the burden of paying for the Prime Minister's out-of-control spending?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we want to be clear that what we are looking to do is to make sure that our system does not have advantages for the wealthiest that do not go to the middle class. What we want to do, as well, is to make sure that we listen to people as we put through these consultations. That is why we have a consultation period. We are listening to farmers, we are listening to people across the country, to make sure that the measures we are putting in place will allow them to continue to invest in family farms, which we know are so important to our economy and to our country. That is my commitment, and I would happy to talk to the member opposite's constituents if he passes me their numbers.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mrs. Bernadette Jordan (South Shore—St. Margarets, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this year marks the 100th anniversary of the Halifax explosion, when a munitions explosion killed 1,600 people, injuring thousands more. It was also the largest loss of firefighters in a single event in Canadian history.

To mark this anniversary, the Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency Service hosted the annual firefighters memorial weekend in Ottawa earlier this month. Honoured at that memorial was my constituent Jeffrey Lilly, a 15-year veteran of the Lunenburg and District Fire Department.

Could the minister tell us what the government is doing to support the brave firefighters who put themselves at risk to keep us safe?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, firefighters are community heroes, and we have been pushing an agenda to support their needs by restoring search and rescue funding, developing an action plan to deal with operational stress injuries, and creating a fund for families of firefighters who fall in the line of duty.

We have also designated the second Sunday in September as Firefighters National Memorial Day, beginning last week with flags lowered in honour of those who have lost their lives protecting the rest of us. They have our deepest gratitude and our enduring respect.

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, local businesses have been plunged into total uncertainty as they grapple with the Liberals' unfair tax plan. These same entrepreneurs are usually the first to invest and the first to hire in our communities across this great country. For them, the 75-day consultation in the dead of summer is not sufficient, nor is it fair.

Will the finance committee chair ensure that consultations on the devastating impacts these changes will have on small businesses are extended until all Canadians who want to be heard can be heard?

● (1505)

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would suggest the rhetoric of the official opposition is getting wildly out of hand. Do they not favour consultations? I know that is what happened under the previous government.

Consultations are taking place until October 2 on the Department of Finance paper, and the Minister of Finance is driving those consultations, as he should.

I would suggest to members opposite and to all Canadians to embrace the consultations, welcome them, and get their point of view out there, and then better decisions will be made.

* * *

GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, on the topic of consultations, without notice, my community learned from the American media that the Liberals approved the request of an American billionaire to give him a new expanded bridge between Canada and the United States in our community with zero consultations. This surprise announcement came amidst confusion and chaos surrounding the Gordie Howe international bridge project, a public crossing that is a complete free-for-all since Liberal patronage appointed a person who has cosy relationships with this U.S. billionaire, who has been incarcerated for contempt in the United States for a project there. Why is—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transport.

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as you know, all Canadians recognize just how vitally important the Windsor-Detroit crossing is. Every single day, 10,000 trucks cross the Ambassador Bridge. We have authorized the replacement. I have been in touch with the mayor of Windsor. There are very specific conditions that will apply before the new bridge is there. Of course, our commitment to the Gordie Howe bridge is 100%, as was stated by our Prime Minister and the President last March in the White House.

*Oral Questions***THE ENVIRONMENT**

Mr. Joe Peschisolido (Steveston—Richmond East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know Canadians care about our pristine coastline. Our government's oceans protection plan delivers on this issue. As the member of Parliament for Steveston—Richmond East, I am very proud of these historic measures.

Could the Minister of Transport inform the House and Canadians on our new oceans protection plan provisions?

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would be delighted to do it and I thank the member for Steveston—Richmond East for his excellent question.

I am incredibly proud of Canada's oceans protection plan. This is an unprecedented plan that will ensure world-class marine safety and protect our pristine coastline. That is why I was delighted to be in Vancouver a couple of weeks ago to announce, amongst other things, the plan that we have called “let's talk oceans protection plan”. It is an online tool that will allow Canadians to express themselves. We are looking forward to their feedback. I encourage all Canadians to go online and “let's talk oceans protection plan”.

* * *

TAXATION

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister claims to be concerned that wealthy people will pay lower rates than middle-class people.

Then can he explain this? Under his proposal, the pizza shop owner who puts aside money to earn a little interest and eventually pull it out for retirement would pay 75%, while the Bombardier executive who has shares in that company, and it makes passive investment, will pay about 50%.

If the member is really interested in helping the middle class, why is he hitting the pizza shop owner with a much higher tax rate than the Bombardier billionaire executive?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to address our plan to make sure that our tax system does not advantage the wealthiest at the expense of the middle class.

What I do know is that there is much inaccuracy being put forward, including in this House. I am happy the member opposite has asked for a briefing from my department. We are happy to have that briefing. Perhaps he will understand better what we are trying to achieve, which is really to make sure that advantages that go to the wealthiest, which in fact are bigger the wealthier Canadians are, are something that we deal with.

We know together, and we agree, that this is not the way our progressive tax system is supposed to work.

* * *

[Translation]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, it would seem that this is the week for democracy.

The Catalan people decided to exercise its right to self-determination. Madrid's repressive policies, which have resulted in newsrooms being raided by the police, one million pamphlets seized, and 700 elected officials threatened with jail time, violate democracy's most basic principles.

When will this stop? Will people have their ballots stolen at gunpoint?

The Prime Minister will be speaking to the UN this week. Will he denounce the Spanish administration's reign of terror? That is the least we would expect from someone who claims to be a democrat.

● (1510)

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada enjoys friendly relations with a democratic and united Spain. Canada and Spain maintain excellent bilateral relations based on shared values.

As far as Canada is concerned, the issue of Catalonia falls squarely under Spanish domestic affairs. We hope that the country's internal debates come to a harmonious end in accordance with its constitutional framework.

* * *

CANADIAN HERITAGE

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in a letter published on September 16, the Quebec minister of culture wrote: “we are concerned about the initial strategic directions of Canada's cultural policy announced by the Minister of Canadian Heritage”.

The Minister of Canadian Heritage has three priorities: the 150th anniversary, which no one really cares about, the CBC, and pleasing Internet giants like Netflix and Spotify.

Will the minister re-examine her priorities and do something to help rather than harm Quebec culture, beginning by making the Internet giants charge their subscribers GST?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we believe in our artists, in our producers, and in the entire arts community. That is why we invested \$1.9 billion in arts and culture, the largest investment in the past 30 years. We are still the only country in the G7 to have made such a significant investment in this area.

That being said, I know that our creators are waiting to hear our vision, which will be presented in the coming weeks. Unlike the members of the opposition, we do not believe that a new tax for the middle class is the best way to support our creators. In fact, one of the first things we did was to lower taxes for the middle class. I will soon have an opportunity to provide more information in this regard.

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, when my colleagues from Manicouagan and Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères buy diapers for their babies, they pay GST. When people go to the movies, to a musical production, or to the theatre, they pay GST. Mr. Speaker, when you buy a book at the bookstore, you pay GST.

Can the Minister of Canadian Heritage tell us why the American streaming giants are GST-exempt when Quebec taxpayers have to pay GST?

Oral Questions

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, supporting arts and culture in this country is one of our top priorities. That is why we have invested so much financially, to the tune of \$1.9 billion.

That said, we also believe in lowering taxes for the middle class. During the election campaign, we made a clear commitment to not raise taxes for the middle class. I will have other opportunities over the coming weeks to present my vision regarding how we plan to support arts and culture in the digital age. I hope my colleague will be here for that.

[English]

The Speaker: There have been discussions among representatives of the parties in the House, and I understand that we will now proceed to tributes to our late colleague, Arnold Chan.

The right hon. Prime Minister.

* * *

[English]

ARNOLD CHAN

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today in the House to pay tribute to the hon. member for Scarborough—Agincourt, our colleague, my friend, Arnold Chan.

Last week, Canadians across the country mourned the loss of an exceptional parliamentarian and a great Canadian, of a proud son, a dedicated husband, and a loving father gone too soon.

[Translation]

Today we are paying tribute to Arnold's achievements, to the man that he was, and to the example he set for us all. A true devotee of the parliamentary world, Arnold first entered the political arena at Queen's Park, where he served as Michael Chan's chief of staff before being appointed senior adviser in Premier McGuinty's office. It was at that time that he began collecting some of the best campaign stories, which he enjoyed sharing at parties and we all loved listening to.

He became known for his sense of humour, his wisdom, and his calm demeanor, a reputation that preceded him when he was first elected member of Parliament for Scarborough—Agincourt in 2014.

Here in the House, Arnold tirelessly defended the interests of his constituents. It was here that members across party lines came to know an effective parliamentarian and a man of principle. As many of my colleagues know, he never tired of this place. He often attended debates even when he was not participating in them. For him, it was an opportunity to see our democracy in action.

Arnold never lost sight of the importance of institutions that are too often taken for granted.

● (1515)

[English]

When Arnold's health started to decline, his faith in the promise of this country was not shaken. His commitment to Canadians never wavered. Even when the doctor advised he take some time to care for himself, he insisted on caring for others, because that is who

Arnold was. That is the Arnold we all knew, the Arnold who rarely missed a vote, the Arnold whose positive energy was infectious, the Arnold who inspired members on all sides of the aisle to do better so we could be better, to be better so we could do better.

He once told me that due to his illness he felt like the scope of the impact he could have on the House was limited, that his cancer had returned so quickly in the weeks following the election that he did not get his chance to leave his mark on Parliament. I am afraid that I am going to have to disagree with the member's view of his own legacy. Perhaps there are no better examples of the instructions he left us to carry on his memory than the impassioned speech he delivered just a few months ago.

[Translation]

On that day he urged us to be worthy of the title reserved not just for members of the House, but for guardians of our democracy. Standing proudly, he reminded us of our duty and our privilege. He reminded us of our unique responsibility as servants of this place. He challenged us to elevate our debate and to be courteous. He urged us to treat every member, every person, with the greatest respect, and to use our heads but to always follow our hearts.

[English]

That day, Arnold advised us to listen to one another, for he believed that listening ought to be the guiding principle of our democracy. For a moment, every single member of this place obliged. We listened carefully to our colleague's every word, knowing, just like he did, they might be his last. Arnold was counting on all of us to do much more than that.

It is my sincere hope that the members in the House from both sides of the aisle join me in paying tribute to Arnold by way of listening, not just today but every day. It is how we can make our democracy stronger. It is how we will make our country better. Let our actions attest to the power of Arnold's example.

To his parents Sandra and Anthony, to his brother Kevin, to his sons Nathaniel, Ethan, Theodore, and of course beloved Jean, his rock, his everything, our thoughts and prayers are with you in these most difficult times. Our parliamentary family stands united with the ones Arnold loved so much.

To Arnold, I am and always shall be your friend.

● (1520)

Mr. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today I wish to join the Prime Minister and all members of the House in paying tribute to Arnold Chan, a colleague who has sadly been taken from us, and from this institution he loved so much, far too soon.

[Translation]

Our colleague from Scarborough—Agincourt won the admiration of his colleagues, voters in his riding, and all those who knew him.

Oral Questions

[English]

Members of our House, on all sides, came to respect his experience, his knowledge, his passion, and his collegiality. His devoted service on behalf of his constituents won him the support of the people of Scarborough—Agincourt, and today we know he will be missed greatly by those he represented so well in the House.

Most of all, his quiet courage and dignity in his struggle with cancer and his call to us when he was last here with us before the summer should give inspiration to members and all Canadians who have joined public life in our country.

This is a House where Canadians of many political persuasions come to speak on behalf of the people who elected them, bringing different principles, different values, and different policies to the debate. We enjoy these passionate debates, certainly some of us a bit too much at times.

[Translation]

We must never forget what brings us together in this House and in our political life: our common decency and our humanity.

[English]

I thought, in his remarks on June 12, that Arnold perfectly expressed that sense. He said:

It is the basic common civility we share with each other that is fundamental. It is thanking our Tim Hortons server. It is giving way to someone on the road. It is saying thanks. It is the small things we collectively do, from my perspective, that make a great society, and to me, that is ultimately what it means to be a Canadian. We are so privileged to live in this country, because we have these small acts of common decency and civility that make us what we are. I would ask members to carry on that tradition, because that is the foundation of what makes Canada great.

This is the sense of collegiality and generosity in disagreement that Canadians always wish to see more of from their representatives. I am determined to do my part to bring more warmth, more positivity and civility to this place.

[Translation]

That is the best way to pay tribute to the life and legacy of our colleague Arnold Chan.

[English]

On behalf of the official opposition, I would like to offer our most sincere condolences to Mr. Chan's wife Jean, his three sons Nathaniel, Ethan, and Theodore, and to all of his many friends, family, and supporters.

Mr. David Christopherson (Hamilton Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my leader and all members of the New Democratic Party, I also rise in the House today to pay tribute to our friend Arnold Chan, the late hon. member of Parliament for Scarborough—Agincourt.

I want to begin by expressing our most sincere condolences to his wife Jean, Arnold's three children Nathaniel, Ethan, and Theodore, and the members of his family and all the close friends who have been affected.

Everyone here knows the sacrifices that are made when one enters political life. Arnold understood this as well. We would like to thank his family for its understanding and its willingness to share Arnold

with his constituents and with us here in Parliament. It was a sacrifice of time, made all the more precious by his early passing.

In Arnold's farewell speech, which has been referenced many times in the House, the sincerity and humility in his words and the clear love and gratitude he showed for his family struck a chord across the entire country, yet for those of us who had a chance to know Arnold well, nothing he said came as a surprise. In fact, they are a wonderful reflection of the person he was and how he lived his life.

In his speech, he called for political opponents to respect one another, to listen to one another, and to engage with each other in dialogue beyond mere talking points because "It is the basic common civility we share with each other that is fundamental."

I was fortunate to have spent the past few years working alongside Arnold on the procedure and House affairs committee, and this is where I really had a chance to see Arnold up close and get to know him. Although every committee will hit bumps along the road, I truly believe Arnold's contributions were a big part of any of the successes that our committee has had.

Arnold was not interested in playing political games. He understood the strength and value that came from a report or a recommendation that all members supported and he was always looking to build bridges and find common consensus. This approach, combined with his sharp intellect and a great sense of humour, made him a natural leader on our committee and a voice of reason in a place where sometimes reason can be in short supply.

Canadians are so used to seeing leading news clips of us, usually fighting, yelling, throwing insults at one another, trying to make our point, and we do do a lot of that. Therefore, it is not a wonder that this is what they see. However, it does not take too long before people realize there are many more dimensions to this place, and many more dimensions to the work we do. Much of that takes place at committee, and it is under the radar.

With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I just want to read a couple of quotes from *Hansard*, at our committee, that will put on the formal record an example of how Arnold approached this, not talk, not speeches. This is in committee, in full flight, and we are going at it. This is how Arnold approached things. The issue at hand here was the rule for going in camera, which, as members will know, was kind of controversial in the last few Parliaments. This had the potential to explode. To me, it underscores Mr. Chan and his approach, and why we feel the way we do and why what looks to me like not one member of the House has left since question period to pay that respect.

I started by saying:

On a related issue, I want to advise colleagues that we're now starting to get into some of the areas where our lack of definition about being in camera could play out. I want to update everyone that Mr. Chan and I are continuing discussions and are hoping to have back here....

Oral Questions

Mr. Chan said, “I know that we did switch topics, but I want to go back to” the hon. member for Hamilton Centre. I will just say Hamilton Centre from now on when it is a reference to me. We use our first names in committee, but we cannot do that here. This is Mr. Chan to me, introducing something that is not good or comfortable for the government.

● (1525)

This was his response:

First of all, I thank him for the courtesy of allowing me the opportunity to have that conversation. Again, I will also defer, to some degree, to the Conservative members of this committee. Once we have that appropriate language, if we can come to a consensus and can get unanimity, we could dispose of it fairly quickly.

Moving on, a month later, Mr. Chan said:

I know that [the member for Hamilton Centre] is not available, so I want to put it on the record that we're continuing our conversations. I think we're very close to a resolution, [and I want to have that opportunity to continue].

In June, I said:

Chair, my intent would be to read the motion. I formally withdraw all of my former documents in relation to this, and I assume Mr. Chan will do the same. We've got a clean slate, and there's been consultations with the government and with the official opposition. My hope is that we finally can get this cleaned up before we rise. So here we go.

The Chair: Hold it.... Hold it.

[The member for Hamilton Centre]: Sorry. Yes, I agree.

The Chair: Do I have unanimous agreement to withdraw all the previous motions on this?

Mr. Arnold Chan: Agreed.

The Chair: Okay.

[The member for Hamilton Centre]: Thanks, Chair, I appreciate that....

Mr. Arnold Chan: I have nothing to add, other than I am prepared to proceed on unanimous consent, unless the official opposition has anything to add.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Chan ended by saying:

I also want to thank [the member for Hamilton Centre] for working collaboratively with the government on this. At the end of the day, we meant what we said.

You know what? Arnold did always mean everything he said.

I conclude my statement by sharing a few more words from Arnold's farewell speech because I hope we take these words to heart today and each day going forward, and I note that the Prime Minister was reflecting on exactly the same line of thinking. This is what Mr. Chan said:

I believe strongly that despite what we see in this place, what gives us strength is the fact that we can actually do it. We can actually engage in this process without fundamental rancour, without fundamental disagreement, and without violence. That is the difference, and that is why I so love this place.

That is the challenge he has left for us.

I just want to say on a very personal note that I have served with hundreds of elected people in my time, and Mr. Chan was one of the most amazing elected Canadians I have ever had the honour to serve with. I want to look directly at his family and say to them that their husband and dad was a remarkable man, a good man, and he made a difference in this Parliament and made our country a better place. We thank them for sharing him with us.

Rest in peace, my friend.

● (1530)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Arnold Chan dedicated his life to politics in Toronto and Ottawa. He could have spent more time with his family and friends but he served the public and his fellow citizens instead. Then came the damn cancer, a really terrible disease.

Arnold was a really good guy, a nice fellow, always smiling, affable, brilliant, and certainly much too young to leave this world. Of course, my thoughts are with his wife and his three sons, who lost their dad much too soon. With all my heart and on behalf of my colleagues from the Bloc Québécois, I extend my deepest sympathy.

I also offer my condolences to all of you who knew Arnold, who were his friends, who loved and appreciated him. On the day we win the fight against cancer together and make it a disease curable with a simple pill, we will remember Arnold Chan and all the other friends we lost too early. I hope that day will come soon.

Thank you, Arnold, and farewell.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I thank all my colleagues in this House. It is for me a great honour to pay tribute to my colleague and friend Arnold.

● (1535)

[*English*]

I was blessed. I do not know who in this place makes the seating decisions when a new member joins this place, but where my friend from Terrebonne now sits was Arnold's seat. After the by-election in 2014, the hon. member for Scarborough—Agincourt was my neighbour and he immediately became my friend. It was horrific news when he told me that he had cancer, needed to take a break, and would come back.

Much has been said here of the standard that he set, which I do not need to repeat, but I want to add to the wonderful words of my friend from Hamilton Centre, because I sat in on a lot of the meetings of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs during the filibuster when nights went late. Through all of that, Arnold was clearly struggling. He was in pain, he was exhausted. I would go to him sometimes and ask if he thought he ought to ask for a substitute for a while. He said no, he could do it. He had a strong sense of duty to his family, which he loved more than anything, to this place, and to his constituents. When the Prime Minister quite rightly said Arnold did not miss votes, Canadians need to know that he did not miss votes, when a lesser mortal would have said, “No one's going to blame me if I go to lie down.”

When we say Jean was his rock—and I cannot see my friend Jean from where I am now, but she knows I love her—she had to come to Ottawa to help hold him together physically as he went through those treatments and kept coming to work, because he set a standard. He set an example. He was a living embodiment of commitment to democracy and love of country, and he exemplified it every single day.

Routine Proceedings

I kept hoping and praying that Arnold would not leave us, but we are all mortal. Our candles go out too briefly, and some way too soon, but the legacy that the Prime Minister and the leader of the official opposition speak of, the example that was set, was not one to be consigned to some footnote of history that once there lived a Canadian member of Parliament who was extraordinary and who truly, every single day, showed respect, caring, and kindness. That example is one that we challenge ourselves with now to embrace, with Jean and Nathaniel and Theodore and Ethan as our witnesses. Do not look to your party whips, look to your hearts, and decide right now how much better we can be.

My colleague, a recently elected member of the British Columbia legislature, Sonia Furstenau, a member of the legislature for Cowichan Valley, on the day Arnold died, rose to speak to the budget. She took Arnold's words from this place and took his message to the B.C. legislature. She quoted Arnold, noting that in his final address to Parliament he said, "I know that we are all honourable members, but to treat this institution honourably. I would ask us to elevate our debate, to elevate our practice." On her part, Sonia went on to say, "Can we do better? Do our words in this chamber always need to be about scoring points and wounding our opponents? Or can we find new paths and new approaches, particularly given the extraordinary challenges we face, not just in province but globally?"

Let us try harder for Arnold's sake. He did not just "advise", to use the word the Prime Minister just used, but advised us to listen. With all due respect to my friend the Prime Minister, that was not advice. That was an instruction. He said, "We have to listen to each other." He exhorted us.

I do not want to consign my friend Arnold Chan to a place where everyone will remember him for what he said, but remember him as someone who changed the way we behave. We owe it to him, we owe it to our own kids, and we owe it to our grandparents that we take Arnold's words to heart.

I loved him dearly. I will miss him, and do miss him dearly. I know he would wish that I remind the House, as the hon. member for Hamilton Centre said, that he meant what he said.

● (1540)

The Speaker: I hope the House will permit me to associate myself with the eloquent words, and especially the sentiments, expressed today about our former colleague Arnold, and to thank the family. I join all members, and many Canadians, in offering our sincere condolences.

[Translation]

I invite hon. members to rise and observe a moment of silence in honour of our esteemed colleague, Arnold Chan.

[A moment of silence observed.]

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, during question period, the Minister of Finance asked me to do something that I cannot do under the rules of the House of Commons. He asked me to disclose confidential information about one of my constituents without their permission.

However, I am confident that if you seek the unanimous consent of my colleagues in this House, everyone would agree to allow the Minister of Finance to table in the House his personal cellphone number so that all the farmers could phone him to share their concerns about the tax changes.

The Speaker: Does the honourable member have unanimous consent to move this motion?

Some hon. members: No.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[Translation]

PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

The Speaker: I have the honour to lay upon the table the report of a Canadian parliamentary delegation concerning its visit to Mexico from March 27 to 29, 2017.

* * *

[English]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Peter Schiefke (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Youth), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's responses to 86 petitions.

* * *

[Translation]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS**

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Orders 104 and 114, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 36th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs regarding membership of the committees of the House.

If the House gives its consent, I intend to move concurrence in the 36th report later this day.

* * *

● (1545)

[English]

RECOGNITION OF CHARLOTTETOWN AS THE BIRTHPLACE OF CONFEDERATION ACT

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill S-236, an act to recognize Charlottetown as the birthplace of Confederation.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it was seconded by the member for Egmont.

As a proud Prince Edward Islander, I am pleased to introduce Bill S-236, an act to recognize Charlottetown as the birthplace of Confederation, introduced in the other place by Senator Diane Griffin. Bill S-236 has been passed by the Senate unanimously.

As we celebrate the 150th anniversary of Canada's Confederation, the ideals, ambitions, and values that came from the Charlottetown conference of 1864 still form the basis of our great nation today. In September 1996, former prime minister Jean Chrétien proclaimed that Charlottetown was to be recognized as the birthplace of Confederation. This legislation would formalize the proclamation in statute, affirming the significant contribution this great historic event has had on Canada. It is legislation that I believe all members of the House can support.

(Motion agreed to and bill read the first time)

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member.

* * *

[Translation]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if the House gives its consent, I move that the 36th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, presented earlier today, be concurred in, provided that the membership changes for the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics only take effect upon the adjournment of the House later today.

The Speaker: Does the hon. member have unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

[English]

PETITIONS

SECURITY CERTIFICATES

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise today to present two petitions. The first petition deals with the issue of security certificates that allow people to be held in secret without access to the basic principles of the Magna Carta. The use of security certificates has always been worrying. The petitioners are calling for their abolition.

BEE POPULATION

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, the second petition deals with an issue on which I have presented many petitions. It relates to the threat to pollinators, particularly honeybees, from neonicotinoid insecticides. The petitioners are from throughout my riding of Saanich—Gulf Islands as well as Ontario and the Ottawa area. They call upon the government to follow Europe's lead and ban the use of neonicotinoid insecticides.

[Translation]

WATER QUALITY

Hon. Denis Paradis (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have another petition here about Lake Champlain and its water quality signed by the people of Venise-en-Québec and Clarenceville.

We are going through a bit of a warm spell now—about time, considering the summer we had—and that has caused an algae bloom. Blue-green algae are proliferating, and it smells terrible. Lake

Routine Proceedings

Champlain is like pea soup. The people want the International Joint Commission's mandate redefined to include an examination of the blue-green algae problem in Lake Champlain.

This summer I met with staffers from the offices of Senator Leahy and Senator Bernie Sanders in Burlington, Vermont. We are going to have another meeting in my riding soon.

I am asking the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Environment and Climate Change to work with us on fixing Lake Champlain's blue-green algae problem.

● (1550)

[English]

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Ms. Irene Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Madam Speaker, I have two petitions to present today. The first is in regard to the situation that has developed at Local 88 of Unifor. Unfortunately, the GM CAMI production workers have been forced to go on strike, because General Motors moved production of the GMC Terrain, a vehicle that was produced at GM CAMI, to Mexico. Now there is great concern that General Motors will move the Equinox to Mexico. That will mean that in addition to the 625 people who lost their jobs in the spring, another 2,800 jobs will be gone. That will affect a lot of families. Therefore, the petitioners are asking that the government act and engage all stakeholders to finally develop a focused, consistent, and effective national auto strategy that will include better integration between federal and provincial investments, ensure that Canada's investment incentives are competitive, and reverse the automotive trade deficit with all countries, including Mexico.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Irene Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Madam Speaker, the second petition has to do with the Thames River. As members know, the Thames is a magnificent heritage river that runs through the city of London. The Conservative government of the past stripped environmental regulations that covered the navigable waters act and left the Thames, and many hundreds of other rivers, very vulnerable.

The Thames River is a unique place. Many species are abundant there. Unfortunately, we now know that the Liberal government has failed to reinstate environmental protection with respect to the navigable waters act. Therefore, the petitioners are calling upon the Government of Canada to support my private member's bill, Bill C-355, which commits the government to prioritizing the protection of the Thames River by amending the Navigation Protection Act.

*Routine Proceedings***QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER**

Mr. Peter Schiefke (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Youth), Lib.): Madam Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 1044, 1047, 1052, 1061, 1062, 1064, 1069 to 1071, 1073, 1074, 1076, 1083, 1084, 1096, 1097, and 1099.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 1044—**Mrs. Kelly Block:**

With regard to the response by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport on March 10, 2017, how does Transport Canada define a middle class Canadian traveler?

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada defines the middle class using a broad set of characteristics that includes values, lifestyle, and income. Middle-class values are values that are common to most Canadians from all backgrounds, who believe in working hard to get ahead and hope for a better future for their children. Middle-class families also aspire to a lifestyle that typically includes adequate housing and health care, educational opportunities for their children, a secure retirement, job security, and adequate income for modest spending on leisure pursuits, among other characteristics. The income required to attain such a lifestyle can vary greatly based on Canadians' specific situations, such as whether they face child care expenses or whether they live in large cities where housing tends to be more expensive.

Question No. 1047—**Mr. Blaine Calkins:**

With regard to the government's search for a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for the proposed Infrastructure Bank: (a) what are the details of the contract awarded to Odgers Berndtson to conduct the search including the (i) amount or value, (ii) start date, (iii) end date, (iv) file number; (b) for the contract referred to in (a), are other positions being filled from the search and, if so, for which positions; and (c) what are the qualification requirements for the CEO position?

Hon. Amarjeet Sohi (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to the government's search for a chief executive officer, CEO, for the proposed infrastructure bank up to and including the date May 15, 2017, the contract awarded to Odgers Berndtson is to conduct anticipatory searches for the leadership of the infrastructure bank, including the CEO, the chairperson, and the bank's board of directors.

The contract value is \$350,000 excluding taxes. It started on April 1, 2017, and ends on March 31, 2018. The contract number is 3515798 and the file number is CP279.

The qualification requirements for the CEO position are posted as part of the opportunity notice on the Government of Canada's appointments website at <https://www.appointments-nominations.gc.ca>.

Question No. 1052—**Ms. Michelle Rempel:**

With regard to federal funding for the rental or lease of the giant yellow inflatable duck as part of the Ontario 150 Tour: (a) how much funding has been committed to the Ontario 150 Tour since January 1, 2016; (b) of the funding committed to the Ontario 150 Tour, since January 1, 2016, how much was allocated for the giant duck; (c) what are the locations and tour dates for the giant duck; and (d) when did the Minister of Canadian Heritage become aware that federal funding was being used for the lease or rental of the giant duck?

Mr. Sean Casey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as part of the Canada 150 celebrations, the government is focusing on four themes, one of which is encouraging reconciliation with indigenous people. The Canada 150 Fund has awarded \$250,000 to the Water's Edge Festivals and Events for the Rhythm of the Nation music and dance performance component of its Ontario 150 tour. This component will be showcased in many cities across Ontario between July 1 and August 13, 2017. None of the committed funds are allocated to the giant duck.

Question No. 1061—**Ms. Cheryl Hardcastle:**

With regard to the Canada 150 Fund: (a) what was the allocated budget; (b) how much of the allocated funds have been approved and distributed to date; (c) will any unspent funds be reallocated to projects that fit the Canada 150 criteria and that did not meet the original funding deadline of October 21, 2016; (d) what are the projects funded, broken down by riding; and (e) for each project in (d), what are the details of the amount of funding received?

Mr. Sean Casey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a), the Canada 150 Fund received a budget of \$200 million, which was allocated in the following way: \$80 million for large-scale, Canada-wide signature projects; \$100 million for community-based projects; and \$20 million for major events.

With regard to (b) and (d), all of the allocated funds have been distributed. Members may consult the link that follows for the list of Canada 150 projects: <http://canada.pch.gc.ca/eng/1475775848282/1475776347243>.

With regard to (c), no unspent funds will be reallocated to projects that fit the Canada 150 criteria but did not meet the original funding deadline of October 21, 2016.

Question No. 1062—**Mr. Bob Saroya:**

With regard to the Canada Infrastructure Bank: (a) what are the government's definitions of (i) concessional capital, (ii) crowding, (iii) security; (b) how much security will be required for a loan from the Infrastructure Bank, as a percentage of the total project's value; (c) how much security will be required for a loan guarantee from the Infrastructure Bank, as a percentage of the total project's value; (d) how much security will be structured as subordinated debt; (e) how much security will be structured as unsubordinated debt; (f) in the event the Infrastructure Bank provides a loan to a project that goes bankrupt, who will repay Canadian taxpayers; (g) in the event the Infrastructure Bank provides a loan guarantee to a project that goes bankrupt, who will repay Canadian taxpayers; and (h) will the Infrastructure Bank provide loans and loan guarantees only to individual projects, or will it also provide loans and loan guarantees to investors who invest in those individual projects?

Hon. Amarjeet Sohi (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a)(i), the Canada infrastructure bank would use federal support to attract private sector and institutional investment. The federal support would be in the form of investments in projects, and the investment would result in the bank holding an asset on its balance sheet. To the extent that the federal support to help a project get built involves an expenditure by the bank greater than the value of the investment asset it receives, it would be considered concessional capital. With regard to (a)(ii), "crowding-in" is the attraction of private sector and institutional investment to help pay for infrastructure.

With regard to (a)(iii), "security" means collateral for an investment.

Routine Proceedings

With regard to (b), the bank would hire professionals with the expertise to structure and negotiate complex financing arrangements, and this could be one term of the negotiation to be determined on a project-by-project basis.

With regard to (c), the bank would hire professionals with the expertise to structure and negotiate complex financing arrangements, and this could be one term of the negotiation to be determined on a project-by-project basis.

With regard to (d), it would be up to the bank, as an arm's-length entity, to determine the exact financial instrument most appropriate for each investment, and therefore it is not possible to determine at this time what percentage of its portfolio would be represented by specific financial instruments.

With regard to (e), it would be up to the bank, as an arm's-length entity, to determine the exact financial instrument most appropriate for each investment, and therefore it is not possible to determine at this time what percentage of its portfolio would be represented by specific financial instruments.

With regard to (f), under traditional infrastructure funding models, governments pay 100% of the costs of infrastructure and bear all of the risks. Compared to this traditional model, the bank will reduce the risks taken on by taxpayers to build the infrastructure we need. By bringing in private investors, risks can be shared, and the bank will ensure the risks borne by taxpayers are minimized. Private investors will be incented to reduce overall risk as well, leading to enhanced due diligence and innovation in infrastructure projects.

For the bank projects, investors will be subject to robust investment agreements designed to protect the interests of Canadians. Just as in a typical private sector transaction, the bank and other investors would negotiate ahead of time how any potential losses would be shared.

Any bankruptcy or default in a project would be guided by the legal agreement between the parties, who will be able to avail themselves of all the recourse mechanisms provided by law.

With regard to (g), loan guarantees would be a tool used in special circumstances and would be structured properly to ensure private capital is at risk and the project benefits from private sector discipline. That is why the legislation includes special oversight provisions on the use of loan guarantees.

If a loan guarantee is used and there is a bankruptcy or default in a project, it would be guided by the legal agreement between the parties, who will be able to avail themselves of all the recourse mechanisms provided by law.

With regard to (h), under the legislation, the bank could invest only in projects, and could not invest in any other party involved in the transaction

Question No. 1064— Mr. Dave MacKenzie:

With regard to the information contained in the government's initial response to Q-954, and the statement by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government that "the original response contained inaccurate information due to an administrative error in producing the response": (a) why did the Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister sign a response containing inaccurate information; (b) who drafted the response containing the inaccurate information; (c) what role did

the Director of Issues Management in the Prime Minister's Office play in drafting the inaccurate information; (d) what role did the Prime Minister's Chief of Staff and Principle Secretary play in drafting the inaccurate information; (e) has the individual who drafted the inaccurate response faced any disciplinary action, if so what; (f) has the government apologized to person who was defamed by the inaccurate information; and (g) what actions, if any, if the government implementing to ensure that inaccurate information is not contained in any future responses to Questions on the Order Paper?

Mr. Peter Schiefke (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Youth), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to the government's response to Question No. 954, departments and ministers' offices work diligently to provide accurate and informative answers to questions on the Order Paper. In the event that responses contain inaccurate information, the government strives to correct responses in a timely manner.

Question No. 1069—Mr. Robert Aubin:

With regard to the exemption the Minister of Transport granted to Jetlines allowing it to have up to 49% foreign ownership in order to purchase between 24 and 40 Bombardier C-series aircraft over a period of eight years: (a) what guarantees did Jetlines give the government; (b) was a contract signed between Jetlines and the government; (c) if the answer to (b) is yes, what are the details of the contract, including (i) the start and end date, (ii) the contracting parties, (iii) the file number; (d) does the contract state that the foreign ownership exemption is subject to the purchase of C-series aircraft; and (e) does a government study show a link between increased foreign ownership and increased competition?

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, changing foreign ownership limits is about increasing competition and allowing the creation of new ultra-low-cost airlines in Canada. The Minister of Transport granted an exemption to Canada Jetlines and Enerjet in December 2016 based on these objectives.

With regard to (a) through (e), as a private company, Jetlines is responsible for its own business decisions, including the purchase of its aircraft fleet. As such, no guarantee or contract was sought with regard to its fleet procurement.

The link between increased foreign ownership and increased competition was documented in various reports. In 2008, the competition policy review panel report, "Compete to Win", recommended that the Minister of Transport modernize investment restrictions in Canadian air transport to 49% of voting equity. In 2016, the Canada Transportation Act review report called for Canada's limit on foreign ownership of voting shares to be raised to at least 49%, unilaterally, for all carriers offering commercial passenger services. The report also noted that Canada does not have an ultra-low-cost carrier and was rated relatively "less trade friendly" for air transport in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's services trade restrictiveness index.

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 1070— Mr. Randall Garrison:**

With regard to Canada's new Guidelines on Supporting Human Rights Defenders: (a) has Global Affairs Canada called upon Canadian representatives of the Government of China to provide legitimate evidence of the well-being and whereabouts of Tibet's Panchen Lama, Gendhun Choekyi Nyima; (b) what progress has the Canadian Embassy in Beijing made in their efforts to obtain permission for a Canadian diplomatic delegation to visit Tibet's Panchen Lama, Gendhun Choekyi Nyima, in detention; (c) in the past 12 months, has the Canadian Embassy delivered démarches to the government of China concerning the detention of the Panchen Lama; (d) has the government of China communicated that it considers the actions of Canadian diplomats with respect to the Panchen Lama to be incompatible with their status under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations or the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations; and (e) what efforts has the government of Canada made to encourage country missions to China by relevant UN human rights procedures, including the UN Working Group on Enforced Disappearance, and the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):

Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a) through (e), Canada's guidelines on supporting human rights defenders are designed to support Canadian missions and Global Affairs Canada's headquarters in advancing the work of human rights defenders. The guidelines are an important tool in the promotion and protection of human rights as an integral part of Canada's foreign policy and a long-standing priority in our relationship with China. We have consistently and regularly expressed our concerns about the human rights situation in China and have specifically advocated for the protection of human rights defenders, including those in the Tibet Autonomous Region, TAR. We have expressed concerns about the restrictions on the freedom of opinion and expression, freedom of assembly and association, and freedoms of religion and belief of ethnic Tibetans.

As was done during the Prime Minister's first official visit to China, Canada will continue to have frank discussions with China on respect for human rights and the rule of law, including in relation to religious freedom and the situation in Tibet.

Senior officials of the Embassy of Canada have undertaken several diplomatic visits to TAR. Canada will continue to seek greater access to Tibet for our diplomats, parliamentarians, NGOs, and visiting delegations. Canadian diplomats require permission from Chinese authorities to visit the TAR. Allowing foreign diplomats and journalists unimpeded and regular access to Tibetan areas would allow us to better understand the realities on the ground.

Canada has requested that China provide information on the location of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and his parents, the level of education that Gedhun has completed, and the expected date for his return along with his parents.

After persistent requests from the international community and Tibetan advocates, on September 6, 2015, Chinese officials responded that the Panchen Lama, then 26 years old, is living under China's control. "The reincarnated child Panchen Lama you mentioned is being educated, living a normal life, growing up healthily and does not wish to be disturbed," said Norbu Dunzhub, a member of the Tibet Autonomous Region's United Front Work Department.

The Government of China has not communicated that it considers the actions of Canadian diplomats with respect to the Panchen Lama to be incompatible with their status under the Vienna Convention on

Diplomatic Relations or the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations.

Canada has called on China to allow the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations special rapporteur on freedom of religion and belief to visit Gedhun Choekyi Nyima.

In the context of our bilateral relationship with China, the guidelines provide the basis for us to continue to examine opportunities for further collaboration in the protection and advancement of the work of human rights defenders, including in TAR. The Government of Canada will continue to urge the Government of China to respect the rights of ethnic Tibetans and to take steps to improve the human rights situation in Tibetan areas.

Question No. 1071— Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West):

With regard to the so-called "Notice and Notice" regime: (a) is the minister of innovation, Science and Economic Development aware that some copyright owners are using this regulation and notification system as a new revenue tool that some experts in the field internet law have referred to as "shakedown"; and (b) given that the Minister has stated publicly that these notifications do not in-and-of themselves constitute a legal obligation to pay, why does the government continue to allow copyright owners to use the "Notice and Notice" regime to demand payment from internet subscribers based on an unsubstantiated accusation of copyright infringement?

Hon. Navdeep Bains (Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.):

Mr. Speaker, notice and notice is an important feature of Canada's copyright framework. It provides a tool for copyright owners to discourage online infringement by better informing consumers.

The government is aware that some participants in Canada's copyright notice and notice regime have sent notices through the system that include offers or demands to make payments in order to settle claims of alleged infringement.

The government is taking steps to educate consumers and engage with stakeholders in order to address concerns raised by Canadians over threatening notices. A frequently asked questions page was created on the Office of Consumer Affairs website, allowing Internet service providers to refer to official and objective information when forwarding a notice. Front-line call centre staff at Innovation, Science and Economic Development inform Canadians about the rules of the notice and notice regime on an ongoing basis. The department also periodically meets with key participants in the regime to better monitor its implementation.

The regime does not impose any obligations on an Internet subscriber who receives a notice, and it does not require the subscriber to contact the copyright owner or the intermediary. There is no legal obligation to pay any settlement offered by a copyright owner.

The department continues to review the regime to ensure it meets its desired policy objectives. In addition, the next five-year parliamentary review of Canada's Copyright Act, due to begin sometime after November 7, 2017, provides an opportunity to take stock.

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 1073—Mr. Blake Richards:**

With regard to the policy by the National Capital Commission (NCC) to require children ages 5 and up to obtain a permit in order to set up a lemonade stand: (a) when did the Minister responsible for the NCC approve this policy; (b) what are the details of any consultations conducted by the NCC regarding the establishment of a lemonade stand registry; (c) who decided that the pilot program, as announced, would go ahead, as opposed to simply letting children set up their own lemonade stands without a permit; (d) does the government believe the three-page permit application is accessible and appropriate for children aged 5 to 17; (e) what are the costs associated with designing and implementing this permit program, broken down by line item; (f) who will determine whether a beverage or consumable product sold under this permit program is safe for consumption; (g) who will determine whether or not the lemonade stand is being operated safely; (h) what material is covered at the “training workshop offered by JA Ottawa” and why is it strongly recommended; (i) are the individuals who teach the “training workshop” for children required to undergo background checks; (j) who decided that 7 percent of all revenues must be donated to charity; (k) why was the 7 percent figure chosen; (l) is there a cap on the number of permits that will be issued each year, and if so, what is the cap; (m) if there is a cap, how will it be determined as to who receives a permit; (n) what are the range of consequences for a child who operates a lemonade stand without a Young Entrepreneurs Permit; (o) will the government offer translation services to children in order to meet the bilingual signage requirement; (p) if the answer to (o) is affirmative, will the government charge for this service, and if so, what will be the cost of this service; (q) what is the range of consequences for signage not being bilingual; (r) what are the consequences for bilingual signage which places French ahead of English, which would be contrary to the instructions provided in the application; (s) what is the range of consequences for not displaying the permit in the manner required; (t) will parents or guardians be held liable for breaches of the rules associated with the permit; and (u) does the government consider having a lemonade stand registry to be in the public’s best interest?

Mr. Sean Casey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a), as a crown corporation in the Canadian Heritage portfolio, the National Capital Commission operates at arm’s length from the government and is responsible for its own day-to-day activities.

With regard to (b), the NCC consulted business and youth engagement groups in developing the Sunday Bikedays youth entrepreneurship program on a pilot basis. It is designed to provide children and youth, ages five to 17 years old, an educational opportunity by operating a kiosk on select NCC parkways during its popular Nokia Sunday Bikedays. The NCC did not establish a lemonade stand registry.

With regard to (c), this NCC initiative is an educational opportunity to introduce children and youth to the world of entrepreneurship and animate NCC’s parkways during Sunday Bikedays in the summer.

With regard to (d), as in most youth programs administered by government or by non-governmental organizations, the application process was designed to give parents the required information about their children’s participation in the program.

With regard to (e), the program includes an optional fun and hands-on educational workshop, offered by Junior Achievement Ottawa, or JA Ottawa. The NCC provided JA Ottawa \$20,000 to develop and implement this workshop for program participants. The NCC also ordered promotional signs at a cost of \$740.

With regard to (f), as with any operation that sells consumable products in Ottawa, kiosks operated as part of this pilot program must conform to City of Ottawa bylaws.

With regard to (g), NCC staff will advise parents and participants on how to operate kiosks along its parkways in a safe manner for both kiosk operators and Sunday Bikedays participants.

With regard to (h), the training workshop is a fun and hands-on opportunity for children and youth to learn about how to create and operate a business.

With regard to (i), all of JA Ottawa’s facilitators are screened according to JA Canada national screening policy.

With regard to (j) and (k), these aspects are not required by the streamlined application process.

With regard to (l), the answer is no.

Item (m) is not applicable.

With regard to (n), NCC staff will inform anyone interested in operating a kiosk on NCC land of the youth entrepreneurship program, as well as provide information required to ensure the safety of participants and the public.

With regard to (o), the NCC will offer assistance with translation to participants in the program,

With regard to (p), there is no charge for this assistance.

With regard to (q) and (r), this condition of the agreement reflects the National Capital Commission’s obligations under the Official Languages Act. As indicated in the Treasury Board of Canada’s directive on official languages for communications and services, the language of majority for the province must appear first when both official languages are used. The NCC would work with the participant to ensure the Official Languages Act is respected.

With regard to (s), the answer is none.

With regard to (t), parents or guardians are responsible for their children’s participation in this program.

Item (u) is not applicable, as no registry exists.

Question No. 1074—Mr. David Sweet:

With regard to the Minister of Finance’s comments published in the Globe and Mail on June 7, 2017, that “there are projects that will not get done in this country if we don’t introduce the Canada Infrastructure Bank”: (a) what are the details of all such projects, including (i) name or title, (ii) location, (iii) riding, if known, (iv) cost, (v) project description or summary, (vi) amount of total projected investment, (vii) projected cost of total project; and (b) for each project described in (a), what evidence, if any, does the government have that such projects wouldn’t be built without the Canada Infrastructure Bank?

Routine Proceedings

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada faces a significant infrastructure gap. The Canadian Chamber of Commerce estimates it as high as \$570 billion. The public sector alone cannot fill the infrastructure gap in Canada. The Canada infrastructure bank, or CIB, will help attract investors to revenue-generating infrastructure projects that are in the public interest. This will help provinces, territories, and municipalities build new infrastructure that might not have otherwise been built, increasing overall service levels for Canadians.

With regard to (a) and (b), specific project details are not available at this time.

Question No. 1076— **Mr. Randall Garrison:**

With regard to Canada's new Guidelines on Supporting Human Rights Defenders: (a) how has the Government implemented the Guidelines on Supporting Human Rights Defenders to promote human rights and protect human rights defenders in Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), China; (b) how have the Guidelines been applied in the cases of the selected prisoners of conscience (i) Gendhun Choekyi Nyima (the 11th Panchen Lama), who has been detained since May 17, 1995, (ii) Yeshe Choedron who has been detained since March, 2008, (iii) Druklo/Shokjang, who has been detained since March 16, 2015, (iv) Tashi Wangchuk, who has been detained since January 27, 2016; and (c) have Canadian officials in TAR, China conducted field visits and investigated the legitimacy of the charges laid against these human rights defenders (i) Gendhun Choekyi Nyima, (ii) Druklo/Shokjang, (iii) Yeshe Choedron, (iv) Tashi Wangchuk?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a), Canada's guidelines on supporting human rights defenders are designed to support Global Affairs Canada at Canadian missions and at headquarters in advancing the work of human rights defenders. The guidelines are an important tool in the promotion and protection of human rights as an integral part of Canada's foreign policy and a long-standing priority in our relationship with China. We have consistently and regularly expressed our concerns about the human rights situation in China and have specifically advocated for the protection of human rights defenders, including those in the Tibet Autonomous Region, or TAR. We have expressed concerns about the restrictions on the freedom of opinion and expression, freedom of assembly and association, and freedoms of religion and belief of ethnic Tibetans.

We will continue to urge China to live up to its international obligations on human rights through multilateral forums, such as the issuing of statements at the United Nations Human Rights Council and advocacy for the participation of civil society in China's universal periodic review.

In the context of our bilateral relationship with China, the guidelines provide the basis for us to continue to examine opportunities for further collaboration in the protection and advancement of the work of human rights defenders, including in the TAR. We have also advocated for substantive and meaningful dialogue between the Chinese government and the Dalai Lama or his representatives to work toward a peaceful resolution of outstanding issues acceptable to both sides. The Embassy of Canada in Beijing has visited Tibetan ethnic regions in China to understand the situation. Canadian diplomats require permission from Chinese authorities to visit the TAR.

With regard to (b) and (c), the Government of Canada is aware of the cases of Mr. Gendhun Choekyi Nyima; Mr. Druklo, or Shokjang; Mr. Yeshe Choedron; and Mr. Tashi Wangchuk. We are closely

monitoring the cases of Tibetan human rights defenders who have been detained. This includes seeking trial attendance where possible.

As was done most recently during the Prime Minister's first official visit to China, Canada will continue to have frank discussions with China on respect for human rights and the rule of law, including in relation to religious freedom and the situation in Tibet. Canada has also consistently advocated for substantive and meaningful dialogue between the Chinese government and the Dalai Lama or his representatives to work toward a resolution of issues acceptable to both sides.

Senior officials of the Embassy of Canada have undertaken several diplomatic visits to TAR. Canada will continue to seek greater access to Tibet for our diplomats, parliamentarians, NGOs, and visiting delegations. Allowing foreign diplomats and journalists unimpeded and regular access to Tibetan areas would allow us to better understand the realities on the ground.

Specific to the case of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the Government of Canada first raised the matter with the Chinese authorities in 1995. In 1998, the Embassy of Canada delivered to Chinese counterparts 1,000 birthday cards for Gedhun Choekyi Nyima from Canadian children.

Since then, Canada has requested that China provide information on the location of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and his parents, the level of education that Gedhun has completed, and the expected date for his return along with his parents.

Moreover, Canada has called on China to allow the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations special rapporteur on freedom of religion and belief to visit Gedhun Choekyi Nyima.

After persistent requests from the international community and Tibetan advocates, on September 6, 2015, Chinese officials responded that the Panchen Lama, then 26 years old, is living under China's control. "The reincarnated child Panchen Lama you mentioned is being educated, living a normal life, growing up healthily and does not wish to be disturbed," said Norbu Dunzhub, a member of the TAR's United Front Work Department.

The Government of Canada will continue to urge the Government of China to respect the rights of ethnic Tibetans and to take steps to improve the human rights situation in Tibetan areas.

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 1083—Mr. Pierre Poilievre:**

With regard to the National Capital Commission's announcement of the Young Entrepreneurs Permit pilot project: (a) what was the total cost of designing this pilot project, broken down by internal staff time (public servants) and broken down by: (i) information technology employees, (ii) communications employees, (iii) translation employees, (iv) lawyers or legal advisors, (v) other public servants; (b) what was the total cost of designing this pilot project, broken down by internal staff time and broken down by (i) public relations agencies; (ii) consultants; (iii) other expenses; (c) what is the estimated total cost of this pilot project, broken down by internal staff time (public servants), including overtime, and broken down by: (i) information technology employees, (ii) communications employees, (iii) translation employees, (iv) lawyers or legal advisors, (v) other public servants; (vi) enforcement officers; (d) what is the estimated total cost of this pilot project, broken down by internal staff time, including overtime, and broken down by (i) public relations agencies, (ii) consultants, (iii) JA Ottawa, the company hired to conduct training seminars, (iv) transportation for enforcement officers, (v) other expenses; and (e) what is the estimated date for the conclusion of the pilot project?

Mr. Sean Casey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a) to (d), the program includes an optional fun and hands-on educational workshop, offered by Junior Achievement, JA, Ottawa. The NCC provided JA Ottawa \$20,000 to develop and implement this workshop for program participants. The NCC also made promotional signs at a cost of \$740.

The requested information is not readily available in the National Capital Commission's tracking systems. Extensive manual research and analyses would be necessary to provide further details. This operation cannot be completed within the allotted time frame.

With regard to (e), the concluding date for the pilot project this year is September 3.

Question No. 1084—Mr. Daniel Blaikie:

With regard to the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation (FFMC): (a) what is the predicted economic impact including possible job losses, closures of facilities, scaling back of operations etc. associated with the province of Manitoba exiting the FFMC (i) to the corporation as a whole, (ii) specifically as it pertains to the operations and facilities in the riding of Elmwood-Transcona; (b) what specific measures have been taken, are being taken, or are planned, to mitigate any negative impacts on the FFMC associated with the province of Manitoba exiting the FFMC; (c) what was the economic impact including job losses, closures of facilities, scaling back of operations etc. associated with the province of Saskatchewan exiting the FFMC in 2012 to the corporation as a whole; and (d) what was the economic impact including job losses, closures of facilities, scaling back of operations etc. associated with the province of Alberta suspending its commercial fishery in 2014 to the corporation as a whole?

Mr. Terry Beech (Parliamentary Secretary for Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a)(i)(ii), the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation is currently preparing an updated corporate risk profile and risk mitigation framework in order to fully consider and address the pending withdrawal of Manitoba.

With regard to (b), the FFMC is preparing for Manitoba's withdrawal by offering supply contracts to fishers and agents in Manitoba to maintain the supply of fish from fishers who prefer to sell to the FFMC. This is similar to the approach taken by the FFMC when the Province of Saskatchewan withdrew from the act in 2012.

With regard to (c), following Saskatchewan's withdrawal from the Freshwater Fish Marketing Act in 2012, the corporation secured contractual arrangements with fishers in Saskatchewan. These arrangements represented approximately 99.5% of delivered vo-

lumes from the province prior to its withdrawal. As a result, the economic impact of Saskatchewan's withdrawal was negligible on FFMC operations and has not resulted in any facility closures or job losses.

With regard to (d), prior to the Province of Alberta's decision to close its commercial fishery in 2014, Alberta's volumes represented 3 to 4% of the FFMC's total delivery volume, and also accounted for 40% of its lake whitefish roe deliveries. The corporation temporarily scaled back sales of this roe. However, increased lake whitefish roe deliveries from other jurisdictions returned FFMC's inventory back to pre-closure levels by fiscal year 2015-16. The impact on overall volumes delivered to the FFMC was negligible. One privately owned processing facility located in Edmonton that was leased by the FFMC was closed as a result of the province's decision. There were no job losses at the FFMC due to the Alberta closure.

Question No. 1096—Mr. Chris Warkentin:

With regard to the proposed Canada Infrastructure Bank: (a) will the Infrastructure Bank be subject to the Access to Information Act; (b) will the Infrastructure Bank be required to disclose information in accordance with the Access to Information Act; and (c) will the Infrastructure Bank be subject to the same proactive disclosure requirements as government departments?

Hon. Amarjeet Sohi (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to the proposed Canada Infrastructure Bank, (a) the bank is subject to the Access to Information Act.

Moreover, (b), the bank is required to disclose information in accordance with the Access to Information Act, with one narrow exception that covers only information in relation to the bank's clients, that is, other investors and project sponsors, and not the bank or projects themselves. This will allow the bank to be a trusted commercial counterparty and was modeled off similar provisions for the protection of client information for other financial crown corporations.

Finally, (c), the bank will be expected to follow best practices and legislative requirements for crown corporations regarding the transparency of its operations. Notably, the proposed amendments to the Access to Information Act in Bill C-58, an act to amend the Access to Information Act and the Privacy Act and to make consequential amendments to other acts, would formalize the requirement that crown corporations publish travel and hospitality expenses as well as any report that is required to be tabled in Parliament.

Question No. 1097—Mr. Chris Warkentin:

With regard to consultation with our allies, in particular the United States, in relation to the Hytera Communications takeover of Norsat International Incorporated: (a) what are the titles and departments of the individuals consulted within the American government regarding the transaction; (b) when were they consulted; (c) what concerns were raised; and (d) how did the Canadian government address the concerns?

Routine Proceedings

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada takes issues of national security very seriously and conducts a rigorous assessment of all foreign investments under the Investment Canada Act, ICA, to safeguard Canada's national security. The ICA includes a multi-step process whereby Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada; Public Safety Canada; and Canadian national security agencies review foreign investments to determine whether an order under the ICA is necessary to protect national security.

Limited information on such reviews can be disclosed due to their classified nature and to safeguard national security. The confidentiality provision of subsection 36(1) of the ICA also applies in this case and reads as follows: "all information obtained with respect to a Canadian, a non-Canadian, a business or an entity...in the course of the administration or enforcement of this Act is privileged and no one shall knowingly communicate or allow to be communicated any such information."

When relevant to a particular investment, it is standard procedure to consult with our allies. In the case of Hytera Communications' acquisition of Norsat International, the Government of Canada consulted with allies including the United States. The details of those consultations are classified and cannot be released.

Question No. 1099—**Ms. Irene Mathysen:**

With regard to the Department of Veterans Affairs and Military Sexual Trauma incidents: (a) what is the specific policy used by the Department to determine whether injuries sustained from a Military Sexual Trauma incident or incidents are service related; (b) what is the documentation from medical experts or other professionals, as well as any other types of evidence, accepted or required to be provided to the Department to determine (i) if injuries sustained from a Military Sexual Trauma incident or incidents are service related, (ii) if the Military Sexual Trauma incident or incidents occurred?

Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a), Veterans Affairs Canada provides disability benefits to veterans with a service-related health condition or disability, regardless of the cause. The department applies the policies related to peacetime service and wartime and special duty service to test the service relationship of any condition. The policies can be found at <http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/about-us/policy/document/1578> and <http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/about-us/policy/document/1447>.

With regard to (b), section 49 of the Canadian Forces members and veterans re-establishment and compensation regulations indicates that an application for a disability award shall include medical reports or other records that document the member's or veteran's injury or disease, diagnosis, disability and increase in the extent of the disability.

Veterans Affairs Canada's disability benefits application checklist specifies that to receive a disability benefit, a veteran must, (1), have a diagnosed medical condition or disability, and (2) be able to show that the condition or disability is related to their service.

In order to make the decision, the documentation required includes a medical practitioner's diagnostic report, diagnosis of a disability related to sexual trauma during service, and the veteran's

statement. In addition to the above noted evidence, Veterans Affairs Canada also considers factors such as location of the assault, the involvement in a service-related or service-mandated function at the time of the assault, and whether or not the assailant was in a position of power.

* * *

• (1555)

[English]

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mr. Peter Schiefke (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Youth), Lib.): Madam Speaker, if the answers to Questions Nos. 618 and 630, originally tabled on Jan. 30, 2017, and Question No. 1015, originally tabled on June 15, 2017, as well as the government's response to Questions Nos. 1041 to 1043, 1045, 1046, 1048 to 1051, 1053 to 1060, 1063, 1065 to 1068, 1072, 1075, 1077 to 1082, 1085 to 1095, 1098, and 1100 to 1102 could be made orders for return, these returns would be tabled immediately.

[Translation]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Is it the pleasure of the House that the foregoing questions be made orders for returns and that they be tabled immediately?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 618—**Mr. Charlie Angus:**

With regard to policing and surveillance activities related to journalists and Indigenous activists since October 31 2015: (a) which security agencies or other government bodies have been involved in tracking Indigenous protest activities relating to (i) Idle No More, (ii) the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls or other Aboriginal public order events, (iii) the Trans Mountain Expansion Project, (iv) the Northern Gateway Pipeline, (v) the Energy East and Eastern Mainline Projects, (vi) the Site C dam, (vii) the Lower Churchill Hydroelectric Generation Project, (viii) Line 9B Reversal and Line 9 Capacity Expansion Project, (ix) other industrial or resource development projects; (b) how many Indigenous individuals have been identified by security agencies as potential threats to public safety or security, broken down by agency and province; (c) which indigenous organizations, and activist groups have been the subject of monitoring by Canadian security services, broken down by agency and province; (d) how many events involving Indigenous activists were noted in Government Operations Centre situation reports, broken down by province and month; (e) have any Canadian government agencies including Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), and the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) been involved in tracking Canadians travelling to Standing Rock Indian Reservation (North and South Dakota, United States of America); (f) has there been any request by the Canadian government or any of its agencies to the United States government or any of its agencies to share information on the tracking of Canadians citizens engaging in demonstrations at the Standing Rock Indian Reservation; (g) what are the titles and dates of any inter-departmental or inter-agency reports related to indigenous protest activities; (h) how many times have government agencies shared information on indigenous protest activities with private sector companies, and for each instance, which companies received such information, and on what dates; (i) how many meetings have taken place between representatives of the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain Expansion Project and (i) RCMP personnel, (ii) CSIS personnel; and (j) what are the answers for (a) through (i) for journalists, instead of for Indigenous individuals or organizations, and only if applicable?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 630— Mr. Matthew Dubé:**

With regard to policing and surveillance activities related to Indigenous activists since October 31, 2015: (a) which security agencies or other government bodies have been involved in tracking Indigenous protest activities relating to (i) Idle No More, (ii) the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls or other Aboriginal public order events, (iii) the Trans Mountain Expansion Project, (iv) the Northern Gateway Pipeline, (v) the Energy East and Eastern Mainline Projects, (vi) the Site C dam, (vii) the Lower Churchill Hydroelectric Generation Project, (viii) Line 9B Reversal and Line 9 Capacity Expansion Project, (ix) other industrial or resource development projects; (b) how many Indigenous individuals have been identified by security agencies as potential threats to public safety or security, broken down by agency and province; (c) which indigenous organizations, and activist groups have been the subject of monitoring by Canadian security services, broken down by agency and province; (d) how many events involving Indigenous activists were noted in Government Operations Centre situation reports, broken down by province and month; (e) have any Canadian government agencies, including the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), and the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) been involved in tracking Canadians travelling to Standing Rock Indian Reservation (North and South Dakota, United States of America); (f) has there been any request by the Canadian government or any of its agencies to the United States government or any of its agencies to share information on the tracking of Canadian citizens engaging in demonstrations at the Standing Rock Indian Reservation; (g) what are the titles and dates of any inter-departmental or inter-agency reports related to indigenous protest activities; (h) how many times have government agencies shared information on indigenous protest activities with private sector companies, and for each instance, which companies received such information, and on what dates; and (i) how many meetings have taken place between representatives of the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain Expansion Project and (i) RCMP personnel, (ii) CSIS personnel?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1015— Mr. Tom Kmiec:

With regard to the government forgiving student loans owed: (a) how many student loans have been forgiven since November 4, 2015; (b) what criteria is used to determine eligibility for debt forgiveness; (c) what reasons are laid out within the criteria as acceptable to forgive student debt; and (d) for each of the instances in (c), how many loans were forgiven under each reason since November 4, 2015?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1041—Mr. Daniel Blaikie:

With respect to the Enhancing RCMP Accountability Act (S.C. 2013, c. 18) and the Treasury Board's authority to deem civilian members of the RCMP to be public service employees, appointed under the Public Service Employment Act: (a) what is the breakdown and status of civilian units, including the Current Civilian Member classification group, and the Public Service classification group, identifying for each (i) whether they are deemed, (ii) the deeming date, (iii) the assigned union local, (iv) the Collective Agreement; (b) by what process is the deeming and classification happening and, in each case, (i) have civilian members been consulted in said process, (ii) what and who is involved in the decision of classification, (iii) what and who is involved of the assignment of union; and (c) what does the government plan to do regarding discrepancies before and after deeming of civilian members' (i) salaries, (ii) benefits, (ii) other items in the collective bargaining agreement?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1042—Mr. Daniel Blaikie:

With respect to funding of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship for the Language Training Sub-Sub-Program (currently 3.1.1.1 in 2017-18 Departmental Performance E-tables - Sub-Programs): (a) for 2015, 2016, and 2017, broken down by year, what is or was the budget; (b) for 2015, 2016, and 2017, broken down by year and province, what is or was the budget for level 1 and level 2 for each province, broken down by level; (c) how are decisions made to change funding for the different levels of training; and (d) what was the rationale for removing funding for level 2 training from organizations in Manitoba?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1043—Mr. John Brassard:

With regard to the distribution of flags and other items for Canada Day by the Department of Canadian Heritage through offices of Members of Parliament: (a) how many flags have been distributed or does the government intend to distribute, broken down by type, including (i) large flag post nylon Canadian flags (90cm x 180cm), (ii) small desktop nylon Canadian flags (30cm x 15cm) with a plastic stand, (iii) large flag post Canada 125 nylon flags (90cm x 180cm); and (b) of the items in (a), since January 1, 2017, how many have been distributed to (i) individual Liberal Member offices, (ii) individual Conservative Member offices, (iii) individual New Democratic Party Member offices, (iv) individual Bloc Quebecois Member offices, (v) individual Green Party Member offices?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1045— Mr. Blake Richards:

With regard to sponsored social media posts (Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter) by the government, including those put out by agencies, Crown Corporations, and other government entities, since November 4, 2015: (a) what amount has been spent on sponsored posts; (b) what is the description and purpose of each sponsored post; and (c) for each sponsored post, what are the details, including (i) date, (ii) analytic data, views and reach, (iii) details of demographics targeted?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1046—Mr. Tony Clement:

With regard to statements made by the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness on May 8, 2017, in particular that "crossing the border in an irregular fashion is no free ticket to Canada", broken down by month, over the last 12 months: (a) what is the average time between an asylum claimant's arrival in Canada and the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) issuing a decision; (b) for each decision in (a), (i) how many were positive, (ii) how many were negative; (c) how many of the asylum seekers referred to in (a) arrived "in an irregular fashion"; (d) how many of the individuals in (c) received a (i) positive IRB decision, (ii) negative IRB decision; (e) for those who received a negative decision from the IRB, what was the average time period between the decision and the time when removal was executed by Canadian Border Services Agency; and (f) what was the average time period for removal for those who arrived "in an irregular fashion"?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1048— Mrs. Kelly Block:

With regard to VIA Rail's 2016-2020 corporate report: (a) how many locomotives and cars will be retired in (i) 2017, (ii) 2018, (iii) 2019, (iv) 2020; (b) what impact will these retirements have by 2020 on VIA Rail's service levels; and (c) what plans are in place to replace the locomotives and wagons?

(Return tabled)

Routine Proceedings

Question No. 1049— Mr. Robert Aubin:

With regard to the decommissioning and sale of Canadian Coast Guard ship (CCGS) Tracy by the Canadian Coast Guard: (a) what were the positions occupied by the managers who planned the decommissioning of CCGS Tracy; (b) was the actual price of CCGS Tracy, including federal investments, set before it was put up for sale and what are the details of this valuation, broken down by (i) assessed value of CCGS Tracy, (ii) value of federal investments in repairs related to CCGS Tracy, made between its acquisition and lay-up, including the names of the repair subcontractors; (c) since the launch of CCGS Tracy until its sale, what was the annual budget, broken down by year, allocated specifically to CCGS Tracy; (d) before CCGS Tracy was decommissioned, was any pre-tender cost planning performed; (e) what are the names of the companies that submitted bids to the government regarding the sale of CCGS Tracy, broken down by (i) company name, (ii) bid price, (iii) bid date; (f) how many meetings took place between the government and the bidding companies, broken down by (i) company name, (ii) meeting date, (iii) departments and titles of government officials attending these meetings, (iv) positions of bidding company officials attending these meetings; (g) how many former crew members of CCGS Tracy left the Canadian Coast Guard once CCGS Tracy was decommissioned, broken down by (i) position, (ii) reassignment to other positions, (iii) pensions and severance packages, (iv) any other benefits over and above the federal pensions they received; (h) before CCGS Tracy was decommissioned, what was the annual operating cost of the buoy work performed by CCGS Tracy; (i) was there a budget allocated directly and only to the vessel's operations in the Laurentian Region; (j) before CCGS Tracy was decommissioned, did the Canadian Coast Guard plan to tender the buoying operations in order to have them carried out by a private company; (k) what were the buoying operations rates quoted by the bidders; (l) was an additional vessel planned to replace the buoying operations of CCGS Tracy in its area of operations; (m) between November 2016 and March 2017, which Canadian Coast Guard vessel performed buoying operations between Quebec City and Montreal; (n) what was the annual cost of repairs to the air-cushioned vehicle based in Trois-Rivières before CCGS Tracy was decommissioned; (o) were functional limitations issued by the Canadian Coast Guard on the use of air-cushioned vehicles; (p) were letters sent to staff on the functional limitations of air-cushioned vehicles; (q) what was the annual cost of repairs to the air-cushioned vehicle based in Trois-Rivières after CCGS Tracy was decommissioned; (r) after CCGS Tracy was decommissioned, what was the cost of repairs to CCGS Martha L. Black; (s) is CCGS Martha L. Black currently operational; (t) how many months was CCGS Martha L. Black operational and non-operational between January 2010 and March 2017; and (u) what is the rank of the commanding officer of the Central and Arctic Region of the Canadian Coast Guard who made the request to purchase CCGS Tracy after it was decommissioned and the name of the associated shipping company?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1050— Ms. Rachael Harder:

With regard to the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities' statement in the House on May 9, 2017, that the government's spending on infrastructure is to reduce the amount of time people spend being unproductive: (a) what does the government consider to be unproductive time; (b) what is the average weekly impact of unproductive time on the Canadian economy; (c) what is the average weekly amount of unproductive time, per person; (d) how many jobs are not created, on a weekly basis, as a result of unproductive time; (e) what does the government anticipate will be the reduction in the impact of unproductive time on the Canadian economy, specifically as a result of infrastructure spending; and (f) what does the government anticipate will be the reduction on the impact of unproductive time, per person, specifically as a result of infrastructure spending?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1051— Ms. Rachael Harder:

With regard to the proposed Canada Infrastructure Bank: (a) how many times did the Prime Minister meet with potential investors, including BlackRock and its CEO, between November 4, 2015, and May 1, 2017; (b) how many times did the Prime Minister's staff meet with potential investors, including BlackRock and its CEO, between November 4, 2015, and May 1, 2017; (c) how many times did any Cabinet Minister or his or her staff meet with potential investors, including BlackRock and its CEO, between November 4, 2015, and May 1, 2017; (d) for each meeting in (a), (b), and (c), what are the details, including the (i) date of meeting, (ii) organization, (iii) name of potential investor, (iv) position or title, (v) specific request or offer of potential investment (in Canadian dollars), (vi) agenda or subject matter discussed at the meeting; (e) does the Prime Minister have any investments that could directly or

indirectly benefit from the bank and, if so, has this been disclosed to the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner; (f) if the answer to (e) is affirmative, what was the Commissioner's response; (g) does any Cabinet Minister have any investment that could directly or indirectly benefit from the bank and, if so, has this been disclosed to the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner; and (h) if the answer to (g) is affirmative, what was the Commissioner's response?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1053— Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach:

With regard to the Kathryn Spirit, a vessel grounded near Beauharnois: (a) since 2011, what are all the government contracts awarded in connection with the derelict ship, broken down by (i) year, (ii) supplier, (iii) description of the services offered, (iv) contract start date and duration, (v) value of the contract, (vi) sole supplier or call for tenders; (b) with respect to the contract awarded by the government to Groupe Saint-Pierre on November 9, 2016, for the construction of the cofferdam, (i) why did the government choose to proceed with a tender call by mutual agreement (ii) what other companies were contacted by the government for this contract, (iii) what is the list of all other proposals received by the government, (iv) what definitions did the government provide for "exceptional circumstances" and "emergency measures"; (c) with respect to the previous owner of the Kathryn Spirit, Reciclajes Ecológicos Maritimos, how many vessels has the company sent to Canada, broken down by (i) year, (ii) vessel name, (iii) category (bulk carrier, tugboat, etc.), (iv) vessel mission; and (d) for each vessel in (c), how much has the government paid out in public funds, broken down by (i) year, (ii) vessel name, (iii) total costs incurred by the government, (iv) reason justifying such government expenditures (repairs, towing, repatriation of crew, etc.)?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1054— Mr. Peter Kent:

With regard to the government's decision to reduce the maximum eligible contribution to a Tax Free Savings Account (TFSA) from \$10,000 to \$5,500: (a) what is the impact or projected impact on federal revenue on a yearly basis, starting in 2016, as a result of the change; and (b) what total eligible amount did Canadians contribute to TFSAs in the (i) 2015 tax year, (ii) 2016 tax year?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1055— Mr. John Nater:

With regard to the Prime Minister's nominee for Commissioner of Official Languages, announced on May 15, 2017: (a) on what date did a Cabinet Minister or a representative of a Cabinet Minister inform Madeleine Meilleur that she had been selected as the Prime Minister's likely nominee; (b) how was Madeleine Meilleur informed that she had been selected as the Prime Minister's nominee; (c) who informed Madeleine Meilleur that she had been selected as the Prime Minister's nominee; (d) what communication has the government had with Madeleine Meilleur regarding her appointment to any position within the government since November 4, 2015, including (i) positions discussed, (ii) dates of contact, (iii) methods of communication, (iv) names of Cabinet Ministers and representatives of Cabinet Ministers; and (e) since November 4, 2015, which Cabinet Ministers have put forward Madeleine Meilleur's name as a potential candidate for a government appointment and what are the details of each such recommendation including (i) date, (ii) recommended position, (iii) other relevant details?

(Return tabled)

Routine Proceedings

Question No. 1056— Mr. Robert Aubin:

With regard to the incident in Yamachiche caused by two-metre waves: (a) on what date did Transport Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada learn of the incident; (b) on what date did Transport Canada launch an investigation; (c) what is the timeframe for the investigation; (d) will the report and the findings of the investigation be available to the public and posted on the Transport Canada website; (e) have inspectors been assigned to the investigation; (f) how many inspectors have been assigned to the investigation, if applicable; (g) what is the mandate of the inspectors; (h) what penalties does Transport Canada provide for; (i) is any compensation available to the victims; (j) what is this compensation; (k) when is compensation expected to be paid to the victims; (l) what are the contents of the investigation files, broken down by file number; (m) how many meetings took place between Transport Canada officials and Fisheries and Oceans Canada officials, broken down by (i) date, (ii) department and titles of government representatives present at the meetings, (iii) subjects discussed at these meetings; and (n) how many meetings took place between officials from Transport Canada and the Corporation of St. Lawrence Pilots Inc., broken down by (i) date, (ii) department and titles of government representatives present at the meetings, (iii) subjects discussed at these meetings?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1057—Mr. Tom Lukiwski:

With regard to correspondence related to the procurement of fighter jets, since November 4, 2015: (a) what are the details of all correspondence between the Minister of National Defense and Boeing including the (i) date, (ii) title, (iii) recipient, (iv) file number, (v) summary, if available; and (b) what are the details of all correspondence between the Minister of National Defense and Bombardier including the (i) date, (ii) title, (iii) recipient, (iv) file number, (v) summary, if available?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1058— Ms. Lisa Raitt:

With regard to government action to combat counterfeit art: (a) what is the official position of the government regarding counterfeit art; (b) does the government have any prohibition against using federal funds to rent or purchase counterfeit art; and (c) what actions are taken by the Canada Border Services Agency when counterfeit art or goods are discovered at border crossing or other point of entry?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1059—Ms. Rachel Blaney:

With regard to the shellfish harvest issue in British Columbia in zones 15 and 16: (a) has the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) observed an increase in harvesting in the last years on local beaches and, if so, has DFO (i) quantified this increase, (ii) determined this increase to be problematic, (iii) recommended measures, (iv) implemented measures; (b) if the answer to (a) is affirmative, what are the measures and what is the status of these recommendations; (c) has DFO observed an increase in illegal harvesting in the last year on local beaches and, if so, has DFO (i) quantified this increase, (ii) determined this increase to be problematic, (iii) recommended measures, (iv) implemented measures; (d) if the answer to (c) is affirmative, what are the measures and what is the status of these recommendations; (e) has DFO identified excess harvesting and, if so, (i) how did DFO make such a determination, (ii) is the government providing measures aimed at restrictions; (f) who has the authority at DFO to request a (i) stock assessment, (ii) management advice or biomass survey; (g) does the government have precise data in terms of biodiversity or biomass of shellfish in British Columbia; (h) does the government have precise data in terms of biodiversity or biomass of shellfish in zones 15 and 16; (i) has there been a reduction biodiversity or biomass of shellfish in zones 15 and 16; (j) in the event that the last biomass survey of the region was conducted more than two years ago, will DFO conduct a biomass survey next summer and, if not, why not; (k) has the government done any studies on quantities and availabilities of shellfish and, (i) if not, why not, (ii) how many studies have been completed and which one is the latest, (iii) what are the conclusions and recommendations of studies in (k)(ii), (iv) what recommendations has the government made with respect to the use and management of this resource, (v) have these recommendations been followed or are there any failures in the implementation of these recommendations; (l) is there any analysis concerning the sustainability of the current harvest and, is so, (i) can the beach sustain the same level of harvest, (ii) can the beach in Powell River sustain the same level of harvest, (iii) can zones 15 and 16 sustain the same level of harvest; (m)

is there any assessment determining maximum sustainable harvest rates and, if so, what are the rates; (n) has the government undertaken an analysis in terms of water temperature conditions required for the development of some shellfish and, if so, (i) will the fecundity rate be affected, (ii) what is DFO's recommendation or management advice, (iii) what is the forecast for the next two years in zones 15 and 16, (iv) is the fecundity annual rate preserved for each species, (v) are assessment made regularly, (vi) what is the threshold in identifying an unsustainable harvest; (o) how many people have been asked for their Tidal Waters Sport Fishing licence by fisheries officers in the last (i) year, (ii) five years, (iii) ten years; (p) of the people in (o), how many were caught without their Tidal Waters Sport Fishing licence and how many circumventions have been inspected in the last (i) year, (ii) five years, (iii) ten years; (q) what kind of sanctions have been handed out; (r) how many warning have been handed out; (s) how many people have been fined in the last ten years, broken down by zone, and (i) what was the average fine amount over the last ten years, broken down by zone, (ii) how many fines per species, (iii) what were the ten most common offences under the Fisheries Act; (t) what where the most common species harvested illegally; (u) what measures does the government have in place to deter people from committing such offences; (v) has the government undertaken an analysis to study the effectiveness of penalties for offences charged under the Fisheries Act and, if so, what were the results of this analysis; (w) has DFO identified the need for more sanctions and, if so (i) what sanction were identified, (ii) what steps were taken, (iii) how often does the government review its policies and procedures regarding fines and penalties for offences charged under the Fisheries Act; (x) has DFO identified the need for more education in order to limit circumventions and, if so, (i) what steps have been taken, (ii) what is the proportion of the DFO budget devoted to this education, (iii) how many staff and officials are involved in education, (iv) how many hours do fisheries officers spend per week and per month on education, (v) where does this education take place, (vi) what kind of tools and means are used for conveying information, (vii) are medias, social networks, daily newspapers and posters used, (viii) what has been the education budget for the last five years; (y) how many calls has DFO received in regard to harvesting shellfish and (i) has this number increased in the last ten years, (ii) what is the follow up associated calls, (iii) how many investigations have occurred in respect to these calls; (z) do the regulations provide for flexibility in specific cases and measures to be adopted concerning exceptional occurrences such as massive tourism flows, chartered tours specializing in harvest and soaring populations and (i) which specific cases do the regulations provide for, (ii) what are the possible solutions envisioned for each specific case, (iii) are special provisions in place in case of excess harvesting; (aa) what are DFO's plans, in conjunction with other departments and agencies, to address and alleviate tension and racialized problems in regards to shellfish harvest; (bb) how many full-time equivalents (FTE) fisheries officer (i) are assigned in each management areas in the pacific region, (ii) how many were there five years ago, (iii) have the number fisheries officer in charge of onsite control been reduced in the last five years; (cc) what is the government employment outlook of fisheries officer for the next two years; (dd) has the question of over harvesting shellfish been tagged as a priority; (ee) have resource management biologist at DFO raised concerns regarding over harvesting; (ff) have resource management biologist at DFO raised concerns regarding overharvesting in zones 15 and 16; (gg) has the Regional Resource Manager of Invertebrate raised concerns in zones 15 and 16; (hh) how many times has this topic been discussed with the government and has the question been raised with the Minister or Deputy Minister and, if so, has the Minister provided a response and, if so, what was it; (ii) has there been any briefing with detailed information on the matter and for every briefing document or docket prepared, what is (i) the date, (ii) the title and subject matter, (iii) the department's internal tracking number; (jj) concerning the DFO meeting with representatives from Tla'amin Nation supposed to establish methods to create stock assessments (i) has this meeting taken place, (ii) if not, when will it take place, (iii) if so, what methods were established and what were the results of the meeting, (iv) what are recommendations, (v) what is the timeline for the stock assessment to take place; (kk) does the government anticipate that there will be a meeting organized in order to make locals have more voice in the settlement of local fishery quotas; (ll) does the government anticipate that local staff will have more power in the management of the quotas in (kk); (mm) does the government anticipate that there will be any openness by DFO to set local limits and, if so, (i) when will this happen, (ii) what will be the process, (iii) how can Tla'amin Nation be involved in the process, (iv) what kind of power can Tla'amin Nation have (discretionary power, sanction power); and (nn) how often are the regulations governing recreational harvest reviewed?

(Return tabled)

Routine Proceedings

Question No. 1060—Ms. Rachel Blaney:

With regard to the issue of oil spill at Burdwood Fish Farm: (a) how many square meters of water has the spill affected; (b) is the government capable of determining the amount of oil absorbed by the absorbent pads and, if so, what is the amount; (c) is the government capable of determining the amount of oil on the sea floor and, if so, what is the amount; (d) is the government capable of determining the amount of oil evaporated and, if so, what is the amount; (e) is the government capable of independently determine the amount of oil spilled; (f) how many pads were put (i) in the fish pens, (ii) outside of the pens; (g) was a report or study done on the response rate and, if so, what were the results; (h) how many times has this topic been discussed with the government and has the question been raised with the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard or his Deputy Minister and has the Minister provided a response and, if so, what was it; (i) has there been any briefing with detailed information on the matter and, for every briefing document or docket prepared, what is (i) the date, (ii) the title and subject matter, (iii) the department's internal tracking number; (j) what are the titles of the responsible parties during the spill response at (i) the Canadian Coast Guard, (ii) the Department of Environment, (iii) the Western Marine Company, (iv) the Department of Transport, (v) the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO); (k) what does the government anticipate will be the long term impact of the oil spill; (l) does the government have precise data in terms of biodiversity or biomass of shellfish in this zone; (m) when was the last time a biomass survey of the region was conducted; (n) in the event that the last biomass survey of the region was conducted more than two years ago, will the DFO conduct a biomass survey this summer and, if not, why not; (o) has DFO identified contamination in the clam or other species and, if so, (i) how did DFO make such a determination, (ii) is the government providing measures aimed at restricting harvest, (iii) what recommendations has the government made with respect to the use and the management of this resource, (iv) have these recommendations been followed or have there been any failures in the implementation of these recommendations; (p) how many studies have been made regarding oil spill and (i) which one is the latest, (ii) what are the details, conclusions and recommendations of these studies; (q) in regard to sampling made following the spill, (i) how many samples were ordered to be taken, (ii) how many samples were taken, (iii) how many samples were analysed; (r) why was there a reduction of the number of samples, (i) who made that decision, (ii) why was this decision taken; (s) what are the results of the samples in (q); (t) how many years does the government anticipate it will take for the clams to be harvested and edible; (u) how many clams had died as a result of the spill; (v) what is the impact on the fish in the pens and (i) how many fish were affected, (ii) will the fish at Cermaq be commercialized and, if so, was DFO or other agencies notified of this decision; (w) were the fish pens prioritized in the cleanup and, if so, why; (x) was their pressure to clean up the fish pens first and, if so, by whom; (y) what is the impact on wild fish; (z) what is the impact on the ocean floor; (aa) how does the government anticipate First Nations and other groups will have to monitor and evaluate the area in the future; (bb) what are the resources that allow First Nations to monitor and evaluate the area in the future; (cc) how did the government cooperate with First Nations on the ground; (dd) was there ever a circumstance when First Nations were limited access and, if so, what was the reasoning; (ee) was there an investigation into the cause of the oil spill and, if so, (i) who investigated, (ii) what was the results of the investigation, (iii) was it a lack of diligence or training, (iv) what were the recommendation of this investigation, (v) have these recommendation been implemented; (ff) what additional training has been identified in order to prevent this accident; (gg) what other measures has been identified in order to prevent this accident; (hh) what where the financial costs for (i) the Canadian Coast Guard, (ii) the Department of the Environment, (iii) the Western Marine company, (iv) the Department of Transport, (v) DFO, (vi) all other parties involved; (ii) have the costs in (hh) been reimbursed by Cermaq or any other parties; (jj) what polluter pays principles have been applied as a consequence; (kk) how has the government or Cermaq proposed to rectify the loss of major food source to Kwikwasat'inuxw Haxwa'mis First Nation; (ll) what is the compensation in place or planned for the replacement of income for the First Nation; (mm) has an environmental impact assessment been conducted and, if so, (i) what are the results, (ii) what were the recommendation, (iii) have these recommendation been implemented; (nn) how many times did DFO complete a follow up; (oo) how many more samples does the government anticipate will be performed in the next five years; (pp) does the government anticipate the results of the samples in (oo) will be shared (i) publically, (ii) with First Nations; and (qq) has a schedule been established for the samples in (oo)?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1063— Mr. Dave MacKenzie:

With regard to the statement from the Minister of Environment and Climate Change on May 18, 2017, that "carbon pricing is the cheapest and most effective way to reduce emissions": (a) what are the other methods of reducing emissions; (b) for each method referenced in (a), what is the cost, per Canadian citizen; (c) for each method in (a), how was efficacy to reduce emissions measured; and (d) for the government's chosen carbon tax or price on carbon, what is the cost, per Canadian citizen?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1065—Mr. Charlie Angus:

With regard to the government's additional information released in its technical paper on the carbon tax or price on carbon on May 18, 2017: (a) what amount of money will the carbon tax collect through the Canada Revenue Agency, by year and by province; (b) what amount of money does the government anticipate will be sent back to the provinces, by year and by province; (c) for the funds referred to in (b), how will they be sent back to the province (e.g. through a cheque to each province's resident, through a transfer to the provincial government which will in turn decide what to do with the money, etc); (d) how many new public servants will be hired to administer the new carbon pricing system, broken down by (i) Environment and Climate Change Canada, (ii) Canada Revenue Agency, (iii) Finance Canada, (iv) Privy Council Office, (v) Other government departments; (e) how many current public servants will be transferred to positions to administer the new carbon pricing system, broken down by (i) Environment and Climate Change Canada, (ii) Canada Revenue Agency, (iii) Finance Canada, (iv) Privy Council Office; (v) Other government departments; and (f) how much will it cost to implement the public servants required to administer the carbon pricing system referred to in (d) and (e)?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1066—Mr. Charlie Angus:

With respect to the Jordan's Principle Child-First Initiative: (a) how many individuals have received services with funds from this initiative; (b) what was the breakdown of the individuals in (a) by region and by category of health service provided?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1067—Mr. Charlie Angus:

With respect to government spending on Student Support Services within the Elementary and Secondary Education Program within Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada: (a) for each region, and for each fiscal year going back to 1984-1985, what monthly, quarterly or other incremental amounts were allocated per student for student accommodations for students attending off-reserve schools; and (b) for each region, and for each fiscal year going back to 1984-1985, what monthly, quarterly or other incremental amounts were allocated per student for financial assistance allowances for students attending off-reserve schools?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1068— Mr. Steven Blaney:

With regard to psychometric tests conducted by the government since January 1, 2016: (a) for which positions or appointments does the government require a psychometric test prior to employment or appointment; (b) how many applicants or potential appointees received psychometric testing; (c) how many individuals being considered for the position of Commissioner of Official Languages of Canada received psychometric testing; (d) how was the psychometric testing for the position of Commissioner of Official Languages administered and graded (letter grade, pass fair, recommended for hire, etc); (e) how did Madeleine Meilleur's psychometric test results compare with that of the other candidates; and (f) what firm or individual conducted the psychometric tests referred to in (d)?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 1072—Ms. Sheila Malcolmson:**

With regard to federal spending in the constituency of Nanaimo—Ladysmith in fiscal years 2015-16 and 2016-17: (a) what grants, loans, contributions and contracts were awarded by the government, broken down by (i) department and agency, (ii) municipality, (iii) name of recipient, (iv) amount received, (v) program under which expenditure was allocated, (vi) date; and (b) for the Canada 150 Community Infrastructure Program, between the program's launch on January 1, 2015, and May 29, 2017, (i) which proposals from the constituency have been submitted, (ii) which proposals from the constituency have been approved?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1075—Mr. John Brassard:

With regard to the use of antimalarial drugs in the Canadian Armed Forces, for each year from 2003 to March 9, 2017: (a) which pharmaceutical companies were awarded contracts for antimalarial drugs administered; and (b) what was the unit cost for (i) 250 mg mefloquine, (ii) 100 mg doxycycline, (iii) 250/100 mg atovaquone-proguanil, (iv) 500 mg chloroquine phosphate (300 mg base)?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1077—Ms. Dianne L. Watts:

With regard to the trip by the Minister of International Trade to the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and India at the beginning of March 2017: (a) who were the members of the delegation, excluding security and media; (b) what were the titles of the delegation members; (c) what were the contents of the Minister's itinerary; (d) what are the details of all meetings attended by the Minister on the trip, including (i) date, (ii) summary or description, (iii) attendees, including organizations and the list of individuals representing them, (iv) topics discussed, (v) location; and (e) what are the details of all deals or agreements signed on the trip?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1078—Ms. Marilyn Gladu:

With regard to expenditures made by the government since February 7, 2017, under government-wide object code 3259 (Miscellaneous expenditures not Elsewhere Classified): what are the details of each expenditure including (i) vendor name, (ii) amount, (iii) date, (iv) description of goods or services provided, (v) file number?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1079—Mr. Glen Motz:

With regard to government procurement and contracts for the provision of research or speechwriting services to ministers since May 1, 2017: (a) what are the details of contracts, including (i) the start and end dates, (ii) contracting parties, (iii) file number, (iv) nature or description of the work, (v) value of contract; and (b) in the case of a contract for speechwriting, what is the (i) date, (ii) location, (iii) audience or event at which the speech was, or was intended to be, delivered, (iv) number of speeches to be written, (v) cost charged per speech?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1080—Mr. Phil McColeman:

With regard to materials prepared for ministers since April 10, 2017: for every briefing document, memorandum or docket prepared, what is the (i) date, (ii) title or subject matter, (iii) department's internal tracking number, (iv) recipient?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1081—Mr. Randall Garrison:

With respect to the periods of service of the Hon. Harjit Singh Sajjan, Minister of National Defence, in the Canadian military in Afghanistan: (a) in terms of Mr. Sajjan's written terms of employment, terms of deployment, terms of service, terms of engagement or any like conditions of service/ employment, what was or were Mr. Sajjan's jobs, positions, and functions in Afghanistan throughout the periods in which he served in Afghanistan, including as they may have been modified or otherwise developed over time; (b) is it correct, as Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner Mary Dawson reports in a letter to Mr. Craig Scott of February 27, 2017, that Mr. Sajjan told the Commissioner that he was "deployed as a reservist to Afghanistan where he was responsible for capacity building with local police forces" and, if so,

was this the extent and limit of his role or roles; (c) if Mr. Sajjan had a role or roles going beyond what he told the Commissioner, did he deliberately withhold that information from the Commissioner; (d) when or after General David Fraser had Mr. Sajjan transferred from Kabul to Kandahar, what orders, instructions, changed terms of service, or the like, whether written or verbal, were given from time to time by General Fraser to Mr. Sajjan about what his role or roles would entail in Kandahar; (e) what was or were Mr. Sajjan's role or roles in Afghanistan in relation to liaising with, working with, mentoring, training, advising, assisting, cooperating with or conducting any similar forms of engagement with the Afghan National Police (ANP), the National Directorate of Security (NDS), the Afghan National Army (ANA), the Governor of Kandahar, and any informal or paramilitary organizations working for or with the aforementioned four organizations; (f) how many meetings and on what dates did Mr. Sajjan attend (i) meetings with the Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) in Kandahar and/or (ii) meetings on the same day as JCC meetings that consisted of a sub-section of the attendees of the JCC meeting; (g) what was or were Mr. Sajjan's role or roles with respect to the JCC and with respect to any other meeting consisting of some but not all members of the JCC, and did his role include facilitating and then reporting on intelligence flows from the National Directorate of Security to the Canadian and/or allied militaries; (h) is any part of what General David Fraser said in the following report by David Pugliese ("Afghan service puts Defence Minister Sajjan in conflict of interest on detainees, say lawyers," [June 21, 2016] Ottawa Citizen), namely that "Retired Brig.-Gen. David Fraser has said Sajjan's work as an intelligence officer and his activities in Afghanistan helped lay the foundation for a military operation that led to the death or capture of more than 1,500 insurgents", untrue and, if so, why and/or to what extent; (i) is any part of what Sean Maloney reports in his book *Fighting for Afghanistan: A Rogue Historian at War* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2011) in the following sentence—"Harj [Mr. Sajjan] attended the weekly security meeting and learned that the meeting could become a tool as well. Over time, he developed rapport with all the security 'players' in Kandahar."—untrue and, if so, why and/or to what extent; (j) is any part of what Sean Maloney also reports in his book in the following sentence—" [Following JCC meetings] Harj was able to send two pages of solid intelligence to TF [Task Force] ORION per week. The quality of the intelligence was awesome."—untrue and, if so, why and/or to what extent; (k) is any part of what Sean Maloney also reports in his book in the following sentence—" [T]he NDS funneled most of the information into the JCC, so it wasn't all just coming from OEF systems or resources."—untrue and, if so, why and/or to what extent; (l) is any part of what Sean Maloney also reports in his book in the following sentence—" [F]rom then on, Harj sent intelligence directly to AEGIS, to ORION, and to the ASIC with his analysis attached."—untrue and, if so, why and/or to what extent; (m) is any part of what Sean Maloney also reports in his book in the following sentence—"My responsibilities were vague at first. General Fraser had me work with [Governor of Kandahar Province] Asadullah Khalid. But I also worked at the PRT [Provincial Reconstruction Team] to assess emergent Afghan policing issues."—untrue and, if so, why and/or to what extent; (n) when Mr. Sajjan delivered a speech in New Delhi on April 18, 2017, and said from a prepared text—"On my first deployment to Kandahar in 2006, I was the architect of Operation MEDUSA where we removed 1,500 Taliban fighters off the battlefield..."—was he referring, in whole or in part, to his intelligence role for which he was praised by General David Fraser, the commander of Operation MEDUSA, as referenced in (h) above?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1082—Mr. Pierre Poilievre:

With regard to the statement by the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities in Maclean's magazine on June 9, 2017, that "My department has approved more than 2,900 projects with a total investment of over \$23 billion since our government took office": (a) what are the details of the 2,900 projects including (i) project description, (ii) amount of federal contribution, (iii) location, (iv) anticipated completion date; (b) how many of the projects referred to in (a) have "broken ground"; and (c) of the projects that have broken ground, what was the date of the ground breaking ceremony or, alternatively, the date when work commenced?

(Return tabled)

Routine Proceedings

Question No. 1085— Mr. Brian Masse:

With regard to the automotive and manufacturing industry in Canada, (a) has the government worked with any global automotive or manufacturing companies to increase existing or to bring in a brand new automotive investment in the form of new factories, products, or jobs, to Canada since 2015, (b) is the government considering greenfield or brownfield investment for the automotive and manufacturing industry in Canada, (c) is the Canadian Automotive Partnership Council considering new investment and greenfield or brownfield investment in the automotive and manufacturing industry in Canada, and (d) if so, what municipal locations were considered?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1086— Ms. Rachel Blaney:

With regard to the right to housing and the upcoming National Housing Strategy: (a) how many stakeholders brought up or advocated for the right to housing during the “Let’s Talk Housing” consultation; (b) what was the government’s response to such demands mentioned in (a); (c) has the government assessed how a human rights based approach to housing can be recognized and furthered through laws and policies; (d) does the government intend to recognize the right to housing, and if not, why (e) does the National Housing Strategy aim at determining whether our laws, policies and practices are sufficient to prevent (i) homelessness, (ii) forced evictions, (iii) discrimination in having adequate housing; (f) when will be the completion for the examination in (e); (g) which department is responsible for the examination in (e); (h) is the National Housing Strategy based on a human right based approach, and if not, how is the government determining the appropriate framework that ensures (i) accountability, (ii) cohesive outlook beyond the physical structure, (iii) systemic causes of housing insecurity; (i) how many times has the right to housing been discussed or raised with the Minister or Deputy Minister of Families, Children and Social Development and has the Minister provided a response to the right to housing and its inclusion in a National Housing Strategy and, if so, what was it; (j) has there been any briefing with detailed information on the right to housing, and for every briefing document or docket prepared, what is (i) the date, (ii) the title and subject matter, (iii) the department’s internal tracking number; (k) how many times has the parliamentary secretary raised the right to housing with the Minister; (l) what are all of Canada’s international obligations, treaties and other legal instruments that ensure everyone in Canada a right to safe or a secure or adequate or an affordable home; (m) why has Canada never formally incorporated the international covenants on the right to housing; (n) has legislation ever been considered for the purpose mentioned in (m), and if not, why; (o) does the government intend to institute a built-in accountability measure to ensure the National Housing Strategy works for all Canadians without a right to housing; (p) how many times has a report from the UN Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing been discussed with the government; (q) has the question mentioned in (p) been raised with any Ministers or Deputy Ministers and has they provided a response and, if so, what was it; (r) has there been any briefing with detailed information on the matter mentioned in (p), and for every briefing document or docket prepared, what is (i) the date, (ii) the title and subject matter, (iii) the department’s internal tracking number; (s) how does the government plan on eliminating discrimination in housing programs; (t) how does the government plan on setting measurable goal and timelines to reduce poverty with its National Housing Strategy; (u) what measures or means the government intends to have to account when the right to housing are violated; (v) does the government intend to involve people experiencing housing insecurity and homelessness at every step of the elaboration process of the National Housing Strategy; (w) does the government intend to offer human rights training for those involved with the Strategy?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1087— Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach:

With regard to the Prime Minister’s Youth Council and the Privy Council’s Youth Secretariat: (a) what is the decision-making flow chart for the Prime Minister’s Youth Council, including each of the positions associated with the Council; (b) what is the total amount spent and the total budget of the Youth Council since it was established, broken down by year; (c) what amounts in the Youth Council budget are allocated for salaries, broken down by (i) year, (ii) position, (iii) per diem or any other reimbursement or expense (telecommunications, transportation, office supplies, furniture) offered or attributed to each of the positions mentioned in (a)(ii); (d) what are the dates and the locations of each of the meetings held by the Youth Council since it was established, broken down by (i) in-person meetings, (ii) virtual meetings, (iii) number of participants at each of these meetings; (e) how much did the government spend to hold each of the Youth Council meetings mentioned in (c), broken down by (i) costs associated with renting a room, (ii) costs associated with

food and drinks, (iii) costs associated with security, (iv) costs associated with transportation and the nature of this transportation, (v) costs associated with telecommunications; (f) what is the decision-making flow chart for the Privy Council’s Youth Secretariat, including each of the positions associated with the Youth Secretariat; (g) what is the total amount spent and the total budget of the Youth Secretariat since it was established, broken down by year; (h) what amounts in the Youth Secretariat budget are allocated for salaries, broken down by (i) year, (ii) position, (iii) per diem or any other reimbursement or expense (telecommunications, transportation, office supplies, furniture) offered or attributed to each of the positions mentioned in (h)(ii); (i) what is the official mandate of the Youth Secretariat; (j) what is the relationship between the Prime Minister’s Youth Council and the Youth Secretariat (organizational ties, financial ties, logistical support, etc.); (k) is the Youth Secretariat responsible for youth bursaries, services or programs; and (l) if the answer to (k) is affirmative, what amounts were allocated to these bursaries, services or programs since they were established, broken down by (i) the nature of the bursary, service or program funded, (ii) the location of the program, (iii) the start and end date of the bursary, service or program?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1088— Mr. Dave Van Kesteren:

With regard to spending on “stock” photographs or images by the government since January 1, 2016, broken down by department, agency, crown corporation, and other government entity: (a) what is the total amount spent; (b) what are the details of each contract or expenditure including (i) vendor, (ii) amount, (iii) details and duration of contract, (iv) date, (v) number of photos or images purchased, (vi) where were the photos or images used (internet, billboards, etc.), (vii) description of ad campaign, (viii) file number of contract?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1089— Mr. Ben Lobb:

With regard to proposed takeovers of Canadian businesses or firms by foreign entities, since January 1, 2016: (a) what is the complete list of such takeovers which had to be approved by the government; (b) what are the details of each transaction, including the (i) date of approval, (ii) value of takeover, (iii) Minister who was responsible for the approval, (iv) name of Canadian business or firm involved, (v) name of foreign entity involved, (vi) country the foreign entity is from; and (c) how many such proposed takeovers have been rejected by the government since January 1, 2016, and what are the details of the rejected proposals?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1090— Mr. Ben Lobb:

With regard to the financial compensation and salaries of ministerial exempt staff, as of June 14, 2017: (a) without revealing the identity of the individuals, how many current exempt staff members receive a salary higher than the range indicated by the Treasury Board guidelines associated with their position; and (b) how many staff members in the Office of the Prime Minister receive a salary in excess of (i) \$125,000, (ii) \$200,000?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1091— Mr. Ben Lobb:

With regard to the Office of the Prime Minister and Minister’s offices from April 1, 2016, to June 14, 2017: (a) how much was spent on contracts for (i) temporary employment, (ii) consultants, (iii) advice; (b) what are the names of the individuals and companies that correspond to these amounts; and (c) for each person and company in (b), what were their billing periods and what type of work did they provide?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 1092— Ms. Hélène Lavergère:**

With regard to cooperation between the Canadian military and the United States (US) military and intelligence agencies in Afghanistan and Iraq and to findings of the Canadian military Board of Inquiry report of May 4, 2010, on the subject of the “14 June 2006 Afghan Detainee Incident”: (a) when did Canada decide to no longer transfer persons in the care, custody, or control of members of the Canadian military to members of the US military; (b) were there any omissions or exclusions from the scope of this decision at the receiving end, such as US intelligence agencies like the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) or did the decision apply to transfers to any agent or actor acting on behalf of the US government; (c) at the transferring end, did this decision apply to all members of the Canadian military, including special forces and intelligence officials, and if not, to whom did it not apply; (d) for what reasons was this decision taken; (e) was this decision taken after legal advice had been received on whether it would be lawful to continue to transfer to the US and if so, was the government advised that it would be unlawful to continue the transfers; (f) what was the date of the last transfer before the decision came into effect; (g) did this decision apply to persons who would or could be characterized as Persons Under Control (PUC) by the US Army, units within the US Army, or the CIA, considering that this is a term that the Canadian military Board of Inquiry report of May 4, 2010, referred to as an “American Army Term”; (h) were there any instances of this decision not being implemented, and thus of persons being transferred to the US military or another US agency in situations in which members of the Canadian military themselves characterized a person as a PUC, considering that the same Canadian military Board of Inquiry report of May 4, 2010, observed that the term PUC was in “widespread use” within the Canadian military in Afghanistan; (i) is the government aware of any instances in which persons who were determined not to be “detainees” were transferred on the battlefield or elsewhere to Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) personnel, including the Afghan National Police, the Afghan National Army, the National Directorate of Security, and any paramilitary or like organizations working for or alongside the foregoing, to then learn that the person was re-transferred by ANSF personnel to members of the US military, CIA, or private US actors cooperating with the US Army or CIA; (j) is the government aware of any instances in which persons treated by Canada as “detainees” were transferred to ANSF personnel and then re-transferred by ANSF personnel to members of the US military, CIA, etc., especially before the 2007 Transfer Arrangement between Canada and Afghanistan took effect; (k) was this decision conveyed to the US government and if so, what reasons were provided and how did the US government respond; and (l) was this decision ever reversed or revised and if so, on what terms, when, and for what reasons?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1093— Ms. Hélène Lavergère:

With respect to the characterization of persons in the care, custody or control of the Canadian military as Persons Under Control (PUCs) or use of like categories, whether or not such terms were or are used officially or unofficially: (a) in relation to a statement by Donald P. Wright et al. in *A Different Kind of War: The United States Army in Operation—ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF) October 2001-September 2005* (Combat Studies Institute, 2010), at p. 221: “Detainees in Coalition hands in Afghanistan were referred to as persons under control (PUCs) instead of EPWs or detainees,” does this reference to “Coalition” apply to the Canadian military, including special forces in any part of the 2001-2005 period in question; (b) in relation to a claim by Ahmed Rashid in *Descent into Chaos: The United States and the Failure of Nation-Building in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Central Asia* (Penguin, 2009), at pp. 304-305: “In spring 2002, ...CIA lawyers further twisted legal boundaries by establishing a new category of prisoner: Persons Under Control, or PUC. Anyone held as PUC was automatically denied access to the ICRC, and even his existence was denied...PUCs were flown around the world to different locations on private jets belonging to dummy companies owned by the CIA.”, is the government aware of whether this is an accurate statement of one use to which the category of “PUC” was put by the United States; (c) in relation to an observation in *Center for Law and Military Operations (United States Army, Judge Advocate General’s Legal Center and School), Lessons Learned from Afghanistan and Iraq: Volume I - Major Combat Operations (11 September 2001—1 May 2003)* (August 1, 2004) [Lessons Learned]: “[P]ersons detained were either classified as ‘persons under control’ (PUCs) or simply as ‘detainees.’... Persons captured on the battlefield were initially brought to the classified location to establish their identity and determine if they met the criteria for potential transfer to Guantanamo. During this phase, detained personnel were classified as ‘PUCs.’”, is the government aware of whether, during such windows of time, CIA agents or persons working for the CIA would sometimes take custody of PUCs from the US Army before they could be officially designated as “detainees” by the Army; (d) in relation to a claim in Chris

Mackey and Greg Miller, *The Interrogators: Task Force 500 and America’s Secret War Against Al-Qaeda* (Back Bay Books, 2004), at pp. 250-251: “In June [2002]... our [US Army] command in Bagram ...came up with a whole new prisoner category called ‘persons under U.S. control’, or PUCs. The whole idea was to create a sort of limbo status, a bureaucratic blank spot where prisoners could reside temporarily without entering any official database or numbering system.”: is the government aware of whether or not this US Army PUC category was created in concert with and used by the CIA as a way to secure custody of PUCs while they were still in a “bureaucratic blank spot”; (e) in relation to the observations in *Lessons Learned* that “the term ‘PUC’ did not develop until the [US] XVIIIth Airborne Corps arrived in Afghanistan” in 2002, did Canadian Forces, including special forces, ever conduct joint operations with the US’ XVIIIth Airborne Corps in which captives were taken; (f) is the government aware of whether the commanding officer of the US’ XVIIIth Airborne Corps, Lt. Gen. Dan McNeill, was a direct source of, or conduit for, the notion of “PUC” and if so, whether Lt. Gen. Dan McNeill was working in concert or tandem with the CIA in introducing this term into the Afghanistan theatre; (g) after General Walter Natynczyk was seconded to command 35,000 US forces in Iraq during the US’ Operation Iraqi Freedom in Iraq from January 2004 to January 2005, did he bring any knowledge of the use of PUC practices or a PUC system from Iraq to the Canada-Afghanistan context when he became head of the Canadian Forces’ Land Force Doctrine and Training system in 2005 and when he was appointed Vice-Chief of Defence Staff in 2006, and if so, was such practices introduced in any way to this doctrine and training system; (h) prior to August 2015 by which time the first Canadian Forces troops had arrived in Kandahar, were there meetings between Canadian Lt. Gen. Michel Gauthier and US Under-Secretary of Defence for Intelligence Steve Cambone or any other officials in the US Department of Defense or in the Pentagon in which they discussed, inter alia, Canada aligning or otherwise coordinating its policy and practices in Kandahar with those of the US, including in relation to detainees, as a condition of the US agreeing that Canada be assigned Kandahar; (i) prior to August 2015 by which time the first Canadian Forces troops had arrived in Kandahar, were there meetings between Chief of Defence Staff General Rick Hillier and any officials in the US Department of Defense or in the Pentagon in which they discussed, inter alia, Canada aligning or otherwise coordinating its policy and practices in Kandahar with those of the US, including in relation to detainees, as a condition of the US agreeing that Canada be assigned Kandahar; (j) prior to August 2015 by which time the first Canadian Forces troops had arrived in Kandahar, were there meetings between any Canadian Forces officers apart from Generals Gauthier and Hillier in which they discussed, inter alia, Canada aligning or otherwise coordinating its policy and practices in Kandahar with those of the US, including in relation to detainees, as a condition of the US agreeing that Canada be assigned Kandahar; and (k) is the mini-biography of Mr. Gauthier on The Governance Network’s website correct in saying Gauthier “[I]ed Canadian Expeditionary Force Command, responsible for all CF operational missions abroad, the Canadian mission in southern Afghanistan” and if so, did this include authority over policy and decisions related to the transfer of captives to other states?

(Return tabled)

Routine Proceedings

Question No. 1094— Ms. Hélène Laverdière:

With respect to the characterization of persons in the care, custody or control of the Canadian military as “PUCs” and “Persons Under Control”, or use of like categories, whether or not such terms were or are used officially or unofficially: (a) does the government accept the accuracy of the finding of a Canadian military Board of Inquiry (BOI) on the subject of the “14 June 2006 Afghan Detainee Incident” [BOI June 2006 Incident Report], in its report of May 4, 2010, (para 30, part II) that the term “PUC” was in “widespread use” amongst Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan in 2006; (b) in relation to a BOI June 2006 Incident Report observation (para 30, part II), stating that “[T]he B Coy MP [B Company Military Police officer] testified that he was directed during ROTO 1 [rotation/deployment 1] to always use the term “PUC” and to avoid the term “Detainee.””, who directed this Military Police (MP) to systematically use “PUC” and to avoid “detainee” and for what reasons was this MP so directed; (c) in relation to a BOI June 2006 Incident Report finding (para 30, part II), stating that “When made aware of the term the TFA Advisors (LEGAD and PM) endeavoured to remove it [“PUC”] from the tactical reporting lexicon, as it had no legal foundation in detainee policy.”, (i) when and how were the Task Force Afghanistan (TFA) Advisors “made aware of the term”, (ii) for what period did “PUC” appear in tactical reporting, (iii) did its use in tactical reporting end, and if it ended, when did it end and was this the result of the initiative of the TFA Advisors; (d) in relation to the same report finding as in (c), was any person in position of strategic command in the Canadian Forces, including Generals Rick Hillier, Walter Natynzyk, Michel Gauthier and David Fraser, at any time aware of the use of the term “PUC” and if so, what actions did one or more of them take in relation to its use; (e) does the government accept the BOI June 2006 Incident Report finding that persons characterized by Canadian soldiers and commanders during one or more periods in 2006 as “PUCs” were transferred to Afghan authorities without also being characterized as “detainees” with the result that there was no triggering of the record-keeping and reporting (including reporting to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)) connected to official detainee policy and to the 2005 Transfer Arrangement with Afghanistan, and if so, what is the number of such PUCs transferred without record or reporting to the ICRC; (f) in relation to the observation in the BOI June 2006 Incident Report (para 33, Part II), that, in relation to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation published Canadian military reports from the field that 26 persons were “captured” on May 17, 2006, by Task Force ORION, those 26 were transferred to the Afghan National Police without ever being processed as detainees, were those persons treated as PUCs by TF ORION; (g) in relation to question (m) of Order Paper Question Q-1117 (41st Parliament, first session; filed by Craig Scott, MP) that asked the government to set out how 11 captured persons referenced at page 96 of a book by the commanding officer of Task Force ORION, Ian Hope-Dancing with the Dushman: Command Imperatives for the Counter-Insurgency Fight in Afghanistan (Canadian Defence Agency Press, 2008)—were processed, were these 11 persons processed as “detainees” with attendant record-keeping and reporting or were they instead treated as “PUCs” and transferred to Afghan authorities on that basis, with no attendant record-keeping or reporting to the ICRC; (h) in view of the statement in a report by the Directorate of Special Examinations and Inquiries (DESI), in “Directorate of Special Examinations and Inquiries Investigation—Passage of Information, Final Report (14 June 2006 Afghanistan Detainee Incident)”, document number 7045-72-09/26, that it was “of very significant concern ...that a number of TF ORION War Diary records for the period 13 May—17 June 2006 could not be located”, have some or all of those war diary records since been located; (i) if some or all of the war diaries referenced in (h) have been located, do they shed light on the use of “PUCs” or like designations as a way to avoid labelling a captive as a “detainee”; (j) in relation to point (o) in Q-1117 (41st Parliament, first session)—“were there persons under the control of Canadian forces who were transferred to Afghanistan, but who were not treated by Canada as covered by the provisions of the 2005 and 2007 Canada-Afghanistan Memorandums of Understanding on detainee transfer and if so, on what basis were transfers of such persons not deemed covered by the agreements?”—that the government did not then answer in the affirmative, would the government now like to change its answer; (k) in relation to point (p) in Q-1117 (41st Parliament, first session)—“were there persons under the control of Canadian forces who were transferred to Afghanistan but whose existence and transfer was not made known to the International Committee of the Red Cross and if so, on what basis was the Red Cross not informed?”—that the government did not then answer in the affirmative, would the government now like to change its answer; (l) in relation to point (n) of Q-1117 (41st Parliament, first session)—“at any period and if so, which periods, [were] there ...one or more categories of persons who Canada passed on to either Afghan or American authorities but who were not categorized as detainees, and did such categories have a designation, whether formal or informal?”—why did the government not reveal the existence of “PUCs” as an informal category; (m) in relation to, *inter alia*, the government answers to points (n), (o), and (p) of Q-1117 (41st Parliament, first session), does the present government consider that the former government

deliberately sought to mislead or even deceive the then Member of Parliament who submitted Q-1117 (41st Parliament, first session); (n) inclusive of points (n), (o), and (p) of Q-1117 (41st Parliament, first session), are there any answers to this question that the present government considers were incorrect or untruthful; (o) in relation to a September 19, 2016, letter from Mr. Craig Scott, former MP for Toronto–Danforth, to the current Prime Minister in which Mr. Scott presented reasons as to why he “believe[d] it to be likely that the Department of National Defence crafted its answer to Order Paper Question Q-1117 (41st Parliament, first session) in order to avoid revealing” the existence of persons who were transferred to Afghanistan without being recorded or reported to the ICRC as “detainees”, has that letter resulted in any inquiries by or on behalf of the Prime Minister and if so, of what sort and with what result; (p) when on December 8, 2009, then Member of Parliament the Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh asked a question to former Chief of Defence Staff Walter Natynzyk in the latter’s appearance before the Standing Committee on National Defence in which Mr. Dosanjh quoted from a Globe and Mail article in which a Military Police officer’s field notes used the term “PUC”, did the government conduct any other investigation into why “PUC” had been used apart from the ordering of Board of Inquiry and Chief of Review Services investigations into aspects of the underlying incident and if so, what was the result; and (q) in relation to findings in BOI June 2006 Incident Report (para 12, Part II), stating that “Although BGen [David] Fraser did not become familiar with TSO [Theatre Standing Order] 321A until arriving in Kandahar..., its underlying principle of transferring detainees to ANSF was made clear to him before departing Canada. Direction provided to him verbally by the Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) [General Rick Hillier] emphasized that Afghan detainees were to be transferred to Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) as far forward in the field and as rapidly as possible; indeed, that their transfer from CF to ANSF custody was to be measured in terms of “minutes to hours.”, does the government consider that this constituted an instruction by General Hillier to circumvent the formal “detainee” system with a “PUC” practice?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1095— Ms. Hélène Laverdière:

With regard to all operational contexts in which members of the Canadian military have been involved since September 11, 2001, up to the present and with respect to all military orders, directives, instructions, etc., whether binding or non-binding, interim, provisional, or final, related to persons in the care, custody, or control of members of the Canadian military and to all persons with whom members of the Canadian military come into contact but who are judged as being in the care, custody, or control of armed forces, security, and intelligence forces, and police forces of another state: (a) what were the numbers, titles and dates of all Canadian Forces Theatre Standing Orders and the identity of the issuing official; (b) what were the numbers, titles, and dates of all Fragmentary Orders and the identity of the issuing official; (c) what were the numbers, titles, and dates of all International Security Assistance Force orders of a similar nature issued in relation to the conflict in Afghanistan and the name of the issuing official or entity which issued them; and (d) what were the numbers, titles, and dates of any orders of a similar nature issued by American, Iraqi, or other forces, including Kurdish authorities in northern Iraq, that apply in any way, directly or indirectly, to Canadian soldiers who come into contact with detainees while serving in Iraq and the name of the issuing official or entity which issued them?

(Return tabled)

*Government Orders***Question No. 1098— Mr. Murray Rankin:**

In relation to Canada's transfer of captives in Afghanistan to the authorities of other states, including the United States and Afghanistan, from 2001 onward: (a) have there been any investigations by any federal agency, including but not limited to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or the Canadian Armed Forces National Investigation Service, of senior officers in the Canadian Forces up to and including the Chief of Defence Staff for possible criminal conduct in violation of one or more Canadian statutes and/or one or more international legal obligations; (b) if the answer in (a) is affirmative, (i) between what dates, (ii) with respect to what conduct, (iii) with what result; (c) have there been any investigations by any federal agency, including but not limited to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or the Canadian Armed Forces National Investigation Service, of any Minister of the Crown including the Prime Minister for possible criminal conduct in violation of one or more Canadian statutes and/or one or more international legal obligations; (d) if the answer in (c) is affirmative, (i) between what dates, (ii) with respect to what conduct, (iii) with what result; (e) have there been any investigations by any federal agency, including but not limited to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or the Canadian Armed Forces National Investigation Service, of any member of the public service for possible criminal conduct in violation of one or more Canadian statutes and/or one or more international legal obligations; (f) if the answer in (e) is affirmative, (i) between what dates, (ii) with respect to what conduct, (iii) with what result; and (g) have there been any investigations by any federal agency, including but not limited to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or the Canadian Armed Forces National Investigation Service, of any member of the a minister's political staff including any member of the Prime Minister's Office for possible criminal conduct in violation of one or more Canadian statutes and/or one or more international legal obligations; (h) if the answer in (g) is affirmative, (i) between what dates, (ii) with respect to what conduct, (iii) with what result?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1100— Mr. Erin O'Toole:

With regard to the Government's nomination of a new Clerk of the House of Commons, and its general commitment to "open, transparent and merit-based" selection processes: (a) what process was followed to select the nominee; (b) how many candidates applied for the position; (c) were any tests or assessments administered to the candidates; (d) how many candidates were interviewed; (e) who were the members of the selection board or interview panel; (f) were candidates' professional and character references checked; (g) how many candidates were psychometrically tested; (h) what was the role of the Prime Minister in the selection process; (i) what was the role of the Prime Minister's Chief of Staff, Principal Secretary and Director of Appointments in the selection process; (j) what was the role of the Government House Leader in the selection process; (k) what was the role of the Chief of Staff to the Government House Leader in the selection process; (l) what was the role of the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard in the selection process; (m) what was the role of the Chief of Staff to the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard in the selection process; (n) did any ministers or exempt staff, not named in parts (h) to (m), have a role in the selection process; (o) what was the role of the Deputy Secretary to the Cabinet (Results and Delivery) in the selection process; (p) what role was provided or offered to the Speaker of the House of Commons, or any personal representative of him, in the selection process; (q) were executive search firms, consultants, or other contractors retained to support the selection process; (r) if the answer in (q) is affirmative, (i) who was retained, (ii) what services were provided, (iii) what was the value of the services provided; (s) when was the nominee notified he was the government's choice, and who notified him; (t) were the opposition parties' House leaders consulted on the choice of nominee, and if so, by whom and when; and (u) was the Speaker of the House of Commons consulted on the choice of nominee, and if so, by whom and when?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1101— Mr. Blake Richards:

With regard to the most recent Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) compliance test on small businesses with regard to active vs. passive income: (a) what date did the compliance test (i) begin, (ii) end; (b) how many small businesses were (i) assessed in this test, (ii) determined to owe a greater amount to the CRA than initially assessed, (iii) determined to owe a lesser amount than initially assessed; (c) how were these small businesses selected for assessment; (d) how many of the businesses assessed were (i) campgrounds, (ii) self-storage facilities, (iii) from other sectors, as broken down by the North American Industry Classification System; (e) what conclusions, if any, were reached about (i) the CRA's interpretation of the rules

regarding "active" and "passive" income of the small businesses involved, (ii) the application of the CRA's interpretation of the rules regarding the eligibility of the small businesses involved to receive the small business tax deduction; (f) what other conclusions were reached; and (g) what standards were used to determine whether a small business (i) provided a sufficient number of services for its generated income to be considered active, (ii) engaged or hired a sufficient number of year-round full-time employees for its generated income to be considered active?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1102—Mr. Pat Kelly:

With regard to the government's decision to permit the Hytera takeover of Norsat International Incorporated: (a) did the transaction undergo a complete national security review as defined by the Investment Canada Act; (b) if the answer in (a) is affirmative, what are the details, including (i) when did the national security review commence, (ii) when did the review conclude; and (c) when did the government approve the transaction?

(Return tabled)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

CUSTOMS ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-21, An Act to amend the Customs Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Alupa Clarke (Beauport—Limoilou, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to see you in the chair again, guiding our democratic exchanges in the House.

I began my speech before question period. Having used up six minutes, I now have four left. In the first part of my speech, I explored the notion of borders from various perspectives: security, trafficking, trade, and the need for some to commute between various countries, in our case Canada and the United States.

As a certain philosopher whose name escapes me once said, borders guarantee a country's sovereignty. It can then be said that they guarantee our Canadian democracy, because in order to be enforced, rights must rest upon institutional foundations, foundations that can only be guaranteed within the borders of a sovereign state that has institutions such as the House of Commons, for instance.

The purpose of Bill C-21, which the Minister of Public Safety introduced on June 15, 2016, in this House, is to amend the Customs Act. Let me remind my colleagues that the whole content of this bill comes from the beyond the border action plan, introduced by Prime Minister Stephen Harper in 2011. The general aim of that plan was to address any emerging threats to the Canada-U.S. border; to promote trade, which makes for continuous economic growth and job creation; to have an integrated cross-border law enforcement; and to establish critical infrastructure for cybersecurity, a need that keeps growing over the years as new technologies become more important in our daily lives and our institutions.

Government Orders

In my view, this bill was put forward in response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The Americans wanted to address the concerns of their fellow citizens about security in North America, which is quite natural. In fact, the goal is still the same. As good partners, we not only wanted to address the concerns of Canadians regarding their security, but we also wanted to be good economic, military, and social partners with the United States. We still want that today. Therefore, we began discussions about border security in good faith and with an open mind.

That being said, it was imperative for us, Canadians, to ensure the continuity of trade flow. That is what is difficult to maintain with this type of bill. As my colleague from Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, our critic on this file, mentioned, this bill is intended to finally respond to the threat of terrorism. However, how can we achieve this while ensuring the continued free flow of goods?

We believe the government has accepted the main points we presented in 2011, which is quite interesting. However, this government still has many questions to answer about this bill. Will there be new infrastructure costs related to carrying out the inspection of outgoing people or goods? What measures have been put in place by this government to protect privacy and ensure that the collection of any new entry and exit data is carried out in a secure manner? How will this bill affect those people who enter Canada at unofficial entry points, as we saw this summer in Manitoba and Quebec? Finally, how is this issue reflected in our trade negotiations with the United States at this time, and will all Canadians benefit from these changes?

• (1600)

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the contribution of the member for Beauport—Limoilou to this debate.

I am concerned about the new information-sharing initiative, although, to be sure, this is not our first time sharing information. The digital age is increasingly permeating not only the federal government and every level of government in Canada, but foreign governments as well. This is an ongoing and growing trend. This bill represents one more step in a direction we have been heading in for some time, towards sharing more and more information.

Does my colleague consider privacy rights important? Does he think that allowing Canadians to retain some privacy is as vital as security? In this case, we are talking about information on travel. This means the government can see where a person has been, what day they left and what day they came back, and, no doubt, what countries they visited.

Is my colleague concerned about privacy at all, or does he think that security is paramount and outweighs Canadians' right to privacy?

Mr. Alupa Clarke: Madam Speaker, at the end of my speech, among other things I asked what careful steps the government intended to take in order to protect the privacy of Canadians.

Clearly, that is one of my concerns. This bill may deal with sensitive matters, but it is absolutely essential. The Americans want to strengthen border security, but we would like trade to remain unimpeded. That said, with regards to the issue raised by the member

for Sherbrooke of the privacy of people going abroad, the Canadian government can already access their information today. Peoples' passports get stamped when they visit other countries. This bill will make it so that information is available automatically and will also give us useful tools to deal with certain issues that may not be raised today, EI for instance.

Imagine someone that is drawing EI benefits and should be actively looking for work but instead is travelling in some tropical paradise, or in the United States. This legislation would let the authorities know automatically, and the information could then be relayed to the appropriate department. It would also allow us to interrogate the individual in order to better understand the specifics of the case and why they would be looking for work outside the country.

The member asks an excellent question. I do believe that we should make sure that the government specifies how it intends to protect privacy in the digital age.

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): I thank the member for his speech, Madam Speaker.

There is a borer in my riding and I am worried about cannabis. People who have consumed cannabis cannot enter the United States.

[*English*]

I am worried that if the government shares the information with the United States, in the going back and forth, the next thing is we would be sharing more information about people. If officials would share the information even when they make things a ticketed offence, then people will not be able to go to the U.S. Is my colleague concerned about that?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alupa Clarke: Madam Speaker, that is indeed a great concern. This morning, the hon. member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles asked the minister that same question, but he did not answer. In fact, he said that cannabis cannot be brought across the border, but we knew that already.

What the member was saying is that customs officers at the U.S. border can assume that half of all those crossing the border may have consumed cannabis in Canada, if it is legal. That is if this ever comes to pass because many promises have been broken so far. How are U.S. customs officers going to deal with this situation? Is this going to prevent some of our businesspeople from doing business in the United States? There are all sorts of questions and concerns.

This gives me the chance to say today that there are some international treaties having to do with cannabis that the Prime Minister should have already abolished. He has yet to do so. He is behind on all these files and is pushing the provinces forward without any clarification. As such, the government has to act as quickly as possible and explain what is going on.

• (1605)

[*English*]

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to speak again on Bill C-21.

Government Orders

One of the interesting aspects about the debate on this bill is around the consequences for trade with our American partner. The reality with our relationship with the United States is that we have hundreds of thousands of Canadians who traverse into the United States and then back into Canada per day. Anything we do with Canada-U.S. travel and trade will have a significant impact with regard to not only the individual crossing, but also the metrics of the infrastructure that is actually under that duress.

What I mean specifically, and through that I will reference my riding, but there are many others across the country, is the way that people are processed in and outside the border, whether it be in the customs line, the lineup for the infrastructure, or the return. In that context of exchange, there are several variables that can take place for individuals.

A passport is one of the documents that can be used for entry and exit. It is required by the western hemisphere travel initiative of the United States. By the way, when the U.S. implemented that, many members of Congress did not even know that was added as a rider, attached legislation, which is similar to what we do with our budget bills, now that we throw the kitchen sink in with everything. It did not get the proper review.

I was part of a group of Canadians, and many parties were involved, pushing for the delay of implementation, which we received because this affects our travel and trade.

What Canadians are being asked to do is to give up more of their privacy. This is important. On borders like mine, travelling to and from the United States is a regular practice. The information that is used therein has become more important for issues related to protection of people's banking accounts; online social and professional discussions or contributions through Facebook, Twitter and so forth; and then, lastly, the aspect related to video and other types of things that could be done and are related to fraud.

During the summer, as part of general discussion, I have been working a lot on the issue of inclusion of fraud and so forth. One of the notable things in the information that is going to be dispelled is the surname, the first name, the middle name, date of birth, citizenship or nationality, and sex of the individual. That is what is collected right now for people entering Canada.

The new information, collected when people exit, is the date, time, place of departure, travel document used at the time of departure, with the travel document number. I mentioned earlier that could be passports or other types of identification, the enhanced driver's licence and other things that are used, the NEXUS card and so forth. There is any unique passenger reference assigned to them by a carrier, including border or non-border designations, or in the case of a carrier crew member, it would be their designation as such.

The information would be gathered by CBSA at every border crossing, including land, sea, and air. The bill would also have some additional reporting of goods that cross the border, and specific needs of reporting related to that.

What I think is important is that it changes a number of things. I know right now in my crossing area, there is a high degree of concern about the digital world we have moved to, and the use of that information, but also the reliance on that information.

Right now, we have problems, often associated with the U.S. system or the Canadian system not following through on the collection of the data, and then the system breaking down. What has happened in the past is that the booths would be closed and there would be lineups which affect our trade and tourism. Seconds do matter when we are talking about tens of thousands of trucks. Every second does matter. It will back up into our economy. It will affect our competitiveness.

Now when the systems go down, the lineups then start to lengthen. When we look at what tools the CBSA has been provided, I get worried. There is a very well-schooled and trained workforce in our CBSA members. Our men and women who serve are very capable.

• (1610)

The problem, quite frankly, goes back to their lack of respect and support for the materials and equipment on the border. That is one of the things that raises my question. We can have a lot of great ideas, but if we do not provide the right tools and appropriate measures, then that does not make a difference. It can complicate and make things worse. I know, through a number of different reports, that the computer systems, equipment, and processing are issues for the men and women who serve the border. I would also argue that there is a malaise in the government to do the necessary things to make sure the working conditions and employment are done properly through contracts and ensuring we have stability.

There are several things that act as disrupters in this entire process. We could have all the good intentions we want, but the reality is whether we have the capabilities to do that. Right now, our men and women are again serving without a contract. It is three years plus about five months since their last contract. If this Liberal government cannot even get a contract with its workers in place—it cannot even pay its workers for sure—what type of competency do we have that it is going to protect people's private information and the accumulation of more data, just because the U.S. says so? That is one thing that stuck out to me right away in terms of the vulnerabilities of this.

I mentioned the impact on my riding, with delayed times and backups related to the proper processing breakdowns. Now, past the breakdown, as we get data breaches and loss of information, as well as the incapacibilities on top of all that, there is no guarantee that what we are doing is actually going to prove anything. The government has not done the necessary work that it should be doing right now.

Government Orders

I spoke in the House of Commons this afternoon at question period about a new border crossing that has been approved by the Prime Minister and cabinet without any consultation whatsoever with the community on what the specifics were going to be. It was nothing. They let a private American billionaire, whom Canadians will have to pay their taxes and tolls to, break the news about what their future is going to be under the Liberals' regime of making a crossing into the United States for jobs, improvement of connections to their families, or whatever it might be. They let a private American billionaire, who was incarcerated for not following through with construction properly on the American government side, do this. They are giving a billionaire in the United States a brand new bridge, plus an expansion of 35%. There was nothing in communication. What confidence do we have in the necessary communication and protection of private information that is going to be dispelled through this bill?

I will come back to this point, in time. However, the timing of this is the real curiosity. This bill and this discussion go back to the previous regime, as well the Obama regime, with regard to Canada-U.S. information being shared back and forth. There were a lot of agreements over the years between our two countries that were ratcheted up. I mentioned the western hemisphere travel initiative as the original one, which has the requirement of a passport. It is no mystery that it was, as I mentioned earlier, an addition to a congressional and federal bill that many members did not even know about. If we look at the history, it was delayed subsequently for Canada. Other countries had to go first because there was no planning. It was actually a response to something and not the creation of something, hence it did not have the proper infrastructure or capacities.

It is interesting that as we are in these negotiations with the United States over NAFTA, one of the things that is going to be required is a re-evaluation of jobs and other types of things that we share on both sides of the border in terms of qualifications. Before, when NAFTA was signed, we did not have the Internet, and we did not have a lot of the jobs that are out there. Whether it be for the computer science industry or accounting, there were a series of different things that were not included.

• (1615)

All of these things will have to be worked out even if we get an agreement, but we will sign another privacy agreement, or implement one in legislation, with the United States before we even know what we will do in terms of a trading relationship with that country and the future of another relationship.

It would seem that the eagerness to do this and the timing of it is off. It would make sense that Canadians who travel, who number thousands per day going back and forth, would want to know what information was being shared. The United States is going to collect that data.

As noted in the discussion earlier, the Liberals just gave a billionaire, an American citizen, a brand new border crossing, with a 35% increase in capacity, for nothing. The Liberals gave it up. They have to move a fire station. That is what Canada received. This is billions of dollars. The operation totals about \$200,000 per day, and Canada gets a fire station moved.

However, the operations work with the American body and CBSA and so forth on a regular basis. When we have to give up more private information, we have to ensure it is rock solid. Not only do the operations in my area involve the CBSA and the Department of Homeland Security, but they can involve private American business. This is critical.

The U.S. Patriot Act allows that information to be accessed and used. It is interesting to note the way it works. The company that has the information taken from it is not allowed to tell the people affected by it.

I have fought for years in this place, and we were successful, to keep Canada's census data in Canada. This will be debated at the table during the discussions on NAFTA. A previous government outsourced data collection and the census to Lockheed Martin.

An hon. member: As the Liberals do.

Mr. Brian Masse: Madam Speaker, it was the Liberals and it was an unfortunate circumstance. They essentially were going to allow Lockheed Martin to assemble private information on Canadians. If my memory serves me correct, the collected data was going to be assembled in Minneapolis. The contract was later amended and it cost Canada more money because the government realized it was a bad mistake. It was going to cost around \$6 million to keep the data in Canada and we kept it here. The agency that would accumulate the data, which also outsourced a lot of government services, just has to give the information over under the Patriot Act. The law is considered broken if contact is made.

It is significant that we look at these issues. I find that since we do not have any full-on trade agreements under the current context of what is happening, it would seem that the sharing of Canadians' private information would come later rather than sooner. I want to touch on that for a moment because it is really important.

This summer I worked quite a bit on protecting Canadians from fraud. We have all seen this happen in our communities. My riding of Windsor West and other communities I consulted with have seen this happen. Fraudsters use basic information to call people either at homes, at their places of employment, or on their cellphones. They even use tactics on the Internet, which cost Canadians millions of dollars. I am speaking about organized crime.

I am sure many Canadians have received phone calls from people stating they are from the Canada Revenue Agency. They are being told they have to pay up because they did not make full payment on their taxes. For people listening today, I would urge them to never talk to people on the phone about their taxes. The CRA does not call people. They will be contacted by mail if there is a problem.

Government Orders

•(1620)

In fact, the fraud on this has become so sophisticated, that caller ID will show the Government of Canada or Canada Revenue. They will buy those types of signatures for when people call in and they will try to convince them. We have those telephone calls coming in all the time to communities and people buy it. They buy it not because they should feel ashamed, not because they are bad people, not because they are naive, but because it is organized crime.

Fraudsters are sustained through organized crime because they get information about people. They know where they live and details about people. I get to hear some of these things because my partner's name is Terry Chow, so they call in and ask for Mr. Chow. She spells it Terry, which is often the way a man's name is spelled. They will call asking for Mr. Chow and I hear the tactics and intimidation. When the caller finds out it is not Mr. Chow, they end it.

My point is that this is an immediate defence for us to know that people calling who try to pretend they are from the government or some other authority, that it is a phony call. I want to know and ensure that there are number of different supports for privacy breaches on information.

The date, time, and place of the departure is now going to be out there; the type of travel document used and the time of departure. All those things in the departure document create the probabilities in the snapshot of people and their consumer habits, as well as wealth and other things. That is one of the reasons why when people get phone calls, no one is there. It is a computer calling and it hangs up because it is recording the probability of someone being there when a telephone solicitor calls later. The point being is this information is important for that.

The type of travel documents and credit card uses are categorized and sold later as part of the credit card agreement to track purchasing behaviour. The sophistication of all those things can be used for fraud.

In terms of privacy breaches in the public service, it is not a conspiracy. Revenue Canada has had breaches. Families' children names and social data have been given up. We have heard of breaches in Citizenship and Immigration, indigenous affairs, correctional services, public services, defence. We have seen what has happened in Veterans Affairs, RCMP, just to name a few. The Privacy Commissioner has been clear on this as well.

I will be looking forward to getting a better understanding of how our privacy laws are going to protect these data, how the U.S. is going to protect it, and more important, how Canadians are going to have recourse for privacy data breaches.

We have not seen much of that in the bill and the responsibilities for it. It is unfortunate. One of the most important things we could have for Canadians is ensuring the government is not part of that information provided. Once it is out there, this will not just be credit card purchasing data information that is breached or some type of consumer related thing, this will be passport information. This is going to be data and information that is crucial.

In the past, we have seen misinformation used against Canadians even where there were laws in place. Maher Arar is a good example

with regard to governments sharing information and not having the proper recourse in place. It took numerous debates in the House, notices of motions, and eventually a settled lawsuit to protect and correct eventually what the governments had done to an individual and his family. These issues are serious and significant.

•(1625)

I want to connect it back as well to the border with respect to the practicality of this because again it is about the delay and the processing that is necessary. What happens if there is a problem related to the collection of this information? Do we shut down the border? I hope that is not the case.

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Madam Speaker, although I support Bill C-21, I have concerns about the ability of the Liberal government to implement any kind of data exchange, based on the Phoenix debacle alone. Because I have a border community similar to my colleague, we have seen what happens as new things get implemented, and there have been a number of new things. Six bridges have been consolidated under the current government. Wait times have increased for trucks. We have had trouble with even passenger line-ups. As we start exchanging more data and we see some of the racial profiling going on, I am very concerned about the amount of time and delays that will happen for individuals. Could my colleague comment on the situation he is seeing in Windsor?

Mr. Brian Masse: Madam Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's work on the border as well as her interest in this debate. One of the things we need to keep in mind is not only the personal time frame and the difficulties about crossing borders, but the cost to the Canadian economy.

I know the member will appreciate this. I have a truck driver who works for an automotive company. At the age of 17, he was caught smoking marijuana, so he has a federal criminal offence for it. He started working for an auto company at age 21 and is now in his 50s. To this day, despite not having any other criminal record or any other problem, we got called because the just-in-time delivery was delayed because of this old offence. That costs the Canadian economy tens of thousands of dollars, if not millions of dollars at times, depending on the amount, the content, and whether it shuts down a line. We have this problem and ironically that will not change later on when marijuana is legalized in Canada; the criminal record will still be there. That delay will then cause a delay in the booth, it will cause a delay in secondary, it will delay parts from getting back and forth, and it will also tell business owners not to invest on borders because they are concerned about it.

We have to ensure, if Bill C-21 goes ahead, that we ameliorate any problems by having the proper technology, equipment, and everything in there. That does two things. First, it ensures we do not slow it down anymore. Second, we protect privacy and there is accountability for that privacy to ensure nothing is expended on that front.

Government Orders

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would not want the member opposite to unknowingly leave wrong information on the record. The member talked about the Ambassador Bridge in his remarks. This weekend he and I drove across that bridge four times while we were at Canada–U.S. meetings. However, he said that the Government of Canada gave the owners of Ambassador Bridge a bridge. That is not quite accurate. What the Government of Canada approved was the owners of Ambassador Bridge to build a bridge under certain conditions with their own money. There is not a dime of federal money in that proposal. I would not want that wrong information on the record, so we should be clear on that. They need to meet certain conditions, and so they should.

However, my question really is related to the bill, and I agree with the member on his privacy concerns. In fact, I have been in people's houses who have been called by supposedly CRA, and CRA did come up on the phone. I picked up the phone and talked to the individual. I asked the person to tell me the name of the deputy minister and of course the person did not know. We have to be very careful about that.

With respect to Bill C-21, is the additional information being required not any different than what is happening now under the Customs Act with respect to the protection of information? The bill looks at other ways and other powers to examine any goods that are imported or exported illegally. Could the member answer that?

● (1630)

Mr. Brian Masse: Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the member for his work and for coming to Windsor to tour the facilities.

The fact is that tolls are taxes, and we will have to pay among the highest tolls. The Ambassador Bridge is owned by a private American billionaire, Matty Moroun, who was incarcerated for not following through with government contracts on the U.S. side. He just received a contract for a brand new bridge from the current government, with a 35% increase. Technically, under the terms and conditions, he has to tear down the existing bridge. However, what the government failed to expand upon is that the bridge is also designated in the United States as a heritage structure. They have told, unilaterally, the Congress and the Senate in the United States, that they have to tear down a heritage bridge. I am not sure, since the owner was actually incarcerated for the misappropriation of money related to the plaza, which he received from the federal government, that they will actually get them to do something about the Ambassador Bridge, which the billionaire does not want to do. There is a lot of exposure for the public and Canadian infrastructure and the economy related to this practice.

What I did not get a chance to talk about was the fact that a person has been appointed to lead the new public bridge project, which would be seen as a potential competitor, who has now derailed the process of the Gordie Howe International Bridge. He has quite a cozy relationship with this American billionaire, to the point that they had private meetings with the bridge company as he was leading the border authority. There seems to be some uncertainty related to whether he was technically representing the Prime Minister or the Minister of Transport or acting for himself. There have been a number of different comments back and forth. I want to thank him, though, as that will continue to go forward.

With regard to Bill C-21, the biggest issue is the increased amount of personal information. That is where the real problem is and the real vulnerability, because it is very detailed on passports.

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, I want to pick up on the theme of the importance of having trained workers at border crossings, such as airports, to ensure the security of Canadians. There is an example in Winnipeg right now. Winnipeg airport workers are on strike, and the Winnipeg Airports Authority, rather than going to the table to try to work out a deal with the workers so they can get back to work, has decided to use an aggressive legal strategy and to use scabs, or replacement workers, to operate the airport while the workers are on strike. That is putting the security of Canadians at risk, not just from a safety point of view but also in terms of the security of information and the security of the airport.

The Liberal government, incidentally, voted against a very good piece of anti-scab legislation, presented by another NDP colleague of mine, that would have helped bring a quick resolution to this labour conflict by stopping the strategy the Winnipeg Airports Authority has implemented of using scabs to draw out the strike and to put pressure on workers. It is incumbent upon the government to lean on the Winnipeg Airports Authority to get back to the table and to get a deal in place so that the airport can be run properly by the people who are trained to run it. That is absolutely what we want to see. The airport needs to be made to realize, and this goes against the airport privatization agenda of the government, that it is not in the business of making shoes or something else. The airport is an important strategic asset, and the government needs to make sure that the Winnipeg Airports Authority goes to the table and makes a deal with its workers to ensure the proper operation of the airport.

● (1635)

Mr. Brian Masse: Madam Speaker, at the end of the day, it is about having the proper work ethic and working with the airport authority and any others and laying out expectations that these practices cannot be used against the workers. The government often says that it is hands' distance away, but it is more like a choking distance, in many respects. That is not acceptable with regard to this and other practices related to workers.

Finally, replacement workers do not have the professional training to have all that personal information. That needs to be done by trained professionals.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): 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 Bow River, Infrastructure; the hon. member for Drummond, Official Languages; and the hon. member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, National Defence.

Government Orders

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to participate in this debate. I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Yellowhead.

[*Translation*]

It has been three months since we enjoyed being in the House. Over the past three months, we have had the opportunity to meet with the people in our ridings to participate in various activities and to hear from Canadians.

Moreover, during question period, it was clear that we Conservatives pay close attention to what citizens and business owners tell us. The current government can count on our utmost vigilance when it comes time to increase taxpayers' taxes.

I would be remiss if I failed to mention that today is a very emotional day for all parliamentarians. Earlier, we all paid a well-deserved tribute to the late hon. member of the House Arnold Chan.

I think the tributes we heard from the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, the leader of the NDP, the leader of the Green Party and the member for Joliette all show that when parliamentarians like Mr. Chan represent their constituents well and seek to move Canada forward with their own vision and the vision they share with their fellow citizens, their aim is true. The late Mr. Chan was a real inspiration to all of us.

I would also like to thank my leader, the leader of the official opposition and member for Regina—Qu'Appelle, who did me the honour of placing his trust in me and appointing me to his shadow cabinet as our Treasury Board critic. I had the pleasure of speaking with the current President of the Treasury Board—and it is not that I do not like him, just that he will no longer be in that position in two years' time—and we reminisced about the good old days when he was a member of the Conservative Party. Some people do make mistakes in life, but back in the day, he did not make any.

We are gathered here today to talk about Bill C-21, An Act to amend the Customs Act. I want to say right away, since we are all in good spirits as we come back to the House, that we support this bill.

The reason is quite simple. In fact, it was under the leadership of the government of the Right Honourable Stephen Harper that the first steps were taken in creating this bill. This all comes back to the historic border agreement reached in February 2011 between former prime minister Stephen Harper and former American President Barack Obama. That agreement had four stages. The first two have been completed. We would like to see the final two stages completed by this government. We are pleased that the current government is following the footsteps and the path set out by the previous Conservative government. This means that we can have greater flexibility in our relationships, both trade and personal, with the United States.

It is worth pointing out how extraordinary this is. Canada and the United States have proven that, while they may disagree from time to time, two great nations can agree on the essentials. That means a lot. As we all learned in elementary school, Canada and the United States share the longest undefended border in the world. That is really important. Our two nations may have disagreed back in 1812,

but as many people know even better than I, our relationship has generally been a fruitful and productive one since then, as former prime minister Mulroney, the man who made free trade between our two countries possible, would say.

I want to emphasize how amazing this is. The border between Canada and the United States is nearly 9,000 kilometres long, 8,891 kilometres to be exact. We have a 6,414-kilometre north-south border, as well as a 2,477-kilometre east-west border between Alaska and British Columbia and Yukon.

These statistics may interest those who play Jeopardy! and other board games. My point is that when you have a border that is close to 9,000 kilometres long, you need to work hard to maintain a good relationship. The people of our two great countries—more than 330 million there and 35 million here—have countless daily interactions with each other. Tens of thousands of Canadians and Americans travel back and forth across that 9,000-kilometre border.

Trade between our two great nations has also been extremely fruitful. We are talking about some \$400 billion in trade between Canada and the United States. This all must be done in a context where we can rely on the quality of our borders, which often gets many people up in arms, and rightly so, since as we saw this summer, our borders may not be as impermeable as some folks would like. We were all surprised to see thousands of people crossing, not at the usual border crossings, but rather through the woods near the official border crossings recognized by both countries. I am sure that we will have the opportunity to come back to this issue caused by this government's lackadaisical attitude when it comes to the question of migrants. However, that is not the focus of Bill C-21.

As I was saying, this bill stems from the agreement of February 24, 2011. Allow me to read a sentence that clearly sums up the purpose of this agreement:

To preserve and extend the benefits our close relationship has helped bring to Canadians and Americans alike, we intend to pursue a perimeter approach to security, working together within, at, and away from the borders of our two countries to enhance our security and accelerate the legitimate flow of people, goods, and services between our two countries.

As I was saying earlier, seeing as our trade relationship is worth more than \$400 billion, a good border is obviously a must. Since thousands of Canadians go to the United States and thousands of Americans come to Canada each day, we want to have good borders, but we also need to face up to the challenges of today.

Members are unlikely to forget the tragic events of September 11, 2001, when the world was plunged into terrorism and unspeakable darkness, when spineless cowards and hypocrites attacked completely innocent civilians. More than 3,000 people lost their lives in the attacks of September 11. In light of this new event, we needed a strong, serious approach to protect the safety of Canadians, Americans, and all the people of the free world.

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What came out of that was an agreement containing four specific areas of co-operation. The first was to address terrorist threats early, since there were specific targets. Did the people crossing the border have a terrorist past? Did they have harmful intentions? Were they there to commit crimes or were they good citizens wanting to contribute to interactions between our two countries? These are the questions that needed answers.

The second area was trade facilitation, economic growth, and job creation. The third was integrated cross-border law enforcement, or in other words, the government wanted to ensure that American laws did not infringe on Canadian laws. There had to be some consistency between the laws of the two countries, otherwise this would not work.

Finally, the fourth area was critical infrastructure and cybersecurity. As we know, this required some very unpleasant changes at border crossings. I think anyone who has driven across the border or has crossed by train or by air, knows that this vigilance is reassuring, particularly in our airports, even if it is sometimes onerous for well-intentioned tourists.

It is because of these four areas that today we have Bill C-21, which amends the Customs Act and seeks to better integrate our trade relations with the Americans and allow Canadians and Americans to move easily between the two countries while ensuring the vital security of the two countries.

With the new technologies that are available, it is easier for police and consulates to identify those with harmful intentions. They are able to identify anyone who has committed a crime or has demonstrated that they have harmful intentions, whether on social media or elsewhere. That is the price we pay to live in a free society where we can walk down the street without being worried that a bomb will go off next to us and to ensure that Canada and the United States continue to have an excellent relationship for centuries to come.

• (1645)

Mr. David de Burgh Graham (Laurentides—Labelle, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am always happy to ask questions of my colleague, the member for Louis-Saint-Laurent, on any subject.

I find this one very interesting. We spoke not too long ago with many of his colleagues about the issue of Bill C-21 and why it is essential that it be put in place in case situations arise like the Amber Alert that was issued in the Lachute area, for instance. There has been a lot of talk about privacy concerns, but no more data is being given. The bill simply allows us to obtain information already available abroad precisely so that we can better protect our own in cases like the one that happened last week.

Does my colleague agree this bill needs to pass with some urgency so that we can, in emergency cases, prevent someone from crossing the border without anyone knowing?

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Madam Speaker, as I said earlier, I am very happy to return to the House after a three-month absence, among other things to meet with my colleague from the Saint-Jérôme region whose riding's exact name escapes me at the moment. Is it a bit further north? It is a pleasure to see you again. I was in your neck of

the woods yesterday because highway 50 was closed, but that is another story.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Members need to address their comments to the Chair rather than to individual members.

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Madam Speaker, I could say that I find it far more enjoyable to talk to you than to other people, but I will not say that because I might get into trouble.

The member for Laurentides—Labelle raises a very good point. Emergencies are exactly why we need a proper security service. Decent people, honest citizens, the 99.999% of Canadians who have never broken the law in their lives and have a clean conscience have no cause to fear the security measures we are putting in place. On the contrary, they are intended to protect us from criminals and miscreants. If, by some misfortune, a person commits some wrongdoing and it unfortunately happens very close to the border so that they manage to sneak across undetected, that is when we absolutely need our police forces on both sides of the border to be equipped with the same tools to tackle the same problems and confront the same dangers, to ensure all law-abiding Americans and Canadians can live in free societies.

[English]

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is good to be back and to listen to my friend. I would not offer the opinion that I have missed him, but nevertheless it is good to be back.

I do not know whether the hon. member has addressed his mind to proposed section 92 of the bill in question. It says that the Canada Border Services Agency may collect information concerning the "surname" of the individual, "the type of travel document", the date and time, and where they are going in the United States. I am taking it that it is somewhat similar to the document that we all fill out when we are travelling to the States right now. Therefore, in some respects, this formalizes what we do right now.

Does the hon. member have any concern with how that information is collected, who receives the information, and how that information could be used?

• (1650)

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Madam Speaker, again, I am very pleased to see my friend on the opposite side.

It is quite interesting. As I rise this morning to defend the bill and answer questions from the government, technically the government should defend the bill, with us asking tough questions in such a case. This is a reverse situation. It is quite funny, and I like that. In two years when I am on the other side, I will be very well trained, because the Liberals let us take good questions. However, seriously, this is a real issue and I appreciate the quality of the question from the member.

Government Orders

This is a thin margin or the thin ice that we have between the personal information we want to protect and a tool that the police authorities should have to do their job correctly. It is always a challenge, and it will always be a challenge to address this specific issue and to play quite well on thin ice. We can ask Canadians if we have a good reputation on that. However, seriously, it will always be a challenge.

As a former journalist, I can tell members that I will rise and fight all of my life to protect personal information. On the other hand, as a citizen of the world, I want to live in a free city, in a free country, in a free society, without being afraid of terrorists.

Mr. Jim Eglinski (Yellowhead, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am glad to be here. I am pleased to rise in the House today to speak to Bill C-21, an act to amend the Customs Act. I will be sharing my time with the member for Louis-Saint-Laurent. I may not be as boisterous in some ways.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I want to remind the member, he has already shared his time with you. Therefore, he is not going to be able to share the time that you have been allocated.

Mr. Jim Eglinski: I will share it with someone else then.

I want to welcome everyone back from a busy summer break. I look forward to sitting in the House this fall, as we will debate some very important issues in this session. First, my condolences to the family and my colleagues across for the loss of our brother from Scarborough—Agincourt.

As my friend said earlier, on February 4, 2011, Prime Minister Stephen Harper and President Barack Obama agreed on a beyond the border declaration, establishing a new long-term partnership built upon a perimeter approach to security and economic competitiveness in both countries. The associated action plan outlined a range of initiatives. It also called for Canada and the United States to generate a joint beyond the border implementation, annually, for a three year period. This declaration has deepened co-operation at the border between Canada and the United States.

Under the declaration, we have seen a number of accomplishments and benefits from it. We exchange best practices. We have successfully launched an automated biometric-based system to counter identity fraud. We signed a historic agreement on land, rail, marine, and air transport pre-clearances. Also, as of 2015, we know we have had millions of people apply for NEXUS memberships to ease their transitions.

On March 10, 2016, our current Prime Minister and former President Barack Obama reaffirmed the commitment. I am pleased to see the Liberals embracing the work done by our former Conservative government. I thank them. Before the agreement, Canadian and American border agencies only collected information on people entering the respective country. This meant that they did not have a clear record of when people exited. After the agreement was made in 2011, and as part of a pilot program, both countries began to share entry information on third country nationals so that the record of a land entry into one country could be used to establish an exit record from the other. As a former law enforcement officer, I know this is very beneficial to the safety of Canadians. The bill

would expand the initiative from third country nationals to all travellers at air and land ports of entry.

The relationship between Canada and the United States goes way back. Since the Canada-U.S. free trade agreement came into force in 1989, Canada's two-way trade in goods and services with the United States has more than tripled. We share the world's longest undefended border, and we have the largest bilateral trade and investment relationship in the world. Every day, there is approximately 400,000 people and close to \$2 billion in trade travel between our two countries, by land, air, and sea. This is why it is important to keep the flow of legitimate trade and travel while ensuring the security and integrity of our borders.

While the bill amends the Customs Act, its implications have nothing to do with the collection of duties on imports. Rather, it strengthens the security of our borders and develops further co-operation between Canadian and American border agencies. Bill C-21 creates new legislation for exports in order to target smuggling. It adds a new export smuggling offence in section 159 of the Customs Act. It also expands the detention powers of border officers to detain goods that are being exported. Proposed section 97.25 would be amended to permit Canada Border Service Agency officials to detain any goods being exported that have been reported under section 95. These provisions would help combat smuggling, keep illegal exports from leaving the country, and enable the prosecution of smugglers.

As previously discussed, Bill C-21 would also enable the collection and sharing of biometric data on all persons as they enter and exit Canada. The new section 92 is added to the Customs Act to replace the old section 92, which was repealed in 1995. This new section would allow the collection of travellers' personal information, such as names, birth dates, and travel document numbers, and allow that information to be shared with American counterparts in accordance with an information sharing agreement between the two border agencies.

• (1655)

In regard to any concerns about protecting the privacy of personal information, it should be restated that this is already being done for third country nationals travelling across the border. According to the Canada Border Services Agency website, both countries securely share entry records of approximately 16,000 to 19,000 travellers daily with no impact on the traveller experience.

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Strict safeguards and agreements will also be in place to protect Canadians' personal information once it is gathered and shared under this legislation. The information collected and the entry-exit initiative will be incredibly useful not just for security purposes, but also to protect Canada's social programs to ensure that foreign travellers with extended stays in Canada pay the appropriate income tax if they are here long enough. For example, individuals who are in Canada for more than the legislated period of time are required to pay income tax. Since the CBSA will have both entry and exit data, the government will be able to calculate the number of days the individual was in Canada and whether they have to pay taxes.

Bill C-21 will not change any tax rules. Rather, it will ensure that all individuals who owe income tax pay it. Additionally, Canadians travelling abroad should be aware of the number of days they spend away from home. Under this legislation, biometric data can be shared with Employment and Social Development Canada for the purposes of administering or enforcing the Employment Insurance Act or the Old Age Security Act. The information collected will allow Employment and Social Development Canada to track Canadians' time spent outside the country to ensure their compliance with Canadian laws. For example, my home province of Alberta requires at least five months of residency in the province for someone to continue their health insurance coverage. Failure to comply means that an individual risks losing their access to health insurance. Again, Bill C-21 is not changing social program rules; rather, it helps to ensure compliance with laws that are already established.

Bill C-21 will also help to further combat identity fraud. As I previously mentioned, the new section will allow the collection of travellers' personal information, including the type of travel document that identifies the person, the name of the country or organization that issued the travel document, and the travel document number. By collecting, sharing, and verifying this information, border agents will be able to identify fraudulent documents and people trying to enter the country under a false name. This is not only important to protect against identity fraud, but also to protect our security and ensure that we know exactly who is entering our country.

In summary, I believe that Bill C-21 is a positive step in the right direction. It builds on Canada's long and historic partnership with the United States. It promotes the beyond the border declaration established with the United States by our previous Conservative government. Bill C-21 furthers the security of our borders and also safeguards our social programs. I want to thank the minister for tabling this piece of legislation and furthering the work of the previous Conservative government. I look forward to supporting Bill C-21.

• (1700)

Mr. David de Burgh Graham (Laurentides—Labelle, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to revisit an issue I brought up with the member's colleagues. Privacy concerns have come up quite a bit. I share these concerns generally, but I do not see them arising in the bill. I see the bill as about sharing information that already exists and, principally, getting information into the country that other countries have, which I think would be useful for our purposes.

My concern struck home a few days ago with an Amber Alert in my riding. I want to ensure that had that person gone south instead of north, we would have had the opportunity to catch him. I wonder if the member would comment on that.

Mr. Jim Eglinski: Madam Speaker, that is an excellent question. Yes, it would have helped the Amber Alert. I was a police officer for 35 years and Canada has been sharing information with the United States for centuries. I worked on a case in 1977 with the United States government on a drug deal. We worked with our counterparts in the Federal Bureau of Investigation and its Federal Drug Act. We solved a case that happened in my riding.

We shared information with the local community that helped us find criminals coming into the west coast. We worked together, so information is very important.

In Canada in the last 10 or 12 years, how many murder cases have been solved because of the sharing of DNA evidence? That is a prime example of cases that have come up in which we have prosecuted and convicted people because we have shared information back and forth.

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the support of the hon. member. I realize that I am having to play both opposition and government roles here while I ask questions.

The hon. member made reference to an interesting point about the sharing of information. I want him to think about it, not only as a member of Parliament but as a former police officer. He made reference to the sharing of information about his constituents leaving Canada and that the information may well be shared with the Alberta health authorities. Presumably that information may also be shared with immigration authorities on persons who are permanent residents and on the path to citizenship and have to be able to demonstrate that they have lived in Canada for x number of years.

I would be interested in the hon. member's comments on the sharing of information with other government agencies, which on the face of it seems like a good idea. Can the member think of other areas in which this information could, should, or should not be shared?

Mr. Jim Eglinski: Madam Speaker, I am not exactly sure where the member was going with that. If I look back at my riding, would the people of my riding be offended if information is shared on their travel status in United States or back in Canada? I do not believe so. I think in a lot of cases people probably would be a bit more cognizant in their travels if they knew that this system was in place. I remember speaking to a lot of my friends when they had over-stayed a bit in the States. I think now that if they knew we were watching them on both sides, they would probably be a little more attentive to their travel plans and follow through on them.

I believe that if the information shared between security agencies, whether in this country or between our country and United States or Europe, deals with our national security and terrorist activities and major crime issues, it will do only one thing: it will make it safer for the public out there.

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If we look back at the recent storms in the southern United States, it would have helped us to know how many Canadians were in United States at the time. It would give us and our government agencies an opportunity to set up the programs they think they may need if they know that there are 8,000 or 10,000 or 5,000 people there. I think it is very beneficial when we look at the safety of people in all aspects.

• (1705)

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Madam Speaker, the government introduced this bill in June of last year and then let it sit. There has been no substantive discussion of these changes to the Customs Act. It is certainly clear that the government now wants to maybe prorogue the House or rush a few bills through to try to somewhat enhance its legislative record. It is particularly shocking given that we are going into the third round of the NAFTA renegotiations that this important bill that the government said was critical to enhancing trade between Canada and the U.S. and that was introduced well over a year ago is only being substantively debated now.

In my remarks, I am going to touch on elements of Bill C-21. Also, in my role as an MP from southern Ontario concerned about the auto industry and our exports, and as the shadow critic for Foreign Affairs, I am going to talk about my concern with how the Liberal government handles the U.S. relationship. It is an important one. As I often say, the U.S. is our closest friend, our neighbour, biggest trading partner, and our strongest ally. I fear how the relationship with the United States has been steadily eroded under the government, regardless of what political stripe is in power in Washington. I will attempt to demonstrate that today, not just through rhetoric but through examples.

Bill C-21 is probably the most comprehensive change to the Customs Act in Canada for individuals. That is because the broadest interventions by Canadian officials at our border would be permitted by the changes to section 94 of the act, under which a border official could ask Canadians to answer "any questions" related to the Customs Act or any other act of Parliament. If Canadians were paying attention to this debate, they would be startled by that. Any questioning on any benefit, tax issue, or anything else could be part of the enhanced questioning at the border as a result of this bill. There has virtually been no debate or discussion of that for well over a year. That is what Parliament is for: it is to have the discussion.

What this bill would then do is allow Canadian authorities to share all of that information with our friends in the U.S. Having been part of the last government and a big supporter of the beyond the border initiative, as we can see from speakers today, the Conservatives are inclined to support this. However, so far we have had little debate. The Liberals are not being open with Canadians or the provinces on how that information will be safeguarded, how personal and private information will be safeguarded when needed. We already have serious problems removing children from no-fly lists, where double names and issues not related to public safety and security make it impossible for young children or, in some cases, veterans to remove themselves from lists. People should be concerned about how information is collected, shared, and stored. That is what Parliament is for: to debate these things so that Canadians will very much know what their government is doing.

The result of Bill C-21 would be an entry-exit data tracking system with sharing with the United States, basically amounting to a common entry-exit system between Canada and the U.S. This has been talked about within the confines of the beyond the border initiative. It has been talked about both in the previous government and the Liberal government.

Let me tell everyone what the current Minister of Public Safety, who is responsible for our border, said about this in the House of Commons in February 2011. He said the following when asking the Conservative minister of the time a question:

If we have a common entry and common exit system, does it not follow that Canada no longer has sovereign Canadian control over immigration and refugees? Canadians need to know what is at risk.

• (1710)

Certainly, the most experienced member of the Liberal government had concerns in 2011 on this exact system, that there was basically no debate on it, but now is being rushed through the House of Commons. I would like him to come to the House and describe how the provisions in the government's arrangements with the U.S. has satisfied the concerns he had at that time. That is his duty as a parliamentarian, particularly now that he is charged with this file. So far, I have not heard the concerns he expressed in 2011 addressed in this place.

It is interesting that this is happening in the context of a government that has actually relinquished its sovereign control over our border, to use the his language, "sovereign control". The Liberals had relinquished it when the Prime Minister said that anyone can come into our country without respecting our sovereign control over our border, and without respecting our well-established, world-recognized fair systems for refugees, asylum claims, and immigration. Perhaps the largest failure of the government has been on the sovereign control of our border. Therefore, I hope the Minister of Public Safety will come to the House and let us know how the concerns he had years ago about a common exit system has been addressed within the confines of thousands of people coming from the United States into Canada illegally.

As I have said constantly, it is okay for a country to enforce its laws. This is a basic element of sovereignty. It is okay for a country to say that it will have a rules-based system with respect to claiming asylum, refugees, and immigration issues. It is fair. In fact, it was a previous Liberal government that put into place the safe third country agreement with the United States to ensure we had a rules-based system on both sides of the border. However, so far in this debate, I have not heard from any government member how that is addressed in Bill C-21, at a time when it is fair to say our border is in crisis. Therefore, since the Minister of Public Safety, as an MP in 2011, expressed concern then about sovereign control over our border, perhaps he should be in the House and perhaps the bill should have been debated a few months after it was introduced and not well over a year later.

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However, I am not done with the hon. member, my friend, the Minister of Public Safety. In his supplemental on that same day in February 2011, here is what he said the government of the day should be achieving in return for a common exit system. He said:

Could the Prime Minister at least guarantee minimum gains for Canada? For example, will he get rid of U.S. country of origin labelling? Will there be no more buy American policies? Will we get hassle free access for durum, beef, pork and softwood? Will passport requirements be removed? Will Canada be exempt from the patriot act? What are the guarantees?

I am probably not delivering it with the gusto he did that day. He is experienced in gusto. However, what he was saying was that the beyond the border initiative should be a partnership with our friends in the United States. It should be two countries working together on areas of mutual interest and for Canada to make these changes, we should see that our national interests were being addressed in the United States concurrently.

If we look at the member for Regina—Wascana, as he was at that time, with his list of demands, those were the issues, minor irritants between Canada and the U.S. Fortunately, my friend who has retired from Battlefords—Lloydminster worked very hard on the rules of origin and issues related to beef, which are some of these issues we have with our closest friend.

● (1715)

However, it was clear the Minister of Public Safety wanted something in return for a common exit system. He wanted to see Canada's interest being advanced with our friends in the United States.

Is that happening now? I would say it is not. I sadly have to remind my friends in the House that when our Prime Minister introduced President Obama right in that spot, he introduced his bromance, his dudeplomacy friend. I have said countless times how embarrassed I was that day for our leader to introduce the leader of the free world, as the U.S. president is often called, in such terms. Quite frankly, it was immature.

How did that bromance benefit Canada beyond the state dinner, the media coverage, and magazine spreads from that state dinner? President Obama cancelled the Keystone XL pipeline within months of the new Liberal government.

We have Bill C-21 and Bill C-23 on border and pre-clearance changes. We are changing and legalizing marijuana, which will affect thousands of Canadians going to the U.S. The pre-clearance bill impacts that. The Liberals could not even get the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement to remove one question from its pre-clearance. We could not even get a question removed from the ICE screening in the United States, yet the U.S. is getting Bill C-21 and common entry exit. The Minister of Public Safety demanded that Canada's interest be advanced concurrently with such a radical move.

While the Conservatives support the beyond the border initiative, we support getting wins for Canada. Regardless of who is in the White House, our friends in the United States will respect us if we come there for a win, not just for a state dinner. In fact, the day he was in Washington, and I have mentioned this before because my friend from Yukon was part of the debate as the last session wrapped up, our Prime Minister committed to freezing between 10% and 20%

of the land mass and the ocean mass in the Arctic from any development or any work on that land without even consulting first nation leaders or territorial leaders.

He basically, with one stroke of a pen, or a tweet, blocked off northerners from developing their own economy. In the age of reconciliation, he gave a courtesy phone call to territorial leaders one hour before the event with President Obama.

I think people can understand why I am concerned. In the last two years we have been on the losing end of our most important relationship. As we are days away from the third round of NAFTA renegotiation, people can understand why I am concerned. The very fact that we are debating this in September 2017, when the bill was introduced in June 2016, just before the House rose, and there is virtually no debate, shows that the government is not putting the priorities of Canadians, with respect to trade and our friends in the U.S. as a priority.

I would remind the House that it was only 2011 when the Minister of Public Safety basically had an itemized list of wins he was expecting the Conservatives to have before ever supporting a common entry and exit system in beyond the border. We should hold him to the same list.

Let us switch to this Parliament, because that is too much from 2011. Really, the only substantive contribution I have seen before the debate this week to debate over Bill C-21 has been from the MP for Orléans who is charged with the American relationship. He is the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and is tasked in that role. He is a friend of mine. He is a retired general. I think the logic was to have him leverage some of those relationships to build on the American relationship.

What did that member list as the five priorities he saw as the lead with the United States? He mentioned Bill C-21 and border security as one of his issues. He predicted a thinning of the border, as he described it.

● (1720)

With the events in Quebec and Manitoba in the last eight months, a disappearance of the border might be a better description. What the member described as a thinning of the border he put as a priority and Bill C-21 was brought forward.

What were his other issues? Regulatory co-operation was one. We support a regulatory co-operation council. I spoke in Washington on that as parliamentary secretary. We will support the government on streamlining regulations to allow the same approach to pesticides and a whole range of issues, from our farmers right through to producers and distributors.

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The member's second priority was energy security and environment. That is interesting, because under the member's government, the U.S. cancelled Keystone XL. The new administration appears to be bringing it back, following the science and the fact that there are going to be jobs on both sides of the border and access for our goods.

The government has been weak in that area, as I mentioned, border security in Bill C-21 and NORAD. In the last few days we have heard testimony at defence committee about North Korea's capabilities in the last few months. My friend from Scarborough—Guildwood shares some of my concerns with respect to that regime, yet the Prime Minister has closed the door to modernizing NORAD with respect to ballistic missile defence. This at a time when we know that the capability of the North Koreans could cause intense and incredible harm to North America. We heard our own generals say in that construct that the way things stood now there was nothing that said the U.S. would need to respond if Canada was threatened because we had opted out of that option, and the Prime Minister has already closed the door. The member for Orléans, who has listed this as a priority, should remind the Prime Minister of that.

The government's fifth priority was empowering women entrepreneurs as the member listed it.

All five issues are important but I have not seen them advanced by the government in any meaningful way since its election. That causes me great concern.

On September 23, we will be hosting our friends from Mexico and the United States for the third round of NAFTA renegotiations. I had a good talk with the Minister of Foreign Affairs today. She knows how much respect I have for her. I am glad she is in that role in the Liberal cabinet.

However, I am concerned that the government's list of priorities going into these negotiations does not mention rules of origin for the automotive industry. U.S. free trade in many ways grew out of Brian Mulroney's work on NAFTA and U.S. free trade before that, but I would remind my friends that it grew out of the Auto Pact from the 1960s.

My dad worked in the auto industry, including at Ste-Thérèse, which is why I was born in Montreal. The auto industry has been integrated on a North American basis, a Canada-U.S. basis in particular since the 1960s. That is how free trade started on this continent, yet the auto industry was not listed as a priority.

Softwood lumber, our perpetual irritant with the U.S., was not mentioned as a priority in that speech. Our Conservative government was able to secure a deal on softwood lumber but so far the Liberals have had trouble with this issue.

Our resource industry writ large, the largest employer of indigenous Canadians, was not listed as a priority. Mexico has put its resource industry as a priority. We have listed a range of other important issues, but we have placed them as priorities when in the past they have been side agreements negotiated after rules of access, export, and everything else was negotiated.

With a government that has seen the erosion of Keystone XL, has seen the NAFTA agreement put forward for full renegotiation, has seen a U.S. government increasingly getting what it sees as a priority

with Canada, including intellectual property changes, a whole range of things, we do not see Canadian interests being advanced with our friends and most important ally. That is concerning and it should concern the millions of Canadians, who rely on trade with the United States, about their future. It should concern Canadians that when the threat is evolving and NORAD is being modernized we are not part of those discussions.

• (1725)

In 2011, it concerned the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness that a common exit system would be negotiated without clear wins for Canada. I do not see those wins. I do not see the debate. I would like to see the government put Canadian priorities forward for a change.

Ms. Leona Alleslev (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for a very comprehensive contribution to the discussion, not only on this bill but on any number of things that the government agenda is putting forward. However, specifically with this bill, if I understand the member correctly, he believes it has gone too far. He is concerned that it would put our sovereignty at risk. I wonder if he could share with us some of the specific checks and balances that he would like to see in this bill to mitigate that risk.

Hon. Erin O'Toole: Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill for her service to Canada. She might have missed that I did say we are going to support this bill. I do support the beyond the border initiative, and if she wants me to underscore more for this place, I will do that now. My concerns and my itemized list that I would like to see are similar to what I have suggested her colleague, the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, was asking for back in 2011.

My wider concern is not that we are working with the United States on the border, but that at a time when presidential orders in Washington are leading to thousands of people illegally crossing into Canada and we are not even addressing that issue, we are going to sign on to a common entry and exit system. That certainly would not have passed muster back in the days of bluster of the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, as he was then in the opposition.

Government Orders

Where are Canadians' assurances with respect to the Hondurans who are in the United States on a short period of time? There is a chance that they will start coming into Canada, because they have a Prime Minister who has flaunted our systems and a government that is unwilling to create a rules-based process. We have the most substantial update to customs legislation in a generation, and I see no plan for our border. I would like to see clear issues in Canada's interest, including respect for our border, in this package with this bill, or at least articulated by the government. At a time when the government is asking us to pass something that is a key priority for the United States, I want to see Canadian priorities advance at the same time.

[*Translation*]

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

My question is about the dangers associated with the fact that more and more information is shared with foreign countries and governments. When confidential information about Canadians is shared with these foreign countries and governments, our government no longer has any control over its protection. Furthermore, Canadians have no recourse in case of a breach of the information system of a foreign country. As a result, Canadians could find themselves at the mercy of ill intentioned persons.

Does my colleague share the concern of many Canadians about the fact that we are sharing more and more information with foreign governments, in this case, the United States, on the travel history of our constituents? Information on entry into and departure from the United States, and even potentially on entry to and departure from other countries, will be handed over to the Americans.

Does my colleague share the concern over the potential for this information to be compromised, since it will be handed over to a foreign government and there can be no recourse whatsoever for Canadians should anything happen?

• (1730)

[*English*]

Hon. Erin O'Toole: Mr. Speaker, there are certainly a lot of issues being advanced, and he has raised an important one, the privacy and the sharing of information beyond the partner in the United States. I may seem like I am picking on my friend the Minister of Public Safety, but I will continue his question from February 2011. Back then, he expressed the same concern as my friend from Sherbrooke. He said, "On the question of privacy, what additional personal information will Canadians be required to disclose and what are the guarantees against cases of abuse like Maher Arar?" That, of course, happened under their watch. He went on to say, "Before surrendering Canadian borders, sovereignty and privacy, will the government bring full details of any proposed agreement before Parliament for debate and approval?" That is essentially what I am asking for now, and I think it is what my friend is asking for.

We have seen nothing since this was tabled in June of last year. There is some debate today, and I appreciate that my colleagues here are participating in this debate. However, we have not heard from the government as to how it is going to handle this with respect to information sharing. It has yet to solve the no-fly list, particularly kids on the no-fly list who are stuck on it because of a name

duplication. If we think allowing that system to stay broken keeps us safe, there are a number of issues already with respect to travel between Canada and the U.S. that are not being addressed by the government. By going to a common entry-exit system, it is only more complicated.

During the course of my remarks, I asked to see how Canadian priorities were being advanced at the same time that we are responding to a key American priority. I would also like to see a detailed plan on these privacy elements, on this information sharing, on how the minister is going to fix the no-fly issue for children, veterans, and other Canadians, and on what timeline.

As I said, I am in a position where I support the beyond the border initiative, and I know that most of my colleagues on this side of the House do, until the NDP. It is the detail. So far, we have not heard this from the Prime Minister. We saw a lot of photos from that state dinner, but I have not seen Canadian interests being advanced, and that is what we want to see.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I hope my hon. friend from Durham will allow me to briefly correct a misinterpretation, which is often repeated, of the impact of the U.S. State Department environmental impact statement on Keystone, to which he referred. It was very specific and price related as to whether having Keystone pipeline approved would expand greenhouse gases from the oil sands or not. It depended on whether those expansions would have happened anyway because they were profitable, which only happens when the price of a barrel of oil is over \$80 a barrel. When it is below that, as it had been bouncing around when Barack Obama disapproved it, the U.S. State Department advice would have been that this would expand greenhouse gases because the pipeline itself is not infrastructure and the expansion of the oil sands would not have gone ahead regardless. Therefore, it was a price-dependent issue.

I want to ask the member a specific question on Bill C-21. I do not think he mentioned this part, but I am concerned about an amendment that would add a new section 94. It says:

Every person who is leaving Canada shall, if requested to do so by an officer, present themselves to an officer and answer truthfully any questions asked by an officer in the performance of their duties under this or any other Act of Parliament.

It sounds to me that it is suspiciously like an opportunity for a fishing expedition and keeping someone there unreasonably. I wonder if he would agree with me that this section might be better amended with words like "reasonable questions relevant to travellers", or something that keeps it from being abused.

Government Orders

• (1735)

Hon. Erin O'Toole: Mr. Speaker, it is good to hear from my friend from Saanich—Gulf Islands. I want to compliment her on her eloquent remarks today remembering our friend Arnold Chan. She is also very crafty to work Keystone XL into the clarification that she is providing to the House. Certainly the price of oil is very determinant on markets, but a lot of the invested costs of these resource development projects are billions of dollars, so they are planned to ride through the fluctuation. She certainly knows we disagree on that issue.

I am in fact a little disappointed. I know she listens to the debate and participates very well. I did mention section 94 and quoted it at the beginning of my speech. Both of us being Dalhousie law graduates, which we talk about a lot, we get into the fine details of things. I would like to at least have the government explain the immense breadth of that amendment. There might very well be good reason for it. Certainly including all acts of Parliament makes it very broad. The concern she is raising I raised at the beginning of my remarks, which is the concern about lack of transparency on this. It was tabled well over a year ago and there has been minimal debate. We now have NAFTA renegotiations under way. We do not see Canadian interests being advanced, and I would like the government to advance them.

Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Battle River—Crowfoot.

Mr. Speaker, I would first like to welcome you and all my colleagues back to the House of Commons. I realize that there are lots of priorities my constituents would like to see us discussing today. One, of course, would be the proposed changes to taxes for farmers and small business people. However, I will limit my comments and presentation to Bill C-21, because there is an example I wanted to talk about that would have been dealt with, possibly successfully, had this legislation been passed earlier.

We are going to support Bill C-21. It is a good piece of legislation. It is necessary, as we look beyond our borders and our agreements to try to make the border thinner, that we have the proper mechanisms and tools in place to do that. We have to make sure that our border security officers, on both sides, have the proper data and are reading consistent data in a format to make proper decisions.

One of the concerns I have is not about the legislation itself but about the implementation of the legislation. I want to make sure that the government actually gives it the funding it deserves and that the border security guards actually have the computers they need to do the work they have to do. For example, border guards are using antiquated equipment. They do not have proper computers. They do not have proper personnel. Their staffing levels are low. We are seeing long lineups, and in that situation, they are dealing with angry and frustrated people. They are making decisions without having that data and information at their fingertips. I want to make sure that the proper funding and resources are in place for our border security officers to actually do their jobs properly.

The other thing is cybersecurity. I want to make sure that the data they are gathering on Canadians as they go across the border or leave the country is properly protected. I also want to make sure that any of the departments using that data safeguard it, whether it is to

prevent employment insurance fraud or welfare fraud or any other type of fraud. We have Canadians, claiming to be in Canada, who are collecting benefits and are not actually in Canada. I want to make sure that our government puts in place the proper safeguards to prevent that information from being hacked. That is private information and should not be generally available to anyone. Those are some of the concerns I have about the bill.

I want to move on to what I wanted to talk about. A friend of mine met a lady and got married. She was not a Canadian. They had a child. A couple of years later, they went through a nasty divorce, and I mean nasty in the worst sense. A court order from the judge basically said that this lady was not allowed to take the child out of the country. They took away their Canadian passports. She proceeded to get a passport in her native country for herself and for the child. She ignored the court order and took the child out of the country. She kidnapped the child, and my friend has not seen his child in seven years. If we had had legislation like this in place, I would like to think it would have caught her. It would have allowed this father to actually spend some time with his child. Now he has not spent any time with his child. He knows where she is but has no contact with her and has no ability to reach out to her to do the things fathers like to do with their kids. If we had had proper legislation in place seven years ago, this could have been prevented.

We see many examples where sharing information has been a benefit to both Canadians and Americans. There was a terrorist attack just a few years ago that was thwarted after the FBI shared information with the RCMP and Canadian security forces. It prevented people from being killed. We have many examples of when we all benefit when we have information in front of us and use it wisely, both in Canada and the U.S. Therefore, we should not be scared to see this type of legislation move forward, because it is in our best interest and for our personal security to make sure that these things happen.

I remember trying to help my friend Bill get his daughter back and all the roadblocks he faced. It tells us that once that happens, it is too late. We cannot turn the clock back. We cannot change it. There is no mechanism to go back and make it right.

Therefore, let us make sure, as we move forward with a piece of legislation like this, that we actually put together a proper implementation program to make sure that not only do we have a good piece of legislation but that it is implemented properly and used and resourced properly so it can be effective and the results are what was intended.

Government Orders

• (1740)

My speech today will be relatively short. However, having listened to all my colleagues in the House today on both the Liberal and Conservative sides, I would say they have done a good job presenting the different aspects of this bill. I compliment them for doing that. However, I want to give examples of what could happen when we get legislation right and what could happen when we do not have proper legislation in place.

I will be supporting this bill. I look forward to seeing it move through the House and committee. I also look forward to the Liberal government's properly implementing this bill. If it does, Canadians will be the beneficiaries of this piece of legislation.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to use this opportunity to apologize to my friend from Durham because I missed the beginning of his speech where he did a very clear job in speaking to how section 94 is overbroad.

Also, I thank my colleague for raising the issue of tracking the movement of children in and out of Canada. I had a constituent who was trying to use the international convention for returning children who have been abducted outside of custodial agreements, to which Canada is a member. It is not easy. I had a constituent who was dealing with the U.S. I would have thought that it would honour the orders of the Supreme Court of British Columbia, but I can say from experience that the state of Vermont thinks that orders from the Supreme Court of British Columbia matter as much as a toy in a Cracker Jack box. It is really difficult.

Tracking the movement of children is another aspect of this. Therefore, I would like to give my colleague an opportunity to say how he would see this act improved, because the bill, as written, would create a record for the movement of children.

Mr. Randy Hoback: Mr. Speaker, it comes back to the implementation of the act and what the government does with it. We now have the tools in front of us for border security officers to do the job. However, if they do not have the proper computers, funding, and staffing levels, and it becomes part of a pile of paper that they have to thumb through every day to find out what is in it, the legislation will not be effective. We currently have amazing technology in this world. New apps are created every day in North America. We see new products and features coming forward. If we embrace and utilize this technology to focus on the issues before us, we will have results. That is why I am encouraging the government to put the appropriate resources in place to get the results we require.

• (1745)

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his support for this bill. It allows for an atmosphere in which we can debate some of the more subtle things and, possibly, the law of unintended consequences with respect to this. He gave a good example of how this law could possibly track the movements of an estranged spouse in the kidnapping of a child. This information would be given at the border or the point of purchase of a ticket. I am not sure where, when or how, and it is reasonable to consider that this information would be shared with foreign governments, sub-national governments, and agencies.

As the law of unintended consequences applies in all matters, I would suggest a couple of examples. For instance, it is very difficult for people to have their name removed from the no-fly list. Also, NEXUS was to be a means by which people who have already done their interviews with the RCMP go through the border at a rapid pace, but is something else. The member and I share that line at the Ottawa airport every Thursday or Friday. With respect to the law of unintended consequences, are there concerns at this point that this information could be used in a manner that would make it difficult for the citizens we are most concerned about?

Mr. Randy Hoback: Mr. Speaker, I understand the member's concerns. However, if the officials involved have the proper resources in place, when accidents do happen they can address them, rather than having them sit on someone's desk for three months, six months, or nine months and subject to a bureaucratic process to fix them. Putting the proper resources in place, such as funding, staffing, and having a process to fix any bugs relatively quickly, would ensure that the legislation would do what it is intended to do.

The other concern I have is with respect to cybersecurity. As the member said, we are possibly sharing this information with other countries or other departments. What assurance do we have that they are protecting that information for Canadians? I want to make sure that the government has the proper safeguards and vetting processes in place to ensure those countries and departments have the proper cybersecurity. We want to ensure that information is secured properly and efficiently. We do not want to see any mistakes made. If we do this right, the number of mistakes will be limited to a few.

Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to be back in this place this fall. As the first day back, I feel like we should have the *Welcome Back, Kotter* song playing in the background.

Like many others, I would like to express my sincere sympathies to Arnold Chan's family and to the members of the Liberal caucus for their loss of a colleague. I think all members of Parliament feel the loss, but they will certainly feel it much more over there. Our best wishes to all those who are feeling that today.

I am also pleased to participate in this debate today on the second reading of Bill C-21, an act to amend the Customs Act. I have enjoyed the debate today. We will be supporting the bill. However, as stated by the questioner from Toronto, there are unintended consequences of which we need to be aware. The devil is in the details. How would some of these regulations be met?

The bill would amend the Customs Act to authorize the Canada Border Services Agency to collect biographical information on all travellers, including snowbirds, and Canadian citizens as they leave for Florida or Arizona. In that regard, the CBSA has a discretionary authority. The agency may collect this information if it wishes, but it is not required to do so. The act authorizes officers to require goods exported from Canada to be reported. The duty to report exports will also empower Canada's border security agency to examine the goods that are exported.

Government Orders

Bill C-21 would also give two exemptions concerning the exportation of goods. Goods on board a conveyance, such as a ship, a truck, or some transportation vehicle, that enter and then leave Canadian waters do not have to be reported. Goods on board a conveyance that proceeds from one place to another inside Canada do not need to be declared.

The bill would amend section 159 of the Customs Act to make it an offence to smuggle or attempt to smuggle goods out of Canada. It includes whether the attempt to remove goods from Canada has been done clandestinely or not. It includes any goods that are subject to duties. It also includes goods that are prohibited from being exported or goods that are controlled or regulated.

The Conservative Party wants to support Bill C-21. The legislation addresses a long-standing priority for our party in maintaining stronger border security for Canada. It also acknowledges that abuse occurs in the export industry and it works toward ensuring that entitlement programs designed for exporters are not abused. The former Conservative government treated Canada's border security very seriously. With Bill C-21, Canadians can see that the current government is building on and following through on work that was done in the former parliament. I commend the government for that.

Bill C-21 will have benefits for many diverse communities across Canada's economy and our labour force. This initiative is good news for hard-working taxpayers as it will cut down on employment insurance and benefit cheats. The provisions of Bill C-21 that spell out the exchange of traveller information will support Canada's law enforcement and national security operations. The benefits of this program may include the strengthening of Canada's immigration and border management, national security, law enforcement, and program integrity in Canada.

The ability to inspect goods exiting Canada will also deter criminals from smuggling illegal and controlled goods out of our country. This legislation has the potential to save an estimated \$20 million a year from those who are unduly receiving entitlement programs while they are not even in Canada.

Bill C-21 is part of the beyond the border action plan, which was jointly declared in 2011 by then prime minister Stephen Harper and then president Barack Obama.

• (1750)

The beyond the borders action plan establishes a long-term partnership respecting perimeter security for both our countries. The joint declaration set out the following key areas of co-operation between the United States and Canada: addressing threats early; trade facilitation, economic growth, and jobs; integrated cross-border law enforcement; and critical infrastructure and cyber security.

According to the action plan, the information-sharing initiative, also known as the entry-exit initiative, was to be implemented by June 30, 2014, under the original timeline. The current Prime Minister announced the agreement with the United States to fully implement the system to exchange basic biographical information in March 2016, following his first official visit to the United States.

According to the Liberal government, the entry-exit initiative will respond to the outbound movement of known high-risk travellers

and their goods prior to their actual departure from Canada by air. This will be an effective measure in Bill C-21. It will help our nation deal with fugitives from justice, registered sex offenders, human smuggling and drug smugglers, exporters of illicit goods, and more.

It has already been talked about today, but parents and other family members will be pleased that we will now be better equipped to respond more effectively in times of very sensitive situations. This includes what we have talked about here in the House today, Amber Alerts and helping find abducted children and runaways. My colleague from Prince Albert told us the story of his friend to which that had happened.

The changes proposed in Bill C-21 will prevent the illegal export of controlled, regulated, or prohibited goods from Canada and would bolster Canada's trade reputation. We are taking measures to help our customers overseas and in the United States and we are saying that we are working hard to control goods leaving our country.

I chair the Standing Committee on Public Accounts. In the fall of 2016, our Auditor General report included a chapter auditing the beyond the borders action plan. The Auditor General reported on the performance of this initiative by the Canadian and the American governments. We know that this has been a very successful initiative.

We also learned at committee from witnesses appearing on behalf of the various federal government departments that are tasked with implementing the beyond the borders action plan that it was a very massive undertaking. We need to be aware that in an undertaking that is already massive, we are adding more information and certain expectations around that information.

The cross-border action plan has many moving parts. It has been a very difficult action plan to develop and deploy, yet we heard about successes. We heard public servants' strong commitment to ensuring that the goals are met. We heard that everyone is confident in success, and as I have said, we already know of this success.

The recommendations by the Auditor General were, as always, accepted by all departments. Every one of the Auditor General's recommendations was agreed to. Our committee found that the public servants who work every day to protect our borders are serious about their work and willing to improve their reporting, cost forecasting, performance indicators, and communication among responsible departments and agencies. It was encouraging to hear the testimony of these public servants.

There are problems, however, and some of them are larger and more difficult than others. Throughout the questioning by members of Parliament from all sides, we heard acknowledgements of the difficulties and real plans to overcome them. All parties agreed to our request to have progress reports. There were pledges by specific witnesses to complete certain tasks in specific time frames and report the progress to our committee, but again, with every little bit of data that was collected, there were difficulties around passing that data on to the proper channels.

Government Orders

Bill C-21 will help Canada identify individuals who do not leave Canada at the end of their authorized period of stay, i.e., visa overstays. The bill includes measures that will provide decision-makers with an accurate picture of an individual's travel history. Decision-makers include border security agents, stakeholders in any industry, and more. This will bring integrity back to our standards, but again, the devil is in the details when we are dealing with our own privacy information.

● (1755)

In conclusion, I think that Bill C-21 is a step in the right direction, but there are many questions that remain unanswered, the question of unintended consequences, and the question of cybersecurity and what other countries do with the information that we have. I look forward to the remainder of this debate. I want to learn more about this bill and the government's answers to some of those questions. For now, our party supports Bill C-21 generally and in theory.

Ms. Cheryl Hardcastle (Windsor—Tecumseh, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Sherbrooke.

I appreciate this opportunity to speak to the concerns that have come to the fore with Bill C-21, an act to amend the Customs Act. My riding of Windsor—Tecumseh is strategically located for astute observation on this bill, and is located a stone's throw from the United States border. As a cross-border community, many of us regularly cross the border to Detroit, for a multitude of reasons. We have family ties, and business and employment ties, as befits our trading-nation relationship, and we enjoy taking in games from professional league sports, with the Tigers, Red Wings, Lions, and Pistons about a half-hour away, more or less, depending on the venue.

I am greatly concerned about the potential consequences of this legislation. With Bill C-21, Canadians would have more of their personal information collected, not by U.S. border agents but by Canadian authorities, and shared with U.S. border agents. This bill would allow Canadian and U.S. authorities to electronically exchange biographic information on people departing and arriving in each other's country. Indeed, it seems that Bill C-21's primary purpose is to introduce the legislative requirement to collect biometric data for all persons exiting Canada. Yes, that is right. Canada would be doing to each and every one of its citizens what the United States presently does to its non-citizens.

Information collected would be the same as the information that the Canada Border Services Agency already collects for Canadians returning to Canada. It would be gathered by the CBSA at every border crossing, including land, sea, and air. However, the thing is that the Canada Border Services Agency was never required to collect information on those exiting Canada, as that is the responsibility of border authorities of the country being entered into. There is the very real concern that Canadian authorities are being asked by a foreign government to hand over personal information of Canadians. Frankly, that is not something that should be the responsibility of the Canada Border Services Agency. Our border agency's sole purpose is to protect Canada, not to hand over Canadian information to foreign authorities.

The United States is a large and powerful and, I should add, well-resourced nation. Americans can take care of their own responsi-

bilities on their side of the border, and we should let them. New Democrats take the personal information and privacy concerns of Canadians very seriously. We only wish that the governing party of this country did so. The Liberals must not ignore recommendations of a wide variety of experts and the very real concerns of Canadians. Acting on security concerns and ensuring a strong and effective Canada–U.S. border must not infringe on the preservation of Canadians' rights and freedoms. Information gathered by the CBSA should not be shared with agencies outside of Canada unless under extenuating circumstances. In such circumstances where information must be shared, existing mechanisms are already in place between Canadian law enforcement agencies and their counterparts in other countries.

As I have mentioned, as a local cross-border community, we see issues in the local news every night regarding such sharing of information. In light of the Trump administration's recent troubling actions, such as issuing discriminatory immigration executive orders and suspending the privacy rights of non-Americans, this initiative more than ever threatens the basic rights of Canadian travellers.

New Democrats understand the importance of maintaining a fluid land border crossing with the United States, our number one trading partner. Without providing additional security for Canadians, this bill could mean longer delays at the borders.

Another point of concern in this bill is its potential to penalize business people who travel regularly across borders. Those who may spend a reasonable period of time outside of Canada could potentially be snagged in various legal issues, limiting benefits to them.

● (1800)

As this bill would amend the Customs Act, I would like to make due note on some of the matters that affect goods crossing the border. In subsection 95(1), Bill C-21 would change practices on the reporting of goods travelling across the border so that all exported goods would be reported at any time without a specific need to prescribe such reporting. Goods already on conveyance leave and then re-enter Canadian jurisdiction while proceeding directly from one location within Canada to another location within Canada. That means an officer could order the goods covered by exemptions to be subjected to reporting.

This bill also sets out the reasons for the detention of imported and exported goods that have been reported under section 95, as well as the ability for the minister to direct any detained goods imported or exported under section 95 to be sold upon 30 days' written notice. It is important for us to take heed here.

The new section 94 has already been mentioned. That section 94 of the Customs Act would create an obligation on persons leaving Canada to potentially answer questions by the CBSA officer:

Government Orders

Every person who is leaving Canada shall, if requested to do so by an officer, present themselves to an officer and answer truthfully any questions asked by an officer in the performance of their duties under this or any other Act of Parliament.

This new requirement is likely to be fraught with legal peril. It would seemingly provide the CBSA with the ability to make a determination as to whether an individual is telling the truth. This may mean continuing questioning that could be construed as relevant or irrelevant, also known as a fishing expedition.

A determination of something other than the truth could ensnare the traveller with potential offences under the Customs Act. For example, CBSA officers may assume that individuals have provided false answers, even when responses are the result of simple mistakes. While we can all expect persons to provide truthful answers to our agents, the fact of the matter is that the CBSA would be able to take the position that a person has provided false answers and pursue the individual for committing an offence under the Customs Act. The potential for a Canadian citizen to get caught up in legal proceedings on the basis of an honest mistake increases dramatically.

In the case of extenuating circumstances where such information needs to be shared, for example in a criminal case, as I have already mentioned, the relevant police agencies such as the RCMP and CSIS, as well as law enforcement agencies locally, are already in contact with their international counterparts. In these cases, existing legislation and practices are already applicable.

Canadians are wary of their personal information being shared among government agencies and Canada's foreign partners because of previous acts passed, such as the Harper government's bill, Bill C-51. The current government's plans to collect and share even more personal information without proper independent oversight of our national security agency is of great concern to New Democrats. The authorities given to the CBSA under subsection 92(1) are not mandatory. The CBSA would be given discretionary authority in that it may collect this information if it wishes to do so. This would create the very serious risk of racial and/or religious profiling, when the CBSA decides whether information on a traveller leaving Canada would be collected and shared. With racial profiling already on the increase in the United States, with everyone from rock bands and celebrities being turned away at its border, this is one fire that we in Canada have no business stoking.

• (1805)

It is the responsibility of the government to protect public safety and defend civil liberties—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Questions and comments. The hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech and I would really like to hear the conclusion. I happen to think that the situation of a riding located on the American border could enlighten us all on this subject.

[*English*]

Ms. Cheryl Hardcastle: Mr. Speaker, I was just finishing up. I would like to reiterate that it is the responsibility of the government to protect public safety and to defend civil liberties, and that accountability is fundamental to those.

The government's plan to collect and share even more personal information without proper independent oversight of our national security agencies is reason for us to now answer the urgent need to modernize our Canadian privacy framework as well.

• (1810)

Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC): Mr. Speaker, one concern I had, and I just want to know what the member's thoughts are on this, is about the actual implementation of the agreement and making sure that our border security officers are properly trained and have the resources to do the job. We do not want to see a scenario where all of a sudden, we have all sorts of new technology with no training and no people to run the new technology, which would actually create even more lineups at the border, more backups, more delays in deliveries, and stuff like that.

Could the member explain to this House her concerns about that and what she thinks should be done to make sure that this does not happen?

Ms. Cheryl Hardcastle: Mr. Speaker, I am from a cross-border community, so I am well aware of the inadequacies that came from government cuts and reorganizations in the past. We have been subject to that in our area.

The problems we have with the border are fixable problems. I do not want to make that part of this issue with Bill C-21. We are putting the cart before the horse. Before we talk about the smooth implementation of it, there has to be consultation and some tangible changes made to it. That means that the public accountability piece has to be included, and we have to follow and listen to consultations with the law experts in Canada. At this point, this is something I would oppose.

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is really important to get an idea of the types of people who are crossing and to expand upon the vulnerabilities in data-sharing.

At the Windsor-Detroit corridor, each day around 10,000 health care professionals travel into the United States: doctors, nurses, radiologists, and other professionals. I would ask the member about the importance of making sure that their privacy is protected.

Ms. Cheryl Hardcastle: Mr. Speaker, being the member of Parliament for the riding next door to mine, he has a heightened awareness of the synergy between the cross-border communities of Windsor and Detroit and also about privacy concerns when we are talking about our own Canada Border Services Agency collecting data.

I would add that besides the privacy concerns for these individuals as they move back and forth and efficiency, we have a new and intangible threat that comes from computers being hacked.

These are huge issues that we just cannot dismiss.

Government Orders

Mr. Randy Hoback: Mr. Speaker, I am glad the member brought up privacy. I think it is very important that we have a proper balance between privacy and the right to have information.

We actually had a situation when we received information from the FBI that prevented a terrorist attack from happening in Ontario. How does the NDP balance that? The NDP says that they are not going to share information because it is Donald Trump, yet the United States shared information with us that prevented a terrorist attack. How does she balance that?

Ms. Cheryl Hardcastle: Mr. Speaker, that is happening now because of the mechanisms in place. We have a regime in place now. We have a treaty. We have the exchange of information. Therefore, that is happening right now. The privacy of Canadians is best served when we listen and respect the report from the Privacy Commissioner about that balance. What is missing right now is the accountability, the transparency, and the modernizing of our Privacy Act to reflect this kind of new legislation.

Simply put, the mechanisms are in place right now for the important sharing that people expect there to be for the well-being of Canadians.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to welcome you back to the House along with the rest of my colleagues. I would also like to welcome this session's new pages, who will be with us for the next few months.

I am pleased to speak to a bill that will definitely have an impact on my Sherbrooke constituents. My colleague from Windsor—Tecumseh mentioned that her region is on the border. Sherbrooke, which is in the Eastern Townships, is too. We have three neighbouring states: Vermont, Maine, and New Hampshire. The fact that our neighbours to the south are so close to us is part of our everyday reality. Some of our communities even straddle the border. We hear some good stories sometimes about communities where there are houses or libraries right on the border between both countries. A lot of people have dual citizenship because of this.

My constituents are quite concerned about this issue. For one thing, lots of people cross the border, and for another, there is a lot of trade between Sherbrooke and the United States. Many of our businesses depend on the U.S. market. They are very concerned because they are so close and their business depends heavily on what is going on in the United States. That is why trade issues in general are really important to my community, especially now that we are talking about renegotiating the trade agreement between our two countries and Mexico. While I was in Sherbrooke this summer, I heard a lot of people talk about the negotiations under way and the upcoming third round of negotiations with our partners, which will be happening here in Canada. They want to protect their trade with the United States. If possible, they would like to grow that partnership. This issue got a lot of people talking this summer.

The main focus of Bill C-21 is people who are crossing the border. The matter of goods has already been addressed rather thoroughly in Bill C-23. Bill C-21 completes the circle in a way, even though there are a lot of problems with the bill. We are talking here about people, individuals, who are crossing our borders. I am therefore pleased to talk about this issue not only because I live in a border area but also

because I care a lot about personal information and privacy, and I am sure that many of my constituents care about this topic too.

From 2012 to 2014, I had the honour of serving as chair of the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics. I was therefore quite aware of privacy issues. I often had discussions with the Privacy Commissioner. These are the subjects I am most interested in.

What worries me the most about Bill C-21 is the issue of privacy. In Canada, year after year, agreement after agreement, we agree to share more and more information, not only with Canadian governments but also with foreign governments. Information sharing is becoming increasingly common. Of course, it is governed by written agreements. Information sharing is not done randomly, but it is becoming increasingly common. Bill C-21, which we are discussing today, is about sharing even more information with foreign countries, in this case the United States.

There is good reason for Canadians in particular to question the protection of privacy in the United States. I mention this mainly because of the infamous presidential order that was recently signed in the United States and that we have heard so much about over the past few months.

• (1815)

The title of the January 2017 executive order was:

• (1820)

[*English*]

Executive Order 13768, entitled Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States.

[*Translation*]

The order excluded people who are not citizens or permanent residents of the United States from the protections provided by the Privacy Act regarding personally identifiable information.

The Privacy Commissioner of Canada, Daniel Therrien, invited all federal ministers involved, including the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, probably the minister most involved, who also happens to be this bill's sponsor. He invited federal ministers to ask their American counterparts to tighten the rules around protecting the privacy of Canadians.

In the letter, the commissioner pointed out that Canada should be included in a list of countries targeted by the American Judicial Redress Act. It has to do with rules that exclude non-Americans from the protections provided under the law regarding how federal agencies use personal information. The commissioner indicated that Canadians enjoy certain protections regarding their personal information in the United States, but those protections are relative, since they are based on purely administrative agreements and are not given force of law.

Government Orders

The Privacy Commissioner of Canada certainly sounded the alarm in January 2017. Now here we are a few months later, debating Bill C-21. We need to be really cautious about this new order, which allows Americans to shirk their obligation to protect the privacy of Canadians to the same degree that they protect the privacy of Americans, their own citizens.

It is therefore deeply troubling to see that American federal agencies can treat Canadians' information differently from that of their own citizens. This discrepancy is extremely concerning, as it seems to put our fellow Canadians' data at risk. The worst part is that if this information ends up in the hands of a foreign country, such as the United States, there are very few options for recourse.

If we give information to the Canada Border Services Agency and this bill is passed, the Agency will have to hand over that information to the Americans. The Americans will then have the information in their possession, but it could fall into the wrong hands. These things happen. We have seen many cases of hackers successfully accessing data that is valuable to organized crime groups. Such data is considered extremely valuable because it can sometimes be used to scam ordinary people who think they are doing the right thing by answering phone calls or emails that seem to come from a government agency. This data is highly valuable to scammers. As a result, many Canadians may be alarmed to learn that foreign governments that use different protection systems may be getting access to more and more of their personal data.

I am very concerned about that; it is the main reason for which I must oppose Bill C-21, as several of my NDP colleagues did earlier today. What worries me even more is the fact that this information is now in the hands not only of American federal agencies, whose protective measures are less effective than the ones we have in place in Canada, but also in the hands of a president who made an executive order that is even better known—the one that bans persons who have travelled to certain target countries, mainly in the Middle East.

This raises more concerns about the way this information may be used by the American government, and by its president, who issues directives to his government and to its security agencies.

It is truly worrisome when we see stories like that of my friend Yassine Aber, an athlete at the University of Sherbrooke, who simply wanted to go compete in the United States. I believe this happened last May. Unlike his six or eight colleagues, he was arrested. He was arrested because of his name and he was questioned for a number of hours before being told to go back home.

Some of the questions, referenced already in the House, were on his religion, his parents' religion, places he had travelled to, and on his friends in Sherbrooke. They even searched his phone to access information, photos, and his social networks. It is very worrisome that the government wants to give even more information to the Americans through Bill C-21. We can all agree that the Americans do not seem to make good use of the information they have. They seem to use it only to discriminate based on race, religion, or gender.

My time is up, but I would be pleased to answer my colleagues' questions if they want to know more about why the NDP is against Bill C-21.

• (1825)

Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Sherbrooke for his ever informative comments.

I speak on behalf of the people of Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot whom I represent, whether they are business owners, professionals who have to travel to the U.S. for their work, or individuals, couples, or families who go there on vacation or retire there.

The thing that gets me is how our constituents are informed by the governments, and I mean governments because the former Conservatives were no different than the current Liberals. As we have seen throughout the day, it was our colleagues from the official opposition who defended this bill because too few of our Liberal colleagues stood up to do so.

How are our constituents informed about how their personal information is used by Canadian authorities? What is shared with the U.S. government? How is our personal information used by the U.S. government? How are our constituents informed about these different measures?

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot for her question.

The problem is that Canadians are ill-informed about the circumstances in which their information is shared. They do not know when local or foreign governments get their information, how long they keep it for and with whom they share it. This goes to the heart of the problem, namely a lack of transparency. As the House is considering this bill, what we ask is to increase transparency in order to ensure data protection, and also to make sure there is accountability, so that we can see tangible protection put in place as time goes by.

Transparency is therefore one of the fundamental aspects of protecting personal information. It allows citizens to know when their personal information has been shared and their right to privacy has been breached, so that they can act accordingly. This is very important and must be done as similar bills are being passed which require increased transparency.

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to the last part of the speech from my colleague for Sherbrooke, who made a very relevant and informed presentation to explain this bill, which is far from simple for the average person. It is important to explain the implications of the bill. The member gave us the very good example of a citizen from his riding, which he represents very well. That citizen went to see him to explain what he had to live through and what could be the dangerous consequences of the bill. I would like my hon. colleague to share that explanation with us.

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

Adjournment Proceedings

The danger is obvious. There is a risk that the Americans and their President will use this information to discriminate against Canadians who simply want to go to the United States to participate in a sporting event. These Canadians will be refused access to the country for no reason other than an impression the authorities have of them based on the colour of their skin, their parents' country of origin or religion, or even their sexual orientation.

This is a very real danger. It happened to a man from Sherbrooke and it will likely happen more often if we continue in the same direction by giving more and more information to the American authorities and their President, Donald Trump.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

• (1830)

[*English*]

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I previously asked if steps would be taken to allow for funding for infrastructure to flow directly to municipalities. It is extremely important that these steps be taken, as approximately 60% of infrastructure in Canada is under municipal jurisdiction. Funding infrastructure in our country, therefore, means getting it to the municipalities.

The government's budget 2017 states that because rural and northern communities of under 100,000 have unique infrastructure needs that require a more targeted approach, the government will invest \$2 billion over 11 years to support a broad range of infrastructure projects. It is to be allocated to provinces and territories on a basis of per capita allocation. This is a bit self-contradicting, in the sense that the government will distribute it on allocation to municipalities, but the province gets the option of how it distributes it and whether it needs to go directly to municipalities. A targeted approach would target the rural municipalities themselves, not allocate the funds to a provincial government. If anything, this method of allocation has missed the target, as is apparent in the experience of many Alberta municipalities.

Small municipalities pass budgets that allocate funds to getting projects shovel ready, but they are wasting considerable time and money doing so. Getting projects ready when they are informed to get on that list is a very expensive project, especially for small communities. Engineering costs a lot of money, so when getting those projects ready, it costs money to apply to get some of the money. Their time and money are wasted because their applications became stale-dated, unlike large municipalities that have shovel-ready projects they can pull off the shelf. Smaller ones cannot do that.

Engineered projects are important to small communities, but the province allocates the funds to these shovel-ready projects instead of supporting the smaller ones, because they can pull them off the shelf immediately.

Budget 2017 also states that bilateral agreements with provinces and territories will have flexible terms, so that funds can be directed to the areas with the greatest need. This seems well intentioned, but the implementation is clearly lacking. Small or rural municipalities under 100,000 that may be in great need of infrastructure investment in many cases simply cannot compete with larger cities with shovel-ready projects. Cities of 100,000 are different from those of 1,000, 5,000, or 10,000.

Infrastructure dollars should be disseminated to municipalities in a similar manner to the gas tax refund. This way, municipalities could use the funds to engineer the projects, get them shovel ready, and implement them. This is what an approach that hits its target looks like.

The government's bilateral agreements with provincial and territorial governments need to be re-evaluated for phase two to ensure that infrastructure dollars actually get to the municipalities for which they were intended. The agreement should explicitly state that the money goes to municipalities so that we do not have a repeat of the hundreds of millions of dollars of new Building Canada fund money that ended up being spent as Alberta government general revenue. It should contain provisions that accommodate the needs of municipalities that are in the process of engineering shovel-ready projects.

Will the government now commit to ensuring that funding flows directly to the municipalities? It can be flow-through, as with the gas tax, but if it is a bilateral that allows them to use it for their own purposes—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities.

• (1835)

Mr. Marc Miller (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for his question, and as an aside, the beautiful tie he is wearing to commemorate the visit of Prime Minister May today.

We are committed to supporting Albertans as we work to improve the infrastructure we need and use every day. That is why we worked in partnership with our Alberta counterparts to sign a bilateral agreement to put into effect two important new programs: the clean water and wastewater fund and the public transit infrastructure fund. To date, we have approved funding for 174 projects that will help improve essential transit and water systems that help strengthen Albertan communities.

The government has also approved more than \$1 billion in federal funding through the new Building Canada fund. This funding is supporting major investments, such as the Yellowhead Trail freeway and the southwest Calgary ring road project.

We are also supporting smaller communities through this fund, such as Bragg Creek and Cougar Creek, where flood mitigation projects have been identified as priorities by the community and supported under our programming.

Adjournment Proceedings

We continue to work closely with Alberta to commit the remaining funding to provincial and municipal priorities.

[*Translation*]

Communities in Alberta continue to benefit from the federal gas tax fund, which provides reliable, predictable long-term funding. In 2016-17, Alberta received over \$219 million under the gas tax fund, which helped to fund local infrastructure projects.

It is important to point out that our programs are structured in such a way as to respect municipal decisions. The municipalities are the experts and know what they need to be healthy, viable, and sustainable. The municipalities tell the Province of Alberta what their most pressing needs are, and the Province determines which projects are a priority and presents them to the federal government in order to obtain funding. By working closely with the municipalities in this way, the provinces and territories ensure that they meet the most pressing needs of their communities and we can ensure that federal investments are making a difference locally.

We will continue to work closely with Alberta to ensure that all federal funding given to communities in the province is transferred quickly and used strategically to promote job creation.

[*English*]

We are very proud of our partnership with Alberta and with everything we have accomplished so far. Moving forward, we will continue to work closely with Alberta on a new bilateral agreement under the long-term investing in Canada infrastructure plan to strengthen Alberta communities and the quality of life for all Albertans.

Mr. Martin Shields: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments my colleague has made and I would agree in principle. He is absolutely right. I have a list of all the projects that were approved. However, as a former vice-president of the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association, I understand clearly how the communities were offered to apply and get their projects in, but then the provincial government, after it promised to give them this money, diverted hundreds of millions of dollars and spent it in general revenue. This cannot continue. If we have a plan and we want to see it done, and I agree with the member, we should make a bilateral agreement so it cannot do this.

Mr. Marc Miller: Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada's support for Alberta is strong and unwavering. To date, we have dedicated nearly \$530 million from phase 1 of our infrastructure plan to Alberta and we continue to work with our Alberta partners to fully commit this funding.

[*Translation*]

We are listening to local communities in order to ensure that these investments are producing as many benefits as possible for all Canadians, no matter where they live.

Our government's focus on public transit, green infrastructure, social infrastructure, trade, and transportation, as well as rural and northern infrastructure is sure to promote job creation in every province in many domains.

[*English*]

We are proud of everything we have been able to accomplish in partnership with Alberta and look forward to continuing our efforts with the province and its communities.

[*Translation*]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as we come back for the fall 2017 session of Parliament, I am very pleased to have the opportunity to begin this evening's adjournment proceedings. It is a pleasure to be here and to be able to speak on behalf of not only the people of the riding of Drummond, but also all residents of official languages communities throughout Canada.

Today I wish to come back to a question I asked last March. That was several months ago, but nevertheless, it remains an important issue and I hope to get some clear answers.

Last March I asked how the Prime Minister could justify the fact that he failed to abide by the Official Languages Act during his cross-Canada tour at the beginning of 2017. There was a bit of a scandal at the time that really reverberated with people. People may recall a trip to the Aga Khan's private island over the holidays. In fact, the media recently reported, on September 13 to be exact, that the holiday did not cost \$127,000, but rather double that, \$215,000.

Anyway, the Prime Minister went on a cross-Canada tour, and during that tour, he went to Peterborough, Ontario, and he forgot that there are Franco-Ontarians. Someone asked a question in French, and he said that he was going to answer only in English because he was in Ontario. Then he went to Quebec, to the Eastern Townships, where there are a lot of English Quebecers. Someone asked a question in English, and he refused to answer it in English. He forgot all about the English-speaking official language minority communities in Quebec and the French-speaking official language minority communities in Ontario.

I asked him if he felt he had violated the Official Languages Act, and even though he would not admit that he had, about 50 people submitted complaints to the Commissioner of Official Languages, and the Commissioner of Official Languages responded with a finding that the Official Languages Act, parts VII and IV in particular, had indeed been violated.

In the report, the Commissioner of Official Languages recommended that the Privy Council Office put measures in place by September 2017, in order to ensure that the public receives services in both official languages during public town hall meetings where the Prime Minister is to address Canadians. The funny thing is that it is September 2017 and we might be lucky enough to have some information on the measures that are supposed to be in place.

Adjournment Proceedings

The Prime Minister holds open town hall meetings and receives information from the public. He has to be able to hold them in both official languages. He has to provide all the services in such a way that both official languages are respected. The Prime Minister himself does not necessarily have to speak both official languages at the time, but the Privy Council Office has to ensure that both official languages are respected. The Prime Minister has to realize that he has responsibilities when it comes to promoting English and French within Canadian society. Part IV—

• (1840)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Order. The hon. parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

Mr. Sean Casey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government is focused on the future and especially the future of our official language minority communities. The primary objective of the Prime Minister's cross-country tour was to connect with people and listen to what they had to say. The Government of Canada stands with all Canadians.

[English]

Our government is proud of the concrete actions taken since the fall of 2015 that will have positive impacts for official language minority communities and for the use of both of our official languages across the country. For example, through the 2017 budget, our government is providing \$80 million over 10 years to support the construction of community educational infrastructure in official language minority communities. This is because we are committed to maintaining and supporting the vitality of our official language minority communities by supporting infrastructure projects such as school day care centres, school community centres, or cultural centres in collaboration with provinces and territories.

• (1845)

[Translation]

We also reinstated the long form census, increased funding for CBC/Radio-Canada, and reinvested in the Canada Council for the Arts. We modernized the court challenges program, implemented measures to ensure the appointment of bilingual judges to the Supreme Court, and launched the review of the regulations governing bilingual federal services. We reopened the francophone component of the Collège militaire royal de Saint-Jean, and supported the francophone heritage, culture and tourism corridor of the Réseau de développement économique et de l'employabilité.

When it comes to immigration, last March, we held the first intergovernmental forum to get the provinces and territories involved in francophone immigration issues, and we made significant improvements to our immigration system to increase francophone immigration.

[English]

From June to December of 2016, we held 22 round table discussions on official languages across the country. They were open to the media and six of them were broadcast live online. Approximately 6,300 people responded to our online questionnaire. This demonstrates Canadians' strong interest in the future of our two official languages. We are now developing a new multi-year action plan for official languages to support English- and French-speaking

minorities and to promote the use of our two official languages from coast to coast.

[Translation]

I would like to assure the member for Drummond that the Prime Minister of Canada is the number one champion of official languages in Canada. Under his leadership, our government is working to give both official languages their rightful place across the country.

Mr. François Choquette: Mr. Speaker, before my time is up, I want to continue what I was saying about how part VII was violated, as was part IV, which indicates that the public has the right to communicate with the Prime Minister and federal institutions and obtain answers to their questions in the official language of their choice.

That tour was hastily planned to draw attention away from the scandal that was the Prime Minister's vacation on the Aga Khan's island, which cost an exorbitant amount of money and violated ethics rules. That tour was hastily planned, but what can be done now to ensure that slapdash consultations like those never happen again? What can be done to ensure that the Official Languages Act is respected during consultations with Canadians? Has the Privy Council Office started to put measures in place so that this never happens again? That is what I would like the hon. parliamentary secretary to tell me.

Mr. Sean Casey: Mr. Speaker, the vitality of official language minority communities and the promotion of bilingualism are two very important issues. By holding broad consultations from coast to coast in 2016 and drafting a new action plan for 2018, our government is stepping up and showing strong leadership with respect to promoting official languages.

[English]

For the Government of Canada our official languages are a priority. We are currently developing a new pan-governmental action plan for official languages that will provide a framework for the Government of Canada's action in a number of areas to further advance the vitality of minority communities and the use of both official languages across the country.

[Translation]

I would like to thank the member for Drummond for his remarks. Our government will continue to work with all members of Parliament to promote and protect our two official languages.

Adjournment Proceedings

[English]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as the member of Parliament for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, which includes the largest army base in Canada, I am proud to participate in today's adjournment debate. Over 5,000 soldiers at Base Petawawa and their families know I have their backs when it comes to keeping the government accountable. We owe it to our soldiers to keep them safe in whatever we ask them to do to perform in the service of our country. That obligation continues when the service is completed.

Earlier this year, I asked the Minister of National Defence why his party refused to implement the recommendation made by the Canadian Forces ombudsman to ensure that before a serving member of the Canadian Armed Forces was medically released from the military all benefits were in place. I am pleased to confirm for the benefit of the military families watching this adjournment debate my strong support for this recommendation by the military ombudsman. The record at committee shows the numerous times I have brought this issue forward only to be stonewalled by the Liberal majority.

It was with some scepticism that I noted the change of position by the government to include a line in the announced defence policy that included the word "ensure" that benefits would be in place before a soldier was released. On a number of occasions, I brought to the attention of the House the case of now retired Warrant Officer Roger Perreault. The time I first brought attention to this case, 27-year veteran retired Warrant Officer Perreault was still a serving member of the Canadian Armed Forces. Warrant Officer Perreault was seeking justice that was being denied him in his application to receive the critical injury benefit.

He was injured in 2006 in a blast from an improvised explosive device, while serving in Afghanistan. He has had three back surgeries, two hip replacements, and other complications. That case has still not been resolved.

I ask Canadians who are following this debate to question if it was just a coincidence. Roger Perreault was medically released two days before the Minister of National Defence announced, with great hoopla, the government would "ensure that all benefits would be in place before a member transitions to post-military life." Warrant Officer Roger Perreault was discharged from the Canadian Armed Forces with nothing in place, no pension, no medical benefit, no critical injury benefit, nothing.

The Liberal Party had known for over a year that this soldier was being medically released and still he was released with nothing in place. What is happening today? Roger has heard nothing about the critical injury benefit, except that his case may be heard in December. The pension that soldier paid into for almost 27 years and was entitled to receive, finally kicked in after months of complaining by his local member of Parliament. Roger is thankful for his local Conservative member of Parliament, for he is certain he would still be waiting for his pension had I not intervened.

The permanent impairment allowance, career impact allowance, or whatever it is being called this week, as the government keeps changing names of allowances to pretend it is providing a new

benefit when in fact it has just renamed an existing benefit, has yet to show up. Ironically, if Roger wanted to smoke pot to alleviate his pain and suffering, he could get a pot licence from the Liberal government right way.

I hope it was this sorry record of treatment that led to the dishonourable discharge for the minister of Veterans Affairs from that portfolio in the last cabinet shuffle.

Now retired Warrant Officer Roger Perreault and thousands of military families just like his, face a new crisis. Thanks to the bad spending by the government and the need to raise taxes today to pay for the bad debt tomorrow, the futures of military spouses are now in peril. For many military families posted on a regular basis, the military spouse, who kept the home fires burning, would not have had the opportunity to accumulate a work pension. The guaranteed income supplement provides an additional monthly non-taxable benefit to the old age security pension recipients who have no other source of income.

When the Conservatives were the Government of Canada, in cases where couples that were previously not eligible for the guaranteed income supplement based on their total family income and who were involuntarily separated, for example, one spouse being admitted to a long-term care facility, the spouse remaining—

● (1850)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence.

[Translation]

Mr. Jean Rioux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for her question. I know she cares deeply about the health and well-being of our military personnel.

We value the core duties and roles of the Ombudsman for the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Forces very highly. I would like to reassure the member that the administrative arrangement the ombudsman's office shares with the department does not affect its ability to conduct efficient independent investigations. The model we have in place mirrors almost all other similar offices across government and meets the test of proper stewardship of resources. The Department of National Defence is committed to maintaining a positive and productive working relationship with the ombudsman. That is why we have encouraged him to come forward if he faces any barriers to carrying out his mandate.

My colleague mentioned an ombudsman's report about soldiers released for medical reasons. As the member knows, the government considered several options to improve the transition process.

Through our new defence policy, we are transforming our approach to managing our women and men in uniform. This includes ensuring that we provide the best possible care and support to our military personnel as they transition out of uniform.

Adjournment Proceedings

As such, a new transition group of approximately 1,200 personnel will be set up to provide flexible and personalized support to members leaving the forces as well as those recovering from illness or injury, with the goal of returning them to active duty.

Furthermore, we will re-establish a personnel branch of experts in military human resources management to ensure that pension administration is complete before military personnel move on to post-military life.

These are complex initiatives that will not be implemented overnight. The Canadian Armed Forces will take the time that is necessary to get this right while ensuring that services to transitioning members continue to be delivered.

We have also been working closely with Veterans Affairs on pursuing ways to streamline and improve coordination between our two departments. Serving our veterans is one of the highest priorities we have as a government and we will not let them down.

Our collaboration will ultimately improve the transition experience for Canadian Armed Forces members. The goal is to help releasing members with a range of harmonized and integrated services as they transition.

This means clear guidance, timely access to benefits and services, and coordinated case management between National Defence and Veterans Affairs Canada. We look forward to the ombudsman's continued support in making improvements that benefit the military, departmental civilians, and all those who form part of the defence team.

• (1855)

[*English*]

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Mr. Speaker, the spouse remaining in the marital home could apply to be reassessed as a single individual rather than as part of a couple. Singles receive a higher benefit than individuals living as a couple. That policy was quietly changed earlier this year. Military spouses will face the immense economic burden of living below the same poverty level guidelines used for the calculation of the guaranteed income supplement.

It is an unfortunate fact that medical challenges as a result of military service contribute to a shortened lifespan, which may include an extended period living in a facility that provides specialized care. What this will mean for military couples is that the spouse at home will lose the family pension if his or her loved one is institutionalized. Military families do not deserve this worry.

The Liberal Party shamelessly campaigned on the backs of veterans to inflate expectations. It was another broken promise.

This veteran sacrificed his health and family in service to his country. It is all about fairness.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean Rioux: Mr. Speaker, we consulted widely with all Canadians in order to come up with a defence policy that reflects who we are. This policy was based on the recommendations of Canadians who asked us to care for our military personnel and make sure they have the training and equipment they need, but also to care for their health and well-being. That means ensuring a seamless transition from military to civilian life.

In that regard, after the huge budget cuts made by the previous Conservative government, we invested new money in Veterans Affairs in order to support people reintegrating into civilian life. That is why our policy stipulates that no soldier will leave the military without receiving his or her pension, and that we will create a group of experts to lead that transition. The health and well-being of our military personnel is a major concern—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted.

[*English*]

Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 6:59 p.m.)

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