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Monday, April 16, 2018

—

Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, April 16, 2018

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayer

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1105)

[*English*]

OPPORTUNITY FOR WORKERS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC) moved that Bill C-395, An Act to amend the Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, work is a basic human need. Its wages feed, clothe, and shelter us. It offers the pride and purpose of doing something valuable for others. Work makes us a living. It also helps us to make a life. That is why almost a million Canadians with disabilities work—including about 300,000 with severe disabilities, according to Statistics Canada—but the system effectively bans many more from working. It is called the “welfare wall”, and here is how it works.

When people with disabilities earn a paycheck, governments sharply claw back supports for income, housing, medications, and other help. These clawbacks, plus taxes, mean that often people are poorer when they work more. They are stuck behind the welfare wall.

For example, if a person with disabilities who is earning the minimum wage in Saskatchewan goes from working part time to working full time, he would see his take-home pay drop from \$21,600 to \$21,500 on an annual basis. That is right: he is working double the hours and making less money at the end of the year.

Just read the social assistance website in New Brunswick:

For example, a single mother with one child may receive \$861 each month. If she has no income at all, she would receive the full \$861. If she has income of \$300 a month, then she would receive \$561 in social assistance.

Therefore, she makes \$300 and immediately loses \$300. It is like a tax rate of 100%, and that does not include other taxes, such as income taxes, payroll taxes, and gas taxes to drive to work, or clawbacks of non-cash benefits such as housing and medication. When all of these different work penalties are added together, many have a negative wage for working.

Mark Wafer, who hired 200 workers with disabilities at his Tim Hortons shops, once asked an official with the Ontario government, “What is the best way to get off disability assistance?” She replied, “Die”.

That is not just the experience of an entrepreneur talking to government; that is the insight of Canada's former chief statistician, Dr. Munir Sheikh, who wrote:

... in Canada, many inappropriate tax-transfer policies have helped to condemn people to being trapped behind low-income and poverty walls and, rather than improving social mobility, may have worsened it: we refer to it as the Zero Dollar Linda model following the work of social policy expert John Stapleton, who examined the incentives that caused a Toronto woman, Linda Chamberlain, to return to social assistance after a successful attempt to rejoin the workforce.

Chamberlain's story is a tragic one. “After three decades of battling schizophrenia and homelessness and poverty, Chamberlain finally got a job”, wrote *Toronto Star* columnist Catherine Porter. As a reward, the government boosted Linda's rent almost 500% and cut her disability payment, making her \$260 a month poorer because she worked. Therefore, she had no choice but to quit and remain in poverty on social assistance, ironically at greater cost to the system.

Linda is not alone. Statistics Canada surveyed people with disabilities who were not in the labour force even though they indicated they could work or had worked in the past. I quote Statistics Canada's findings: roughly 94,000 people reported that if they were employed, they felt they would lose additional support. About 82,000 people reported that they expected their income to drop if they worked.

It is time to knock down this welfare wall. It is time to allow people to earn a living. It is time to pass Bill C-395, the opportunity for workers with disabilities act.

This legislation would require governments to permit these workers to keep more in wages than they lose in clawbacks and taxes. It would do this through measurement, action, and enforcement.

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First is measurement. The bill would require Finance Canada to calculate how much governments take away in taxes and clawbacks of income, housing, medication, and other help for each thousand dollars a worker with disabilities earns. This calculation would only use publicly available tax and benefit rules, not personal financial information.

Second is action. If the calculation shows people were losing more than they gained from work, within 30 days the finance minister would have to identify and report to Parliament changes to tax and benefit programs that would fix the problem. He might adjust federal disability tax credits, the CPP disability plan, or any other federal measure to make work pay.

Third is enforcement. Provinces must already meet numerous existing federal conditions in exchange for billions of dollars in federal transfer payments. This legislation would add one more condition that would require provincial taxes and benefits to always allow people with disabilities to gain more than they lose from work. To be clear, the federal government would not dictate how provincial policies work; rather, it would instill one simple principle: do not punish people with disabilities for working. Provinces would have total liberty in how they instill this principle.

For example, in British Columbia, people used to lose their drug coverage if they got a job and left welfare. That is not the case anymore. Economist Kevin Milligan, who advised the governing party on its platform, wrote, B.C. "replaced an 'all or nothing' program for social assistance recipients with one that is income-tested and more gently smoothed out as incomes rise. This had the effect of removing a very tall 'welfare wall' that provided a disincentive to work for people on benefits." Similar solutions can allow other Canadians to get jobs without losing life-saving medications.

Respecting the bill and allowing people with disabilities to work could save taxpayers money. Data from the Ontario government showed that if one person on disability assistance gets a \$17-an-hour job, the government saves \$14,000 in benefits and collects an extra \$1,000 in taxes. Imagine what we would save if we knocked down the welfare wall and freed tens of thousands of workers with disabilities to earn a living and escape poverty.

Speaking of poverty, the best anti-poverty plan is a job. If an individual is of working age but lives in a household where no one works, that person has a 50% likelihood of living in poverty today. However, if an individual works full-time year-round, that person will only have a 3% chance of being poor.

The same is true for people with disabilities, who generally have a higher poverty rate. However, people with disabilities who are employed are only 8% likely to be below the poverty line. Let me give the House a startling example.

Let us put two people side by side, one who has a disability and a job and the other who has no disability and no job. The second person is more than twice as likely to be below the poverty line, which shows that it is joblessness more than disability that causes poverty, and it is not just material poverty.

While we are always told how dangerous it is to overwork, we often forget the greater danger to health and happiness of not

working at all. Allow me to quote former *British Medical Journal* editor Dr. Richard Smith, who said, "Unemployment raises the chance that a man will die in the next decade by about a third. The men are most likely to die from suicide, cancer, and accidents and violence. ... Separation, divorce, and family violence are also linked with unemployment."

● (1110)

He went on, "But it is mental health that is most harmed by unemployment. The unemployed experience anxiety, depression, neurotic disorders, poor self-esteem, and disturbed sleep patterns, and they are more likely than the employed not only to kill themselves but also to injure themselves deliberately."

Dr. Diette, a Washington and Lee University economist, wanted to determine if unemployment causes bad mental health or if it is just the other way around. He studied the mental health of people who had never before experienced serious psychological distress. Those who went on to lose their jobs later became at least 125% more likely to suffer such psychological distress than those who kept working.

Elsewhere, researchers tested 1,000 laid-off Danish shipyard workers for psychiatric symptoms during a three-year follow-up period. He found these workers suffered worse mental health results than other workers who kept their jobs at a different shipyard. Here we have a very large sample size of people in the same country and in the same industry. Those who were not working went on to suffer far worse mental health than their counterparts who continued to have jobs.

Some would say, "Of course unemployment harms health and happiness. People without jobs are stressed about money", but that is only part of the story. University of Zurich economist Dr. Winkelmann found that life satisfaction for unemployed German men was significantly lower on a scale of 1 to 10 than for working German men, even when their total incomes were the same. How can this be? We are always told that work is a necessary but miserable slog, and we would all be happier retiring at 30. Trendy TED talkers are always talking about this amazing future when robots will do all the work for us, yet evidence proves that people are happier and healthier working, even when money is no issue.

Why is that?

First, it is because work makes us valuable to others. Tibet's Nobel Prize-winning spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, and the American Enterprise Institute president wrote together that virtually all the world's religions teach us that diligent work in the service of others is our highest nature and thus lies at the centre of a happy life. In one shocking experiment, researchers found that senior citizens who did not feel useful to others were nearly three times as likely to die prematurely as those who did feel useful. That is especially true for people with disabilities, whose skills and contributions are often undervalued by ignorant attitudes and small-minded people.

Second, work connects us to one another. A workday is a constant flow of exchanges of goods, services, emails, phone calls, handshakes, questions and answers that link us together, and in each of these exchanges a worker is important to someone else. That is especially true of people who might be isolated and lonely. Their work colleagues form a social network, and even a family. A worker matters to his colleagues. He has a name, and as the *Cheers* jingle taught us so many years ago, sometimes we want to go where everybody knows our name.

Third, work puts us in control of our lives, which is a basic human need. "One of the most prevalent fears people have is losing control", wrote psychologist Dr. Elliot Cohen. Welfare surrenders our control to a system in which politicians we do not know make decisions that shape our lives. Through work, however, we take control of our lives. We do, rather than being done to. We become active players, not passive observers. We are the independent authors of our lives.

For these reasons, work is a blessing, not a burden. A system that robs people of this blessing is not only foolish but inhumane. Therefore, let us knock down this welfare wall and open up opportunity for people with disabilities to earn a great living and live a great life.

• (1115)

Mrs. Celina Caesar-Chavannes (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague mentioned Mark Wafer, who is from Whitby, my riding. I had an opportunity to hear Mark speak a number of times about the importance of hiring individuals with disabilities not for the benefit of the company, because they get some kind of arbitrary credit, but because individuals with disabilities often work harder. They are not often late for work. They are dedicated individuals. Therefore, I appreciate the comments my colleague made.

However, we will be introducing in Canada a disabilities act with the Minister of Sport and Persons With Disabilities and our parliamentary secretary. We have done over 6,000 consultations. I did one in Whitby at the Abilities Centre. We heard a lot from individuals who said, quite frankly, that they would like to have a job and would like to not have the clawbacks. I wonder if and how my colleague is working with the minister and our team to ensure this particular idea of an incentive is embedded in the legislation we are developing.

• (1120)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, that is a very good question, and I will address the two questions in reverse order. I have reached out to the current public services minister, who was the disabilities

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minister, to discuss this bill. She was very receptive. However, she was obviously unable to commit to government support, or opposition. I am looking forward to seeing the government's bill with respect to making workplaces more inviting to people with disabilities. I am sure there will be many good measures included in that bill.

The member also pointed to Mark Walker's success at employing people with disabilities, to great profitable success in the six Tim Hortons that Mark Walker owns. All of the performance metrics were higher because of, not in spite of, the fact that about 200 of his employees have disabilities. The service at the window was faster at the Tim Hortons that Mark Walker runs than it was on Camp Day when all of us politicians go to work at Tim Hortons. It was actually about half of the service time when persons with disabilities were doing the work than when the bigwigs like us were standing there trying to figure out how to do it. In the United States, Randy Lewis of the huge Walgreens distribution centre and the ruthlessly profitable business that it runs, became one of the most profitable in the company's entire ecosystem when 1,000 people with disabilities went to work there.

Again and again, we underestimate people. This bill gives them a chance to prove all of their worth to contribute and be their best.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as everyone probably knows, there are costs associated with working, such as the cost of transportation and, for working parents, the cost of child care. Does my colleague believe our tax system should be set up to ensure that working never costs more than not working and that working is always worthwhile, regardless of an individual's personal circumstances? Unfortunately, sometimes that is not the case.

Does my colleague believe that basic principle of taxation should inform all our policies?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for her question. First of all, I would like to make it clear that the government should never punish people who work. It should never take back more than a dollar for each dollar a person earns.

The system we have in Canada right now can make things better or worse, depending on the province and the individual situation. In some cases, people end up worse off when they decide to work, increase their hours, or get a raise. I think we can all agree that nobody should ever be in a situation where the effective tax rate exceeds 100%. That does happen in some cases in this country. The finance minister should do the math to make sure nobody ends up being penalized for working.

Mr. Stéphane Lauzon (Parliamentary Secretary for Sport and Persons with Disabilities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take part in the debate on Bill C-395, an act to amend the Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements Act.

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The bill raises an important question: what can we do to encourage people who are not currently in the workforce to enter and remain in it? In the context of this legislation, how do we ensure that measures are put in place to encourage persons with disabilities to work, if they so wish?

[English]

Canada's future progress depends on making sure that every Canadian has an equal and fair chance at success. We need to ensure that the benefits of a growing economy are felt by more and more people with good, well-paying jobs for the middle class and everyone working hard to join it. The number of Canadians in low-wage jobs is high by international standards. Many of these workers struggle to support their families and afford basics like healthy food and clothes for growing kids.

• (1125)

[Translation]

That is why budget 2018 introduces the new Canada workers benefit, for example. This measure, which replaces the working income tax benefit, will help low-income workers keep more of their income. With this benefit, the government is also proposing an increase in the disability supplement in order to provide more assistance to Canadians who wish to enter the labour force and face financial barriers because of their disability. The Canada workers benefit will help lift approximately 70,000 Canadians out of poverty by 2020. It will encourage more people to join the workforce.

[English]

Whether this extra money is used for things such as helping to cover the family grocery bills or buying warm clothes for the winter, the improved benefits will help low-income working Canadians to make ends meet.

Furthermore, starting in 2019, the government will also make it easier for people to access the benefits they have earned by making changes that will allow the Canada Revenue Agency to calculate the Canada workers benefit for any tax filer who has not claimed it. Allowing the Canada Revenue Agency to automatically provide the benefit to eligible filers will be especially helpful for people with reduced mobility, people who live far from service locations, and people who do not have internet access. As a result, everyone who can benefit from the Canada workers benefit will receive it when they file their taxes, and an estimated 300,000 additional low-income workers will receive the new Canada workers benefit for the 2019 tax year because of these changes. Combined with previous enhancements, our government is investing almost \$1 billion in new funding per year to help low-income workers get ahead.

In addition to the new Canada workers benefit, the federal government has provided the refundable medical expense supplement to improve work incentives for Canadians with disabilities. This supplement helps to offset the loss of coverage for medical and disability-related expenses when individuals move from social assistance to the paid labour force.

The intention of ensuring that a financial work incentive exists for Canadians with disabilities is strongly supported. That is why the government is taking action to achieve improvements in labour market outcomes for persons with disabilities. However, while it is

obviously desirable to ensure that social assistance programs preserve an incentive to work, the provision of social assistance for the working age populations, including for persons with disabilities, is primarily a provincial and territorial area of responsibility. Of course, the federal government has an interest in ensuring that its policies preserve work incentives and has collaborated with the provinces in this area. In recognition of the important role played by provinces and territories in providing basic income support, our government has worked with them to make province-specific changes to the design of the working income tax benefit to better harmonize with their own programs. Quebec, Alberta, British Columbia, and Nunavut have already taken advantage of this opportunity. Moving forward, our government will continue to work with interested provinces and territories to harmonize benefits under the new Canada workers benefit and to help support the transition from social assistance and into work.

• (1130)

[Translation]

Another noteworthy measure in budget 2018 is a new pre-apprenticeship program that would help under-represented groups in the economy, including women, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and newcomers, explore the trades, gain work experience, and develop the skills needed to succeed.

After 20 years experience in teaching and professional development, I can say that the future is bright and there will be jobs for these people. This program will benefit many people, especially those who need it the most.

As the hon. member probably knows, the government is also committed to providing Canadians more information on the practices of federally regulated employers. This transparency will contribute not only to shedding light on leaders in matters of pay equity, but also to putting pressure on employers responsible for the wage gaps that affect women, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and visible minorities.

We are also introducing in the House a new bill on accessibility, which will seek to improve accessibility and opportunities for Canadians with disabilities in sectors under federal jurisdiction by removing the barriers these people currently face.

[English]

The new legislation will build on a series of Accessible Canada consultations that we held across the country.

[Translation]

As a government, we understand the importance of helping Canadians remove the obstacles to economic development. That is why fairness and equality are at the forefront of budget 2018, which contains new investments to help those who need it most.

Private Members' Business

I urge the member from Carleton to support these measures and the upcoming accessibility bill because they are good for Canadians with disabilities and millions of other Canadians.

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Carleton for introducing Bill C-395. I believe that this bill addresses a gap in the tax system known as the “welfare wall”, a fairly well-known economic principle. It occurs when those who are receiving social assistance or people with disabilities, as we are talking about here, want to enter the workforce but will lose money to taxes or benefit clawbacks by doing so.

I do not think that this is a result of any level of government acting in bad faith; rather, I think it is an indication of the complexity of our tax system. It is becoming so complex that, despite our best efforts, we have introduced unintended effects into the system that penalize people who want to re-enter the labour market.

I will vote in favour of the bill at second reading so that we can study it at committee. I have questions about some aspects of the bill, such as whether the financial implications for different levels of government are those suggested. I believe that will be the case, but we will be able to do a more in-depth analysis at committee.

This is an example of the left and the right being able to work together because we have a common interest. I believe that we have the greater good at heart. We want to help people who want to work, in this case, once again, people with a disability. Support for the bill introduced by the member for Carleton has come from progressives and Conservatives, including a former representative of the Canadian Tax Foundation, the Canadian Association of Social Workers, Jack Mintz, and Ian Lee, who will never be taken for progressives, as well as the Canadian Association for Supported Employment. The entire political spectrum is represented on this long list of supporters, which clearly indicates that we have a social consensus.

I am saddened by the government's attitude. If I am not mistaken, my colleague, the parliamentary secretary, said that the government will not encourage support for this bill, at least at second reading, which I find very disappointing. The bill by the member for Carleton is clear. It would amend the Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements Act. The various levels of government are subject to conditions with respect to social transfers and health transfers, and these conditions help address any problems that may arise or any issues regarding how different governments use the transfers. When the federal government is able to punish persons with disabilities who want to return to the job market, this will be addressed at the federal level, and it must also be addressed at the provincial level. I am saddened that the speech I just heard had nothing to do with the bill itself, and instead had to do with government measures, since at the end of the day, this bill is worthy of consideration.

If the bill passes, there will be three requirements. The first has to do with the Minister of Finance.

• (1135)

[English]

Finance Canada will be asked to calculate the level of taxation and the loss of benefits that would be incurred by the person with a

disability in going back on the job market and having a job and wages. Following that, if the earned income is lowered by the effect of taxation and the loss of benefits, then Finance Canada would have to modify or amend in some form the working income tax disability supplement. The same would be asked of the provinces through that modification and the agreement between the federal government and the provincial governments for the social transfer. It is that simple. That is all that is asked here.

[Translation]

I do not see why the government would not study this new measure, which would complement what it proposed in its last budget. At the end of the day, I worry that the government is telling us it can do better than this bill. Personally, I really doubt it.

I introduced Bill C-274 in the House of Commons to fix a specific problem with the transfer of SMEs and family farms. I managed to secure the support of many members. The Conservative Party was on board, as were the independent members and, in theory, 15 to 20 Liberal members. Then the Minister of Finance released a cost estimate for the bill. The tax specialists I had been dealing with had estimated that my bill would cost between \$75 million and \$100 million.

During the final week of debate, however, the government pulled a rabbit out of its hat and claimed the bill would cost between \$800 million and \$1.2 billion in lost revenue. That scared off a lot of Liberal backbenchers. Several of those who had initially supported the bill and acknowledged the existence of the problem my bill was trying to fix decided to vote against it.

The Department of Finance misled the members of the Liberal Party, because in a report on the fiscal impact of my bill that was published two months after the vote, the Parliamentary Budget Officer put the fiscal revenue shortfall at about \$150 million, not \$800 million to \$1.2 billion as the finance department led the House to believe.

The government tends to completely ignore positive legislation brought forward by the opposition, especially on fiscal matters. It is trying to undermine the members of the House by systematically refusing all opposition-led tax bills, whether they are proposed by the official opposition or other opposition parties.

In our consideration of Bill C-395, however, we are working on the particular issue of Canadians who are struggling to get over the welfare wall.

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• (1140)

[English]

The welfare wall exists, and we need to attack it where we can, federally and provincially. It makes no sense.

My colleague, the member for Abitibi—Témiscamingue, actually showed that this is a principle that should be applied everywhere in our tax system. It should be applied, because it makes sense in terms of creating incentives for people with disabilities or people on social assistance or people who want to find an opportunity to work. We need to give them every single opportunity to do so.

Creating walls and keeping a state of affairs where people going to work actually lose money and benefits because they are going to work makes no sense. It is our duty as parliamentarians, it is our duty as people who have been elected by our constituents, to ensure that we correct these problems. The bill tabled by the member for Carleton aims to do exactly that.

I will be asking the government to look at this bill and to send it to committee to ensure that the objectives targeted by this bill would be achieved. This would actually be a positive contribution by this Parliament. It would ensure that people who want to gain some dignity by going back to work and being able to contribute socially in their communities would not be penalized and would not suffer from the shortcomings of our own legislation when we adopt tax measures provincially and federally.

I encourage all members of Parliament in this House to vote in favour of this bill and to send it to committee to try to see what we can do for people with disabilities who want to gain dignity by joining the job market.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I support Bill C-395, the opportunity for workers with disabilities act, put forward by my colleague, the member for Carleton. I want to thank him for his steadfast and exceptional advocacy for accountability to taxpayers and for economic freedom, security, and opportunity for all Canadians, especially the vulnerable and disadvantaged. His bill could benefit many Canadians who have different barriers than others in their day-to-day lives.

The bill would mandate Finance Canada to calculate how much people with disabilities currently lose in taxes and clawbacks as a result of each additional income of \$1,000 they earn, up to \$30,000, on a province-by-province basis. If there are cases where clawbacks are higher than the employment income, the finance minister can review possible changes to the federal tax and benefits system so people with disabilities are not worse off or get paid simply less because they are working. The finance minister would then consult with each province to fix the problem. Of course, the federal government puts conditions on provincial programs and services all the time.

I support Bill C-395 because every Canadian has value and every Canadian with disabilities who wants to work and is able to do so should be able to maximize his or her opportunities without penalties or barriers from government. Meaningful work is important for well-being, a sense of dignity, for a fulfilling life, and it should be a public policy priority to support people with disabilities who want and are able to work.

Unfortunately, Canadians with disabilities often struggle to secure employment or when they do, government policies stop them from being able to fully benefit from their efforts and endeavours.

According to a 2012 Statistics Canada report on persons with disabilities and employment, the last report done on this subject, the employment rate of Canadians aged 25 to 64 who have a physical or mental disability was 49%, compared to a 79% rate of those without a disability.

In my home province of Alberta, people with disabilities who do work often lose \$1.15 for every new dollar they earn under the current system. The assured income for the severely handicapped, or AISH, is Alberta's program supported by the Canada social transfer. This separate supplement income program acknowledges the unique financial costs and significant barriers that only this exceptional group of people face.

Currently, an Albertan living with a disability can receive a standard living allowance of almost \$1,600 monthly through AISH. Like many provincial income programs for the disabled, the financial benefit decreases as earned income increases. Of course, an individual living with a disability who is able to work full-time may not receive the same level of support as someone who cannot work at all or who struggles to be accommodated by prospective employers.

Right now in Alberta persons with disabilities in the AISH program can only earn a certain amount before their payments are reduced. Under Alberta's AISH employment income exemption calculation, a single person on the AISH program can only earn up to a maximum of \$800 before his or her payments are clawed back monthly. Once a person earns just over \$2,700 monthly, he or she no longer receive an AISH benefit at all. That is a salary of \$32,000 a year with no additional benefits. However, the reality is that people with disabilities often have an additional set and scope of costs and requirements for survival, never mind to thrive, in their daily lives and for their whole lives that people without disabilities can not imagine.

Canadians with the same income who are not disabled already struggle to make ends meet. People with disabilities who can and want to be included in the workforce should not lose benefits that are specifically designed to support their disabilities.

A notable exception about Alberta's program, through recent improvements by both the former PC government and the current NDP one, is that it is actually significantly more generous when compared to other provinces.

Ontario, for example, has the Ontario disability support program where a single person with a disability can earn a maximum financial benefit of only just over \$1,100 monthly. The benefit is based on family status, providing more if a disabled person has dependants.

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British Columbia has the person with disability program under B. C. employment and assistance, which is also based on family status. A single person can only receive just over \$1,100 per month.

This scenario means there is virtually no financial incentive for disabled people to work. The more they work the less money or benefits they receive, even if they have a low-paying job. If there is no benefit for disabled people to work because they may get paid more if they do not, then what incentive is there for them to go to work and why should they be punished for wanting to contribute to society and for doing something that is fulfilling and meaningful and fulfilling?

The current system therefore presents a unique problem. In "The Dignity Deficit", Arthur Brooks says, "We feel a sense of dignity when our own lives produce value for ourselves and others. Put simply, to feel dignified, one must be needed by others."

Involuntary unemployment can be extremely damaging to a person who wants to work. Studies conclude that compared with people who are employed, unemployed people can experience mental health issues, which is not just highly correlated but tied directly to their lack of work. Many struggle with depression and have lesser physical well-being generally. Unemployed people are more likely to cope by drinking, smoking, and using drugs.

• (1145)

It is often assumed that these physical and mental challenges are the cause of unemployment, but there is a growing body of evidence that suggests that the relationship is also the other way around and that for people with disabilities, those who are able to work, are more healthy mentally and emotionally, benefiting from a sense of self-worth from gainful employment, than people with disabilities who can work but do not.

Brooks says, "Involuntary unemployment saps one's sense of dignity." Receiving employment insurance or disability benefits does not actually help disabled people who want to work. It is backward and perverse for a government system to disincentivize it or claw back fundamental supports for those who do.

I am passionate about this issue in part because of my personal experience with people with disabilities. In university, I volunteered with the Little Bits Therapeutic Riding Association at the Whitemud Equine Learning Centre in Edmonton. I got to know adults and children with cognitive, developmental, mental, and physical challenges, originating from birth, from tragic accidents, and from diseases and illnesses. They and their families and guardians had a major impact on me. Many of them would not be able to work. They depended completely on a network of family, friends, public and private support systems, and programs. However, there were those who could work, and did, and who made all kinds of contributions through work and volunteerism. They should not be penalized for meaningful employment or profitable entrepreneurialism, and for their efforts to advance and support themselves. All of them, those who could work and those who could not, also contributed to my life, my perspective, and my well-being in ways I am sure they never knew.

In Lakeland, the Vegreville Association for Living in Dignity is a not-for-profit association that helps support people with develop-

mental disabilities to have opportunities for success and personal growth by promoting the development of communication and cognitive and motor skills through participation in work and in many initiatives and events in the community.

VALID has long-standing partnerships with businesses for employment positions, and with charities for volunteer activities in Vegreville. For more than 20 years, VALID's program with the immigration case processing centre secured work placements for three to five, and sometimes more, disabled people every year. These opportunities will soon be taken away from workers with disabilities in CPC Vegreville because despite an outpouring and herculean effort to stop it by employees and their families, union reps, and elected representatives at all levels and of all parties in Alberta, and right across the country, the Liberals are closing the office in September 2018.

That closure will eliminate hundreds of much-needed jobs in Vegreville, with wide-ranging and significant economic and social consequences for the town and region. The Liberal closure will end decades of consistent and predictable employment opportunities for adults living with disabilities in and around the town and end all fundraising by the employee champions for local charities and not-for-profit associations that help the disadvantaged, needy, and vulnerable through their contributions to workplace charitable campaigns.

The immigration department said that the new office in Vegreville would accommodate 312 employees, only a maximum addition of 32 positions. Vegreville could have expanded for them and for more jobs or placements for people with disabilities.

It is a huge loss that was imposed with no consultation and no economic impact assessment. The cost study the Liberals hid for a year showed it would cost millions more. Nothing ever actually prevented them from opening an office in Edmonton. They have never proven the case why the Vegreville office has to be closed, not to the whole team of employees who consistently outperform targets and backstop other offices, not to the 76% of employees there who are women, and not to the people with disabilities who will no longer have opportunities for worthwhile and meaningful work there.

Canadians with disabilities should be able to exercise their talents, abilities, and ambition to pursue and attain employment and entrepreneurial opportunities when they can and want to. Governments should not penalize them for doing so. The aim of Canadian public policy should be to enable and empower people with disabilities to enjoy meaningful work without barriers and to thrive, not take away incentive from their drive to work and pursue their goals.

Private Members' Business

That is why I support Bill C-395, and all members should support it. It is a focused, specific, and necessary initiative to actually deliver in policy on all the words and intentions elected representatives often share about compassion and about supporting diversity, abilities, and inclusions. The Conservatives mean those words, are acting on those words, and I am sure the Liberals will support it.

• (1150)

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to join in the debate on the opportunities for workers with disabilities act. I would like to take a moment to share with this place an example of why I believe this is a needed and helpful measure for many who are disabled.

Most provincial disability programs are obviously capped at a certain amount. For the sake of an example, and this is not the example I am using from British Columbia, let us say an individual's provincial disability assistance is \$1,200. Unless one has the benefit of being subsidized, rent for housing takes a very good portion, if not almost all, of that monthly amount. For many who are disabled there is simply not enough funds left over to pay utilities, buy groceries, toiletries, and other basic items. For many, the only other option is to find some work, and this is where it gets interesting.

Any income generated independently of social assistance support in some regions may be deducted dollar for dollar. That means if an individual were to earn an extra \$800 working part-time, once that additional income is deducted dollar for dollar, the net income is the same \$1,200. In other words, that individual is no better off working at all. That is what gets to the heart of this legislation. In order for someone on disability to come out ahead, that individual would have to earn at least \$1,300 or more, getting into the range of almost full-time, which for many who are on disability may not be practical or even an attainable solution.

Fortunately, most provinces have developed some income earning exemptions for those on disability. In my home province this is now \$1,000 for a single person on disability. Most would agree that is a positive. We all know that having a job provides more than much-needed additional income. It provides a sense of value and it helps restore confidence.

A retired public servant who has spent many years working with disabled citizens once shared with me some interesting observations. From his perspective, the importance of learning what one can do with a disability as opposed to what can no longer be done is an important part of moving forward.

His other observation was that time was of the essence. The sooner a person is able to return to the workforce in some way, the odds are more likely that person will remain actively engaged in the workplace. Being engaged and productive and finding ways we can achieve that is something government policy should always encourage.

Knowing that in some regions a person with a disability can be adversely impacted by returning to the workplace in any way goes against the principles that help promote a positive and potentially more productive lifestyle. For those of us who are not disabled, our net take-home pay will generally always ensure we come out ahead. This principle should be no different for those who are disabled.

When I think of the observations from that retired civil servant, what the bill proposes would help to ensure that the framework would be in place. That is a positive and it is one of the reasons why I support the bill.

I would like to thank and commend the member for Carleton for bringing forward this important legislation. I am not sure of the member's original reasons for getting involved in this area, but he has been a champion for the Canadian National Institute for the Blind. He has been a champion locally for people with disabilities. I am sure it is in part due to his exposure to some people that he has been able to realize he adds unique contributions to this place and his contributions are forwarded by the same. I give him full credit as he continues to stand up for people with disabilities to ensure they can participate meaningfully.

I would like to beg the House's indulgence for a moment on a related subject that is also of concern and is all too often overlooked. To be clear, the bill would create new opportunities to help disabled Canadians. However, from my experience, and perhaps from the experience of other members here, there are those citizens who have barriers, be they mental or physical, that prevent them from securing employment. In some cases, these people are not able to secure disability status. It could be because of a lack of capacity, or as is common in my region a doctor shortage, and that can make it extremely difficult for a marginalized person to receive the required medical certification to qualify for disability status.

• (1155)

That is not something we can directly fix with a private member's bill from this place. Health care, as we know, is a provincially delivered service. However, one thing we have done in this place is to make Canada a less attractive location for new doctors. Recent tax changes, including to personal income tax rates, will result in many doctors having a reduced net take-home pay. That is not helpful in physician recruitment, and it is definitely not helpful for retaining those physicians. I mention these things because I believe it is important to recognize the role of doctors and physicians in establishing disabled status.

Getting back to the bill, I would like to thank all members in this place for taking the time to hear my comments today. I believe it is fundamentally important to find ways we can help disabled Canadians, and this bill is one of the steps we can take together. I would hope that the members here, as well as our colleagues who are trying to travel to Ottawa through ice storms and whatnot, will consider these arguments and support the initiative of the member for Carleton. This is an important step for ensuring that every single Canadian from coast to coast to coast has the same benefit and the same principle to participate meaningfully in the workplace, earn some more income, feel the pride of being more self-sufficient, and not be subject to government clawbacks, which oftentimes make very little sense to the people who are subject to them, or to many of us in this chamber.

*Government Orders***GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[Translation]

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to have an opportunity to speak to this bill, which is important to understanding the situation many people face on a daily basis. For instance, some couples, when one of them has a disability and is not currently working, have to crunch the numbers before accepting a job. A number of considerations come into play when deciding whether it is worth it to go to work. Transportation costs, for one, are a factor that must be considered and so are day care costs, if the couple has children, since staying at home saves on this expense. A number of factors come into play in the calculation. Furthermore, many benefits are lost once a certain income bracket is reached. For instance, the amount of family allowance payments goes down as income goes up. This can have a significant impact considering all the benefits. In Quebec, the public drug insurance plan covers people who are not working. People who work are obligated to join the drug plan offered by their employer, and that plan is sometimes a lot more expensive than the government plan. Choosing to go to work can have significant financial consequences.

When you add up all the money people do not have to spend when they are not working but do have to spend when they are, and then you factor in lost benefits, the tax rate, and rising costs of various services they need, unfortunately for a lot of people, it is not worth having a job. That is just so sad.

Right now, we have an unprecedented labour shortage. In Abitibi—Témiscamingue, people are tearing their hair out trying to come up with ways to find workers. Many of these jobs require minimal skills, and employers are even hiring people who are not qualified at all. For many of these jobs, the only requirement is willingness to work. The situation is so dire that employers have no choice. Right now in Abitibi—Témiscamingue, businesses are closing and restaurants are cutting back their hours because they cannot find workers.

We need to figure out how to help everyone with the ability and the desire to work find those opportunities because the labour shortage is having a major impact on regional economies like mine. A bill like this one would guarantee that people with disabilities benefit from making that decision to work. I think that is so important.

Employers are left with no choice. They have to resort to non-traditional labour pools. When people do the math and realize it is not worth it to go to work, then we lose out on potential employees. Countless studies have shown how effective persons with disabilities are at work.

I will be pleased to continue my speech when we resume debate on this bill.

• (1200)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The time allotted for debate has expired. The hon. member will have six minutes for her speech when the House resumes debate on the bill.

The time provided for the consideration of private members' business has now expired and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

[English]

BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2018, NO. 1

Hon. Jody Wilson-Raybould (for the Minister of Finance) moved that Bill C-74, an act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 27, 2018 and other measures, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

[Translation]

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to speak to Bill C-74 on behalf of the Government of Canada, as well as our government's planned investments to strengthen the middle class and maintain the strength and sustainable growth of the Canadian economy. Budget 2018, entitled "Equality + Growth: A Strong Middle Class", represents the next stage in our plan to invest in people and the communities where they live in order to provide the best opportunities for success to the middle class and all Canadians.

The bill we are talking about today, budget implementation act, 2018, No. 1, is the next step in the plan that our government launched over two years ago. When we took office, we jumped into action by helping develop a confident middle class that stimulates economic growth and that is currently benefiting from more opportunities for success than ever. Giving Canadians the opportunity to reach their full potential is not only the right thing to do, but it is also the smart thing to do for our economy. The decision to invest in the middle class is the right decision. Targeted investments combined with the hard work of Canadians across the country have helped create good, well-paying jobs and will continue to strengthen the economy over the long term.

Canada's economy is strong and growing, and the government's finances are continuously improving. Since 2016, Canada has been leading the G7 in economic growth. It has the lowest net debt-to-GDP ratio of any G7 country, by far. The federal debt-to-GDP ratio has been firmly placed on a downward track, and based on our projections, the deficit-to-GDP ratio should also drop to 0.5% in 2022-23. Our government knows that its plan is working because Canadians are working. Over the past two years, the Canadian economy has grown and generated 600,000 new jobs, most of which are full time. Today, we have the lowest unemployment rate in nearly 40 years. These jobs have made it possible for Canadians to better meet their families' needs and better plan for their retirement.

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However, we know that there is still work to be done. We must ensure that the economy reflects the diversity of our country, a country where all Canadians can contribute to and benefit from the nation's prosperity in a significant way. Bill C-74 contains worthwhile measures. I would like to take a few moments to present a few of them, since they are an important part of our government's plan to help the middle class and all those who are striving to reach their full potential. The government believes that Canada's biggest strength is our diversity. In order to succeed in a rapidly changing world, our economy must reflect our diversity and give every Canadian real and fair opportunities to succeed.

Regarding gender equality, we know that although Canadian women today are among the best educated in the world, they earn less than men, are less likely to participate in the labour market than men, and are more likely to work part time. We believe it is time for a change. Closing these gaps and giving women equal opportunities to succeed will encourage a more inclusive dialogue on the questions that will shape our future. We know that it will also improve the quality of life of our families and communities while stimulating the economy. Simply put, when women have the support and opportunities to fully contribute to Canada's economy, all Canadians do better.

For example, the Canada child benefit is an important government initiative aimed at making a positive change for the millions of Canadian families with children. Close to 3.3 million families with children are receiving more than \$23 billion in annual Canada child benefit payments. A single mom of two children aged five and eight with a net income of \$35,000 in 2016 will have received \$11,125 in tax-free Canada child benefit payments in the 2017-2018 benefit year. Naturally, this \$11,125 is absolutely tax free. That is \$3,500 more than she would have received under the previous child benefit system.

Last year, single mothers earning less than \$60,000 a year received \$9,000 in benefit payments on average to help make things like healthy food and summer programs for their kids more affordable. Thanks to this increased support, the Canada child benefit is helping to lift hundreds of thousands of Canadian children out of poverty. Child poverty has been reduced by 40% compared with 2013.

● (1205)

By better supporting those families that need it most, including those led by single mothers, the Canada child benefit helps them give their children a good start in life by providing a safe place to live, music lessons, affordable sports camps, and all the day-to-day necessities to which every child has a right.

With Bill C-74, our government will enhance the Canada child benefit in order to ensure that the benefit is indexed to the cost of living effective July 2018, which is two years earlier than initially scheduled.

We realize that some people, especially indigenous people living in northern and remote communities, have often faced barriers when it comes to accessing essential government services and federal benefits such as the Canada child benefit. With Bill C-74, our government will take steps to ensure that anyone who is eligible for support receives it.

Through Bill C-74, the government proposes to expand outreach efforts to all indigenous communities on reserves and in northern and remote areas, and to conduct pilot outreach projects for urban indigenous communities so that indigenous peoples have better access to a full range of federal social benefits, including the Canada child benefit.

● (1210)

[English]

Now I would like to talk about the Canada worker's benefit. Canadians working hard to join the middle class deserve to have their hard work rewarded with greater opportunities for success. We know that these Canadians are working to build a better life for themselves and their families. Low-income Canadians are sometimes working two or three jobs so that they can give themselves and their children a better chance at success. That is why budget 2018 introduced the new Canada workers benefit, the CWB. Building on the former working income tax benefit, the CWB would put more money into the pockets of low-income workers. The CWB would encourage more people to join and remain in the workforce by letting them take home more money while they work.

Through Bill C-74, the government would increase the overall support provided by the CWB for the 2019 and subsequent taxation years. In particular, the government proposes to increase maximum benefits under the CWB by up to \$170 in 2019, and increase the income level at which the benefit is entirely phased out. As a result, low-income workers earning \$15,000 could receive up to almost \$500 from the CWB in 2019 than they could receive this year under the current working income tax benefit. That is \$500 to invest in the things that are important to them, and to make ends meet.

The government would also propose changes to improve access to the CWB to allow the Canada Revenue Agency to calculate the CWB for anyone who has not claimed it starting in 2019.

Due to these enhancements and intended actions to improve take-up in 2019, the government estimates that more than two million working Canadians would benefit, many of whom were not benefiting from the working income tax benefit. This would help lift approximately 70,000 Canadians out of poverty.

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With regard to small businesses, the government is also committed to providing direct support to the small businesses that create the jobs that Canadians depend on. Small businesses are a critical part of our economy, and the government is taking action to help them grow, invest, and create good, well-paying jobs. To that end, Bill C-74, proposes to lower the small business tax rate to 10% from 10.5%, effective January 1, 2018, and to 9%, effective January 1, 2019. This means up to \$7,500 in federal corporate tax savings per year to help entrepreneurs and innovators do what they do best: create jobs. Lowering small business taxes should encourage new capital investment in businesses. These investments, whether in better machinery, more efficient technology or new hires, make businesses more productive and competitive.

Bill C-74 also proposes measures to ensure that the tax system encourages corporate owners, including small business owners, to use low corporate tax rates to support their business and not for significant personal tax advantages. The first measure would reduce the ability to access the small business tax rate for small businesses with significant income from passive investments. For those earning less than \$50,000 of passive investment income each year, there will be no change in the tax treatment. Also, the tax applicable to investment income remains unchanged. Refundable taxes and dividend tax rates would remain the same.

A second measure corrects a flaw that allows larger private corporations to gain an unintended tax advantage. The measure would better align the refund of taxes paid on passive income with the payment of dividends sourced from passive income. Together, these two changes would impact less than 3% of all private corporations and provide a simpler and more targeted approach. Ninety per cent of the tax impact would be borne by households in the top 1%.

We listened and the design of these proposals is based directly on the feedback that we received during the consultations on our tax proposals. Thanks to this input, we have put forward an approach that is simpler and better targeted than what was outlined last summer. At the same time, we are doing more to help typical small businesses grow by enabling them to retain more earnings for investment and job creation through a lower small business tax rate.

To help Canadians succeed today and in the economy of tomorrow, the government is making long-term investments to grow the economy in a way that ensures good jobs, healthy communities, and clean air and water. Canadians understand that pollution is not free nor should it be. That is why putting a price on carbon pollution is central to the government's plan to fight climate change and grow the economy.

In Canada and abroad, the impacts of climate change are evident, including coastal erosion, thawing, permafrost, and increases in heat waves, droughts, and flooding. Our shared quality of life and our present and future prosperity are deeply connected to the environment in which we live.

Today, through Bill C-74, the government is taking action in order to reduce emissions by introducing the greenhouse gas pollution pricing act. Pricing carbon pollution is the most effective way to reduce emissions. It creates incentives for businesses and households to innovate and pollute less.

I would like to underline that our approach to putting a price on carbon pollution has been collaborative from the beginning. As a first step, the government worked with most provinces and territories and indigenous partners to adopt the pan-Canadian framework on clean growth and climate change in December 2016. The framework includes a pan-Canadian approach to pricing carbon pollution, with the aim of having carbon pricing in place in all provinces and territories this year. The plan provides provinces and territories with the flexibility to choose between two systems: an explicit price-based system or a cap-and-trade system. Right now, a price on carbon pollution is in place in four provinces—Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia, and Alberta—covering over 80% of the Canadian population. All other provinces have committed to adopting some form of carbon pollution pricing this year.

Four out of five Canadians live in jurisdictions that already have a price on carbon pollution, as I have mentioned, and right now those provinces are leading Canada in job creation. With that goal in mind, the government is moving ahead to ensure that a legal framework is in place for the proposed federal carbon pollution pricing system. In jurisdictions that fall short of the federal standard, the federal carbon pollution pricing system would apply on January 1, 2019, starting at a price of \$20 per tonne of emissions. The direct revenue from the carbon charges on pollution under the federal system would go back to the province or territory of origin.

On an annual basis, the provincial and territorial systems in place would be assessed by the Government of Canada against the federal standard. By putting a price on carbon pollution, Canada is joining 67 other jurisdictions that have already taken this important step to curb greenhouse gas pollution. Together, those jurisdictions represent about half of the global economy and more than a quarter of global GHG emissions, according to the World Bank's November 2017 report, "State and Trends of Carbon Pricing 2017".

Putting a price on carbon pollution would help put Canada on a course to meet our 2030 emissions target, in combination with other complementary clean growth measures under Canada's clean growth and climate action plan. It makes sense not only for our shared environment, but also to strengthen our growing economy.

Government Orders

•(1215)

[*Translation*]

This bill represents the next steps in the government's plan to put people first by giving them the help they need now, all while investing in the years and decades to come.

In order to remain competitive and successful in the global economy, every Canadian must have the opportunity to contribute to our prosperity and to benefit from it. As we continue to grow and strengthen the middle class, we are making significant progress in terms of equality of opportunity, to ensure that the next generation of Canadians can share in a prosperous middle class; a more innovative, creative, and competitive knowledge-based economy; and environmental protections.

[*English*]

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, before I comment on my colleague's speech, I would like to draw attention to the fact that all of us in this House today are standing with the families of the Humboldt Broncos team, the unspeakable tragedy that occurred just days ago. We want them to know that our thoughts and prayers are with them. We are so grateful for the outpouring of support that has occurred.

In relation to the comments of my colleague, he failed to mention that the government is actually raising taxes on more than 90% of middle-class families. He also failed to mention that we are paying \$26 billion in interest alone to carry the national debt, which will rise to \$33 billion in just a few years. This year alone another \$18 billion is being added to that national debt.

Could my colleague inform this House as to when the budget will be balanced? We were promised during the campaign that the budget would be balanced by 2019. Now we understand that it could be as late as 2045. I wonder if my colleague could enlighten this House as to when the budget will actually be balanced.

•(1220)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Joël Lightbound: Mr. Speaker, I want to echo my colleague's sentiments about the recent tragedy. My thoughts and prayers are with the victims and the community as a whole. I think all members of the House share these sentiments.

As for the member's question about taxation, it is important to bear in mind that one of the first things we did as a government was to lower taxes on the middle class, in the \$45,000 to \$80,000 bracket, while increasing taxes on the wealthiest 1%, in order to give the middle class more money to make investments and meet their many day-to-day obligations. Actually, if I am not mistaken, that was the first thing we did.

However, we did not stop there. We introduced the Canada child benefit, which is more progressive than the family benefits program introduced by the Conservatives. It is more generous to those who need it most, and it is tax free. It provides support directly to Canadian families who need it the most. The Canada child benefit allows nine out of 10 families to keep more money in their pockets, money that is tax free. As I was saying in my speech, this measure

has lifted hundreds of thousands of children out of poverty. It has reduced child poverty in Canada by 40% relative to 2013 levels.

As far as the deficit is concerned, as I said very clearly, the ratio of our debt to the size of our economy is the best in the G7 and is trending downward, as is the ratio of our deficit to the size of our economy. These were precisely the results we were looking for when we decided to grow our economy by investing in the middle class and in infrastructure.

[*English*]

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the budget implementation act seems to be very much in the realm of the Bay Street mentality with which the government approaches issues. It does not close any of the tax loopholes that are incredibly egregious, giving hundreds of millions of dollars to some of Canada's wealthiest citizens. It does not do anything to shut down the overseas tax havens. We have seen the government sign more and more of these tax treaties with these egregious overseas tax havens, letting tens of billions of dollars leave the country.

What the budget implementation act does is ask regular Canadians to wait. They are being asked to wait for pharmacare, until perhaps after the next election or perhaps another decade. Who knows? They are being asked to wait for pay equity, when Canadian women have already waited for decades and decades. For Canadians in my neck of the woods, in New Westminster—Burnaby, who have seen the acute housing and homelessness crisis we are facing, this budget implementation act and the budget basically say to wait as well.

My question is very simple. Since the government seems to be so incredibly generous with its Bay Street friends, why is it always asking Canadians to wait for the essential services they need and that they are asking for?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Joël Lightbound: Mr. Speaker, as far as tax havens are concerned, it is important to mention that nearly \$1 billion were invested in the Canada Revenue Agency over the past two years so the CRA could have investigators on the ground conducting audits and getting results for Canadians. That did not make it to the list of priorities for the Conservative government of Stephen Harper, who did not even talk about it, as the then-minister, Mr. Blackburn, told us just last summer.

We invested \$1 billion to conduct the necessary investigations in order to bring to justice those who send their revenue to tax havens. That is what the Minister of National Revenue is working hard to do at the head of the CRA.

The member said our government waited, but we did not wait when it came to indexing the Canada child benefit to make sure it met the middle class's growing needs and continued to reduce inequality in this country. We did not wait when it came to increasing the Canada workers benefit, formerly the working income tax benefit, by almost 165%, a move that will lift tens of thousands of low-income Canadians out of poverty.

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In my opinion, our government is progressive to the core and is working hard to help those who need it most.

• (1225)

[English]

Mrs. Celina Caesar-Chavannes (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, over this past weekend, I had a round table, an open discussion, about budget 2018 in the riding of Whitby. My hon. colleague had an opportunity to visit the riding a little while ago. In Durham region, of which Whitby is a part, over the last couple of years, we have seen unemployment decrease to the lowest it has been in 15 years. When I was knocking on doors, it was about 11% or 12%, and now it is down to 5.6%. Members in my riding are excited about that. They are excited about the fact that we have been reducing the small business tax rate, we have indexed the CCB, and we have introduced the Canada working income tax benefit.

One of the things that people were questioning and a bit concerned about is what we have done for seniors. I wonder if the hon. member could address some of the concerns that the residents of Whitby have had.

Mr. Joël Lightbound: Mr. Speaker, it is true that I was in the member for Whitby's region. I was impressed by the dynamism of the local entrepreneurs and also the community members I met, who are very involved and shared their concerns with me. It is a region that is very dynamic. With regard to making sure that this growth is sustained, though it was not part of the member's question, I would like to highlight the investments in 2018 in science. They are historic and will make sure that we continue to innovate in this country and create well-paying jobs for Canadians as Canadian scientists are hard at work finding the bright ideas of the future.

In terms of seniors, it is important to remember that one of the things we have done as a government is to increase the guaranteed income supplement by 10%. That is helping close to a million seniors with a little less than \$1,000 per year every year. That is something we should be proud of. That is on top of the national housing strategy we have put forward, which will help provide more housing for senior citizens across this country. These concerns have found an echo in the actions of this government, and I could go on for longer.

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in regard to the national carbon tax and imposing one upon provinces that may not be in agreement with the government's aims, the courts previously found, in the Vander Zalm ruling regarding the HST, that a province not only needed to be consulted, but there needed to be agreement by the province in order for the feds to collect a tax that would normally be collected by the province. It was under the good governance clause that it was allowed.

Does the member or his government have an opinion from the Minister of Justice's officials that he can share outlining the constitutionality of a nationally imposed federal carbon tax? Our Constitution would allow an environmental program to be tabled by the Minister of Environment, but a tax by a federal minister of finance basically engaging in energy regulation, I believe is ultra vires and outside its constitutionality. Does the member have any evidence that he can table, or will his government be tabling such an

opinion, so that members can know this has been thought through? He said in his speech "a legal framework" for the imposition of this national carbon tax? Is it legal?

[Translation]

Mr. Joël Lightbound: Mr. Speaker, obviously we would not introduce a bill if we did not believe it to be legal.

Here is where I disagree with my esteemed colleague: we see this as a price on carbon pollution. My colleague calls it a tax, but it is actually a price on carbon pollution. I think this shows how the Conservatives' vision contrasts with ours. Members on this side of the House believe it is important to grow our economy in a way that protects and preserves our environment. I would also like to remind him that this type of system is in place in four Canadian provinces so far, four provinces that account for 80% of the population.

[English]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there are only two questions that Parliament must ask when presented with a budget: what does it cost us, and what do we get for it as Canadians?

Let us start with the cost of this budget. Costs are borne out through government in three ways: spending, debt, and taxes. Debt and taxes are the symptoms; spending is the cause. Whatever Parliament agrees to allow the government to spend, it must ultimately tax or borrow from the citizens and from bondholders.

The Liberal government loves to spend. The stats show that it has been increasing spending at an annual rate of roughly 6.5% to 7% per year, which is three times the combined rate of inflation and population growth. In other words, spending is growing three times as fast as the need. That spending, of course, requires a source. The government has been plundering taxpayers and borrowing to pay for that spending ever since it took office.

Let me talk briefly about the government's approach to spending. In an adjoining piece of legislation to this budget bill, the government will attempt to change the way in which Parliament approves the executive branch's expenditure of money. We, as Canadians, live in the British parliamentary system, which for roughly 800 years has meant that the power of the purse rests with the elected officials and that the crown cannot spend what Parliament does not approve. That principle originated in the fields of Great Britain at the time that King John signed the Magna Carta.

Typically governments have come forward before the House of Commons with detailed spending plans, item by item, agency by agency, department by department, and purpose by purpose, saying "Here is what we want to spend. Here is what it is for." Then, Parliament has scrutinized that spending and passed it, and that government has been restricted by the specificity that it put in that legislation. In other words, it can only spend the money on the things it said it would, and only in the amounts that it said it would spend.

Instead, this year the government wants to do something that has only once been done in Canadian history, and then only during a crisis, and that is for Parliament to approve \$7 billion of discretionary spending, which ministers on the government's Treasury Board can spend whatever they want on, as long as it stays under that \$7-billion limit.

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As I said, normally that \$7 billion would be carefully earmarked in the main estimates that come before the House, and we as parliamentarians would approve or reject it. If it were approved, then the government would have to spend each dollar where it said it would. However, not this time.

The government has changed the system in a way that allows the government to have a big bundle of cash for a group of politicians sitting on the Treasury Board to allocate as they wish. As it stands, based on the system of financial reporting, the results of that spending will only come out in subsequent public accounts.

The public accounts for the fiscal year we have just entered will not come out until the fall of 2019. As members all know, we will be in an election at that time, and therefore those accounts cannot be tabled in the House until after the election. What the government is asking us to do is approve \$7 billion of discretionary spending, and it will get back to us after the election on how it spent it.

One example of the attitude of the government to spending money was what the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Finance was saying. He was bragging that the government has spent an extra \$1 billion on tax collectors. Normally, most governments blush when they talk about the resources they put into tax collecting departments. The Liberal government openly brags about it.

We all know that tax collection is necessary for any functional country. We also know that given their druthers, the Canadian people would like to see lower taxes and lower costs, and less money spent on bureaucrats hounding our small businesses and workers, as has become the customary practice of the government. We have seen tax collectors go after the tips of waitresses, shoe salesmen's discounts, and the disability tax credit for people suffering with diabetes.

• (1230)

However, the government brags openly about its expenditure on those same tax collectors, which is the Liberal approach to spending: Spend more. Spend now. Spend faster. What does that bring? It brings debt, which is the next pillar of the current Liberal government's plan. It is more debt.

The Liberals ran in the last election on a \$10-billion deficit, which meant they would increase the national debt by a mere \$10 billion a year. In the first two budgets, that deficit was twice what they promised. This time, it will be three times what they promised. Not only that, they promised that the deficit would be gone by 2019, which is next year. Now they say that will not happen for another quarter century. During that time, Canada's national government will add almost half a trillion dollars in additional debt. That assumes that the government introduces no additional spending in the upcoming pre-election budget next year—an unlikely story. It also assumes that direct program spending will only go up by about 1.5% over the next five years, when the government has been increasing that spending at a rate of about 5.5% since it took office. Therefore, we are expected to believe that the Prime Minister is a new man, that he has changed, and that he will not increase spending at 5.5% but only 1.5%. Who believes that the Prime Minister has even the intention of changing his ways, when his words have not suggested that he believes restraint is necessary?

Originally the government told us that its plan, its anchor, was that the deficit must never be more than \$10 billion. Now the Liberals have shattered that promise. The Liberals said their anchor was that they would not add more than \$25 billion total. Well, they have already done almost double that in new debt since taking office. They released that anchor as well.

However, the new anchor that the Liberals say will guide them in their spending is that the debt-to-GDP ratio will decline. That is, the debt will never be allowed to grow faster than the economy. Now, there are problems with using that measurement as an anchor, which I will list. One, the debt-to-GDP ratio of the Government of Canada is an incomplete measure of the country's ability to withstand indebtedness.

The Canadian government is supported by taxpayers. Those taxpayers have to support other levels of government which also have debt. Alberta is adding almost \$10 billion to its debt this year, which means that one-fifth of every expenditure that the Government of Alberta makes is paid for by borrowing. Ontario has doubled its debt in the last 10 years alone, and it is the most indebted subnational government in North America. Atlantic provinces are similarly indebted. Their aging populations will retire in disproportionately large numbers, meaning fewer taxpayers and more people needing health care at a time when their provinces are already struggling with large debt interest payments to lenders. Therefore, the same taxpayers that the federal government are relying on to support the federal debt also have provincial debts that are growing exponentially. Finally, those taxpayers have personal debts, which happen to be among the largest in the OECD. Right now, the average Canadian household has \$1.70 in personal debt for every dollar in disposable income.

If we take the personal debt, the corporate debt, and the government debt of the entire economy, it is three times the size of GDP, which is a larger ratio than Greece, Spain, or other basket cases on debt around the world. This is according to Gluskin Sheff, which is a major financial firm that performed that calculation just a month and a half ago. Therefore, if we take all the debt that the Canadian economy is supporting, we are in a worse financial position today than is Greece.

Government Orders

●(1235)

The government just assumes that all of its good luck will continue. Oil prices have doubled. The American economy is roaring. The world economy has picked up. Interest rates have been at historic lows. The real estate bubble in Toronto and Vancouver has created a short-term and unsustainable employment boom and revenue for the government it cannot count on. All of these events are temporary. They are out of the government's control, and they could be gone just as quickly as they appeared.

If we are running massive, promise-shattering deficits today, while lady luck is smiling, how will we pay the bills when she starts to frown? The government has not prepared for those eventualities. In fact, its arbitrary debt-to-GDP ratio anchor creates a whole series of perverse policy incentives.

The debt is the numerator in that measurement, and the GDP is the denominator. If we were hit with a financial crisis that caused the GDP to shrink, to reduce the debt-to-GDP ratio, as the government claims is its promise, it would actually have to cut spending dramatically in the middle of a recession, which is exactly the opposite of what it claims should be done during such economic times. It would have to cut spending to reduce the size of government faster than the economy overall was reducing in size, and it would have to do so in a way that would allow it to run budget surpluses in order to pay down the debt at a faster rate than the economy was shrinking.

Who in the House would really think it was responsible to prepare for a rainy day by suggesting that if a financial crisis were a problem and an external threat were to arise, the solution, according to the government's plan, would be to cut spending and dramatically reduce the government's ability to respond? That is effectively what the government's current anchor would require it to do to reduce the debt-to-GDP ratio in the event that a crisis came along and shrunk the GDP. Nevertheless, that is the anchor it chooses to rely upon as it goes forward.

That brings me to taxes, because, as we know, today's deficits are tomorrow's taxes. The government cannot ultimately spend any money that it does not tax, either by taking it out of the pockets of people today or by forcing them to pay interest on debt tomorrow. That interest, by the way, is going to rise by one-third over the next five years under the government's plan, from about \$25 billion to \$32 billion. That is an increase of \$7 billion or \$8 billion in the amount Canadian taxpayers will give wealthy bondholders. That is another wealth transfer, by the way, from the working class to the super-rich. That always happens through higher taxes.

What do we know about the government's record already on taxes? According to the Fraser Institute, which conducted an objective and scientific analysis of the taxes paid by middle-class Canadians, 80% are already paying higher taxes under this government, on average \$800 more. With other projected tax increases, those the government has already legislated or committed to, it will be about 90% of Canadian taxpayers, and they will pay, on average, over \$2,000 more in taxes once the government's full plan is implemented.

Taxpayers are already contributing more to feed the government's insatiable, uncontrollable spending. However, the government is just getting started. It has an additional carbon tax it wants everyone to pay. That tax is laid out in a 206-page section of the budget bill we are now debating. Let us step back a minute and ask ourselves what we were told about this carbon tax.

●(1240)

First, we were told that it would be revenue neutral, that the government would cut taxes as much as it raised them. While people might pay more for gas, groceries, electricity, and other basic essentials, they would get an income tax break or perhaps a consumption tax break. As a result, it would be a strictly neutral transaction shifting taxes from what we earn to what we burn. That was the promise. However, nowhere in these 206 pages of legislation on the federal carbon tax is there any mention of a tax reduction to offset the new burden to be paid by Canadian taxpayers for the carbon tax.

Second, we were told that the carbon tax would be simple. There would be a wholesale levy, and then the marketplace would do its work. The government would put a price on something we do not want, and people would therefore consume less of it, that being carbon-intensive goods, and the problem would solve itself. We would not need all this bureaucracy: regulators, administrators, rules, and accountants to administer the tax on the end of the small business or household. That would all be behind us.

We now have the legislation, and it is 206 pages long. There are permits. There are credits that could be traded between provinces, and there are different rates of taxation for different kinds of carbon products, all of which will have to be sorted out through endless paperwork by high-priced accountants and lawyers who will then administer this scheme.

This carbon tax, as established by this legislation, would benefit some. It would benefit those who are wealthy and well-connected and who have the ability to get their hands on the resulting revenue.

Ontario already has a carbon tax, and while it takes one-third more of the income of a low-income household than that of a rich household, it provides benefits to people who can afford to buy a \$150,000 electric Tesla. If someone is a millionaire and can buy a Tesla, that person will get \$15,000 as a bonus, but a low-income single mom trying to keep the lights on or pay for gas to get to work will pay more so that the rich guy can have his fancy electric car. It is another wealth transfer to the privileged elite using government as the delivery mechanism to move money from those who earned it to the privileged few who did not.

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• (1245)

Herein lies the worst part of the carbon tax, and it is the cover-up, the carbon tax cover-up. For the last two years, I have asked the Liberal government what it would cost the average family to pay the \$50-a-tonne carbon tax. The good news is that the government has that information. I know, because I submitted access to information requests for which it released the information. However, it released the information with some black ink over the numbers. We are not allowed to know the numbers. We know there is a cost, and we know that the government knows the cost, but it does not want us to know the cost.

This is the first time in my parliamentary career that a government has imposed a tax without telling people what it will cost them. The basic principle of parliamentary democracy is that the commoners must approve any tax the common people must pay, but we cannot approve what we do not know. If the government is so proud of its carbon tax, why does it not tell people what it will cost them?

Finally, the government will not tell us how much greenhouse gases will be reduced. We do not know the cost and we do not know the benefit, yet we are supposed to judge the cost-to-benefit analysis.

This budget costs too much and will achieve too little, so I am moving a motion to amend the budget bill. I move:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word "That" and substituting the following: the House decline to give second reading to Bill C-74, an act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 27, 2018 and other measures, since the Bill: (a) fails to address the cost of the government's carbon tax to the average Canadian Family; (b) neglects to implement, or to even mention, the government's promise of a balanced budget; and (c) will continue on the path of adding debt at twice the rate foreshadowed by the Minister of Finance.

• (1250)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The motion seems to be in order.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Whitby.

Mrs. Celina Caesar-Chavannes (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member took me back to my fourth grade days when he mentioned that debt was the numerator and GDP was the denominator and that if, for example, we got into a fiscal crisis, we would need to cut services to maintain our debt-to-GDP ratio.

I am wondering if my hon. colleague remembers the days before the last election, when that is exactly what his government did. It cut services and essential programs needed by Canadians to create a fictional surplus before the last election. During the election, his government then ran on an austerity budget at a time when the economy was stagnant, such that at this time, we would not see Canada as the fastest-growing country in the G7, we would not see the job creation we have seen so far, and we would not see the economy booming as we do.

I am wondering if the hon. colleague can speak to that.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, I certainly can, as a matter of fact. She said we would not have seen Canada as the fastest job-creation jurisdiction in the G7 if Conservative policies were in place. Actually, that is exactly what we saw. When the great global recession struck here in Canada, we had the best job record

anywhere in the G7. In fact, we were the last country to go into deficit and the last country to go into recession, and we were the first to come out of recession. That was the result of careful planning in the good times.

In the years leading up to that great global recession, which originated outside our borders, our previous finance minister, Jim Flaherty, paid off \$40 billion in debt so that we had a cushion and could absorb those external shocks. We then quickly recovered and turned that short-term, externally caused deficit into a surplus so that when the next worldwide shock struck, the 70% drop in oil prices in late 2014, we were once again insulated against its effects, and we were able to move forward with a solid economic position. That is a good reminder that when times are good, we should squirrel away everything we can so that we are prepared for the bad times that may come ahead.

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I like the hon. member, and he is certainly very articulate, but I really have to ask where he was over the past decade, particularly under the Harper government. We saw the worst deficits in our nation's history under the Conservatives, and we saw the highest family debt load in Canadian history. It has gotten worse under the Liberals.

He mentioned in his speech the question of transferring money to the privileged few. This was a practice started by the Harper government, and it has been amplified by the Liberals, particularly when we look at overseas tax havens. We lose anywhere from \$10 billion to \$40 billion each and every year. No one knows how much, because the Liberals, up until a few weeks ago, refused to give the figures to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, as the Conservatives did before them. We lose billions and billions of dollars a year that could go to job creation, building social programs, and providing the things Canadians really need. What we have seen is the Liberals continuing the practice of signing these tax treaties with notorious tax havens.

My question for the hon. member is very simple. Does he think it is bad, as I do, that the Liberals are continuing the practice of signing these agreements with overseas tax havens and allowing tens of billions of dollars to leave the country untaxed, when they could be serving to build job creation, build a better economy, and build programs for Canadians?

• (1255)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, I like the member as well. He talks about the Liberal approach to tax fairness. In the last election, the Prime Minister said that he would go after wealthy tax cheats. It was not until after the election that we found out whom he meant. He meant pizza shop owners, farmers, and welders who own small businesses. He meant waitresses who might get a discount on a sandwich during their break at the restaurant. He meant diabetics, from whom his government attempted to take away the disability tax credit. Those were the wealthy tax cheats the Prime Minister had in mind.

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That reminds us that whenever government gets big, costly, and expensive, it is always the working class that pays the bills. That is because capital and higher income people are more mobile. They have the ability to reap the benefits of big government without absorbing the cost. Of course, workers do not have the same ability. They cannot hire a fancy accountant or move their money offshore. They cannot get on a plane and just move somewhere else to work for another company around the world somewhere. As a result, when all the bills come due for big government programs, it is always working people who end up shouldering the burdens.

The solution to that is to contain government and allow people to keep more of what they earn to expand free enterprise, a system based on voluntary exchange, where one can get ahead only by offering something to someone else that is worth more to that person than it costs to pay for it. That system of voluntary exchange and free markets has lifted literally billions of people around the world out of poverty. It is the number one determinant of economic success, and it is the greatest invention for the creation of material prosperity and the defeat of poverty ever conceived by any human being.

I am sure the hon. member from the NDP would agree with that.

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I certainly appreciate this member's contribution to the debate today. Absolutely, government debt is at a high when we add in the provinces. However, we also add our demographics, and it becomes incumbent upon any responsible government to make sure it is not taking on more debt than it needs, particularly since there is no war, recession, or public safety concern.

Could the member extrapolate a little on the issue of carbon pricing or carbon taxes? When the carbon tax was brought in, the cement industry in my province of British Columbia was hit extremely hard. Since Washington state and Alberta did not have a carbon tax, and Washington state still does not have one, that industry has been hit particularly hard, and now taxpayers are permanently subsidizing millions of dollars every year, which was supposed to be temporary, just to keep the cement industry going.

I would appreciate if the member could extrapolate more on how carbon taxes actually end up pushing people's behaviour in odd ways.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Mr. Speaker, the member from British Columbia is a great champion for entrepreneurship. He understands that entrepreneurship is about allowing people to produce prosperity for themselves, their families, and their communities. That is one of the points of distinction between this side and that side. As he correctly points out, governments tax industries and people into submission. As Reagan put it, "If it moves, tax it. If it keeps moving, regulate it. And if it stops moving, subsidize it."

We see it over and over again. Let us just consider the current example of the Trans Mountain pipeline. The government has wrapped the project in so much bureaucratic red tape that the proponent has suggested that the project may no longer be economically viable and they may cancel it altogether. Now the government is saying, "It is okay. We will just take taxpayers' money to prop up what we have been holding down." One wonders why it did not just get out of the way in the first place and let this

ecologically friendly, safe, and secure project go ahead without so much burden.

Again, the government imposes taxes, regulations, and other costs until businesses finally cannot operate. Then it says that it needs to spend more money to prop up all these failing businesses. We saw it impose massive new taxes on small businesses, or at least attempt to, in the fall, before we stopped it. Simultaneously, it is saying that we need billions of dollars of corporate welfare to save businesses from collapse. Why not just get out of the way in the first place, so that enterprise can rely on investment and sales to generate its revenues and pay its bills, rather than constantly forcing businesses to hire lobbyists, suck up to politicians, and turn to government?

● (1300)

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will talk about the size and scope of Bill C-74. I would like to start with the size. I have been here for a few years, and a number of my colleagues have been as well, and we recall the worst years of the Harper government, when massive 300- and 400-page bricks would be dropped in the middle of the House of Commons.

Those omnibus bills, as part of the budget implementation act, were designed to hit sometimes a couple of dozen areas and various pieces of legislation. It was a deliberate tactic, which was anti-democratic and designed to hide from the Canadian public what was actually in the budget implementation act. Of course, we spoke very loudly about that, as did many Canadians, seeing it as a fundamentally anti-democratic approach to government, with 300 or 400 pages touching 24 or 25 different pieces of legislation. What it did was hide the intent of the budget in a very real way.

At that time, we were the official opposition, but the Liberals, as the third party, also rose in this House and repeatedly condemned the Harper government for putting in place anti-democratic omnibus legislation. My colleagues will recall Liberal members standing up and saying that having 300 or 400 pages of legislation that is dumped in one brick hitting 24 or 25 different pieces of legislation is fundamentally anti-democratic. It does not allow Canadians to know what is really in the budget implementation act, and it does not provide the kind of clarity and transparency that hopefully we would all seek to see in a budget implementation act, which is perhaps one of the most important pieces of legislation brought forward by Parliamentarians, who are elected by the people of this country to come together and discuss transparently and democratically the nation's business. This piece of legislation is one of the most important.

Thus, my colleagues can understand my complete dismay when the Liberals, just a couple of weeks ago, tabled their budget implementation act. We have had previous budget implementation acts of 300, 350, 400, and sometimes as many as 450 pages of legislation tackling 27, 28, even 29 different pieces of legislation.

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The Liberals made commitments of sunny ways and a new approach to transparency. We all recall, back in 2015, the Prime Minister making those commitments, that the Liberals would take a completely different approach to governance, that they would have respect for democracy and bring in a different type of electoral process, putting away first past the post. The Liberals also said very clearly, many times, that they were going to do away with omnibus legislation.

However, what did the Liberals table? They tabled the largest omnibus bill in Canadian history, 556 pages, amending not just 28, 29, or 30 different acts, but 44 separate pieces of legislation. It is nearly 100 pages longer than any of the omnibus legislation we have seen in the past, which the Liberals used to criticize and attack. We are 100 pages beyond what the Conservatives used to do, 100 pages beyond the Harper record. We have the biggest, fattest, and least transparent budget implementation act in Canadian history.

There is no other way to put it. This is a profound betrayal of everything the Liberals said they stood for in 2015, every commitment they made to Canadians at that time, and every speech the Prime Minister and other Liberal MPs made in the House of Commons saying that they were going to do away with omnibus legislation. The size of this is beyond belief. We have never seen anything like it, 550 pages. It is beyond anything the Harper government imagined or was able to table. It is that much worse.

● (1305)

It will come as no surprise to you, Mr. Speaker, that in the coming days we will be endeavouring to put the case to you, because, as Speaker of the House of Commons, on behalf of all Canadians, you have the ability to divide or carve up this omnibus legislation and create stand-alone bills that can be voted on separately. That power, which has been given to you, Mr. Speaker, is sacrosanct and so important. When the government is refusing to heed Canadians' calls, when it is refusing to be transparent and democratic, then the Speaker of the House of Commons has the ability to intervene, and we will be asking and laying out the case in the coming days for you to do just that. It is fundamentally important.

That is the start of what is probably one of the most cynical budget implementation acts we have ever seen, cynical in its size and in its scope. Before I go into those details, let us talk about what the current situation is for the vast majority of Canadians, because this is very germane to the debate we are going to be having over the next few days. Far from having sunny days and sunny ways, as the Prime Minister likes to say, as he goes around the globe to various meetings, Canadians are actually struggling to make ends meet in a way that is perhaps unprecedented, beyond the depressions and recessions we have seen in the past. We now have a new reality that the government should have taken account of.

The new reality is that the average Canadian family now has, inflation-adjusted, the worst family debt load in any period in Canadian history. The average Canadian family is struggling under a worse debt load than it had under the Great Depression or under recessions. It is struggling under a massive debt load far beyond its annual earnings. That debt load is making it difficult for so many families in this country to make ends meet.

The average Canadian family is now surviving on temporary or part-time work. Despite the fact that the finance minister will stand in the House and say how things are rosy out there, the jobs that are being created tend to be temporary in nature. They do not allow for the family-sustaining type of employment that the NDP has always promoted and that we believe very strongly in achieving. However, that takes investments, forethought, and planning, which we do not see from the government.

When we look at the situation of the average Canadian family, as the price of housing goes up and rents go up, the homelessness and the housing prices are beyond belief. The debt load is considerable and growing. For most Canadians, temporary or part-time work, or cobbling together a series of part-time jobs, is the alternative they have economically.

That is the context of the budget, the context that the government should have paid close attention to. Instead, the Liberals tabled the largest and most fundamentally anti-democratic omnibus piece of legislation in Canadian history, 100 pages beyond anything Mr. Harper did, and they did so in such a timid way that even the scope of the budget itself has been eroded.

It is profoundly cynical as a budget implementation act because it goes far below where the budget was, which was already very timid, so we are looking at an extremely timid budget implementation act in terms of what it seeks to achieve. At the same time, it is fundamentally anti-democratic in the size of what has been dumped into this omnibus legislation.

What could have been in this budget implementation act and should have been in the budget? We talked about this a number of times. I spoke at a press conference with Jagmeet Singh, the national NDP leader, a very charismatic and energetic guy, and we gave some direction to the federal government as to what it should put in the budget. One of the most important items was tackling what is a profoundly unfair tax system. I also intervened in a letter to the finance minister with the hon. member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith, who is an extremely effective member of Parliament, and we spoke about gender equality.

● (1310)

When we look at what is in the budget, we see absolutely nothing that touches on the issue of tax fairness. Tens of billions of dollars is going offshore that the government refuses to cap or take action on in any way. In fact, on the current government's watch, more of these very egregious tax treaties, which are basically no-tax treaties, are being signed with notorious tax havens like Antigua, Barbuda, Grenada, and the Cook Islands. The Conservatives signed them all the time. However, the Liberals are signing even more.

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The Liberals did nothing to tackle the issue of the stock options loophole, which is a nefarious loophole that in the latest year we have figures for helped 75 wealthy corporate CEOs pocket \$6 million each, for a grand total cost to Canadian taxpayers of half a billion dollars. That was \$6 million each, on average, for 75 of Canada's wealthiest corporate CEOs who used the stock option loophole. Jagmeet Singh and I directed our comments to the finance minister and the Prime Minister stating that it needs to end. The Liberals could have chosen to end the stock option loophole and take action on the issue of tax havens. However, they did neither. They are allowing that privilege, the transfer of wealth that we are seeing, and a growing inequality in this country, such that now a third of the Canadian population has as much wealth as two Canadian billionaires, something that came out just a few months ago and continues to reverberate with regular Canadians because they see the inequality in the tax system. They see a tax system that is built to be profoundly unequal, and of course they are reacting, because the Liberals and the Prime Minister promised in the last campaign to take action against the proliferation of tax havens and the profoundly unfair tax system that makes sure that tradespeople, small business owners, nurses, or truck drivers pay their fair share of taxes, yet someone who is running one of Canada's biggest and most profitable corporations does not have to worry about that.

As members know, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives has now estimated the real marginal income tax rate for Canada's biggest corporations at less than 10%. It is at 9.8% on average. There are a lot of corporations that are not paying any tax at all. However, the average tax rate is now 9.8%, which is far lower than for regular individuals, who are working hard each and every day to put food on the table, seeing an erosion of their services, and participating in a tax system that is absolutely and profoundly unfair.

That is what could have been in this budget implementation act. However, there is no sign of that at all.

We would expect that there would be provisions from the budget in the budget implementation act. This is something I would like to tackle now.

When we talk about the scope of the budget implementation act, there are two things that come to mind immediately. The first is the issue of pharmacare. I have spoken in this House many times about constituents, as have my colleagues. All of us have raised specific cases as to why it is important to have pharmacare in this country. First off, as a country we pay too much, and many Canadians are left to choose between putting food on the table or paying for their medication. Jim, whom I have cited a number of times, is outside here, just off Wellington Street, and begs every day for the \$580 he needs every month to pay for the medication that keeps him alive. Because there is no pharmacare, Jim and so many others like him are forced into that awful choice.

We, the Parliamentary Budget Officer, and every expert who has analyzed this issue have said that bringing in pharmacare makes sense from a whole range of perspectives. Overall, it actually saves money for Canadians. It allows us to bring down the costs of medications. It reduces costs for some small businesses that pay up to \$6 billion a year for medical plans that allow their employees to have access to medications.

● (1315)

Therefore, for all of those reasons, it made sense to bring in pharmacare. We certainly heard in the weeks coming up to the budget a refrain that the Liberal government was going to bring in pharmacare, so we should watch out, because this budget was going to steal the NDP's thunder. We are happy to have our ideas stolen; we just do not like to have them gawking at our ideas, because gawking does not mean they are implementing them, which is what they should be doing. They should be implementing pharmacare right now. That is what they should be doing.

We saw in the budget that instead of doing anything practical to address the issue of pharmacare, the Liberals promised a study, and that was it. There was nothing more. As a result, the scope of the budget implementation act is a mighty failure when it comes to actually putting in place programs that matter.

We then come to the issue of gender parity. My colleague from Nanaimo—Ladysmith has been a very articulate spokesperson on this issue. We raised it with the Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister prior to the budget. There were some words in the budget about moving forward on pay equity. We saw that. We read that. Yes, the government was going to implement pay equity, finally, after decades.

Then, as I madly perused the 556 pages of the most massive and most bloated omnibus legislation in Canadian history, I looked for something that indicated that the Liberals would implement pay equity, but there was nothing, not a word. The Liberals promised it in the budget, and they have already broken their promise with the budget implementation act a couple of weeks later. It is unbelievable. It was an issue that the Liberals admitted it was time to take action on. In the transfer from the budget to the budget implementation act, it is not as if they were trying to scale it down. At 556 pages, they were dumping everything they could into it, but they decided not to dump in pay equity, which was actually in the budget and could be in the budget implementation act as a respectful and democratic way of processing the commitment that was made in the budget, but there was absolutely nothing. It is another broken promise, another fail. It is appalling to me.

Therefore, looking at the scope of the budget implementation act, not only do we see all sorts of things thrown into the BIA that should not be there and that we will be requesting that you remove, Mr. Speaker, so that we can have the appropriate democratic process even though the government does not seem to want to respect that, but there are also things that should be there that are simply not. That is the real failure of this budget implementation act.

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It is so cynical in its nature. Everything that the Liberals said they stood for in 2015 they no longer stand for. We all saw those promises about making Parliament work, making it more transparent and democratic. On every commitment that they made to the public in 2015, we are seeing exactly the opposite in the greatest, most bloated omnibus legislation in Canadian history, not tabled by the Harper Conservatives, as bad as they were, but tabled by this Prime Minister's Liberal government. What a failure for those Canadians who have been waiting for decades for pay equity. What a failure for those Canadians who have been waiting for decades for pharmacare so that they do not have to beg to raise enough money to pay for their medication or do not have to choose between paying the rent and paying for their medication. On behalf of all those Canadians across the country who were hoping to see a different approach from the current government, I can say we are all profoundly disappointed by this budget implementation act. As a result, we will be voting against Bill C-74.

● (1320)

Ms. Filomena Tassi (Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, to be fair, I know that when the Liberals ran, their platform was different from that of the opposition parties. It was different in that we committed to invest in Canadians. We made that commitment because we believed that this investment was important and worthwhile. We know what Canadians are about, and we know that this investment is going to pay off.

Those investments have paid off. In fact, over 600,000 jobs have been created since November 2015. Canada has the best balance sheet in the G7, with the lowest debt-to-GDP ratio. It is projected to soon be at the lowest point in almost 40 years.

We will index the CCB this July. That is what the budget implementation bill will do. We know that when the CCB was first introduced, nine out of 10 families benefited, raising over 300,000 children out of poverty. In the budget implementation bill, the Canada workers benefit is going to raise approximately 70,000 Canadians out of poverty. We have reduced small business tax. There are many things that our budget will do, because we want to invest in Canadians, we believe in Canadians, and we are very proud of the results.

I recognize that the opposition party took a different approach. However, in terms of the budget implementation bill, I would like to ask the hon. member about one thing in particular. I would like to hear his comments on the new gender results framework. How does the member feel about that framework? Does he believe that this is important for Canadians? Does the member see the merit in implementing it the budget implementation bill?

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, I think the answer is quite simple. It is the actions brought forward in the budget implementation bill that will actually make a difference for Canadian women. It is not there, nor are the commitments around pay equity that were made, and these were commitments made in the budget. We are not talking about a broken Liberal promise from five years ago, 10 years ago, or 15 years ago; we are talking about a few weeks ago.

A commitment was made in the budget, but it is not contained in the budget implementation bill. For all of the Canadian women who have been fighting for pay equity and for all of them who have said

that they have waited long enough, both Liberal and Conservative governments have been responsible for that broken promise.

There would have been the light of hope, when the budget came out, that the budget implementation bill would contain those provisions, but it did not. There is not a word. It is a tragically broken promise.

What makes this such a cynical budget implementation bill is that a commitment made just a few weeks ago is already being broken by the Liberal government.

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I could not agree more with the member on his enumeration of the many failed and broken promises of the Liberal government in relation to its platform and all of its great plans. Suddenly, all of those promises are being broken.

My question relates particularly to the carbon tax. If I am not mistaken, my colleague and his party do support a carbon tax. We know that the government knows what the carbon tax will cost, but it has not been willing to divulge that information.

I wonder if my colleague and his party have done any substantive studies on what this carbon tax will actually cost the average Canadian family.

● (1325)

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, this is the problem of transparency that we have seen with both the government of the member's prime minister, Mr. Harper, and the current government. There is a lack of transparency.

That is why the provisions that are contained within this budget implementation bill are so inappropriate. It should be a stand-alone bill. Perhaps the member will be raising this as well with the Speaker. I have certainly indicated that we will be raising the idea that it should be carved off for that exact reason, so that we can do the appropriate study and have the appropriate vote around that issue.

The environment is something that I feel profoundly strongly about. We have seen failure from the current government, as we saw failure from the previous government. I think younger Canadians certainly get it, because we are seeing more and more of them saying "A pox on both the old parties. They simply do not take into consideration the intense impacts of climate change."

The fact is that climate change is costing our economy billions of dollars more every year. The federal government needs to make provisions. Our national government, working with the provinces, has to put measures into place. The current government has completely failed on that. In fact, it is actually going backwards, as the previous government did.

To have that debate, we need transparency. We need to hive off those provisions of the omnibus budget bill so that we can have that debate in Parliament.

Government Orders

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I was very surprised to see that this budget implementation bill amends the Parliament of Canada Act. That is one of the measures that I fought for, particularly at the Procedure and House Affairs Committee. These are recommendations that I made. They seek to recognize motherhood and new parenthood as valid reasons for members to be absent from the House without penalty. Unfortunately, the government included those recommendations in an omnibus budget bill, when they have nothing to do with the budget.

Past amendments to the Parliament of Canada Act were always made in an open and transparent manner. They were never made surreptitiously. Since members must abide by the measures set out in that act, they cannot be amended in secret. To amend the Parliament of Canada Act in a way that is not open and transparent would be an insult to Canadians' intelligence.

I would like to know what my colleague thinks about the transgression that the Liberal government dared to commit in the budget, namely planning to quietly amend the Parliament of Canada Act as part of an omnibus bill.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for Abitibi—Témiscamingue for her intervention. I know her region well, and she is doing a great job of representing it. She is always tremendously passionate about representing her constituents effectively. The concerns she has raised in the House are issues that the people in her region care deeply about. I want to commend her for being such an excellent representative in the House.

My colleague asked a very good question: why did the Liberals cram so much into this monster bill, after criticizing the Harper Conservatives for doing the exact same thing?

What the Liberals are doing now is even worse. Certain measures that should have been included in this bill to implement the budget are missing, and several elements that are included should be removed. As my colleague suggested, this bill ought to be split up so that each element can be considered separately.

We will be back shortly to discuss the possibility of burying this monster bill and drafting fair, well-targeted legislation. That would make the House much more democratic.

• (1330)

[*English*]

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, when we talk about an economic vision for this nation, one concern for me is the Liberals' love of the mega cluster, the supercluster. If they put as much money as possible into two or three big giants, we will have a much broader economy. However, Canada is a very diverse region. Rural regions need specific economic development dollars, yet it has all been put on the desk of the Minister of Innovation. Particularly in my region of northern Ontario, we have the undermining of FedNor programs and the lack of understanding of how we build rural, blue collar, resource-based economies throughout rural parts of Canada.

What does my hon. colleague think of this Liberal vision where by picking a few winners that is going to create a more sustainable economy?

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, very quickly, I would like to praise the member for Timmins—James Bay. He is an amazing and very articulate spokesperson for rural areas across the country and northern Ontario in particular. He speaks up effectively and is one of the leading parliamentarians in the House.

The member raises a very important question. Do we centralize all of our economic considerations around a few companies or do we look to broadening economic development right across the country?

I think members would agree that economic development needs to take place right across the country, not just in a few areas. We need a government with the leadership and the ability to understand all the regions of the country, which is not what we see from the government.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time today with my hon. colleague from the riding of West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country.

[*Translation*]

It gives me great pleasure to speak to Bill C-74, the budget implementation act, 2018, No.1, which is intended to strengthen the middle class and make sure all Canadians have the skills and opportunities they need to succeed.

[*English*]

Budget 2018, appropriately entitled “Equality + Growth: A Strong Middle Class”, is a statement that continues to build upon the solid foundation laid out in our government's prior two budgets.

Our economy is strong and the future for our country and for all Canadians is bright. Our progress as a government over the last two and a half years is something of which we can all be proud.

Hard-working Canadians, including those in my riding of Vaughan—Woodbridge, are taking risks, investing in their communities and their businesses. Due to their efforts over 500,000 net new jobs have been created, an overwhelming majority of which are full time.

[*Translation*]

Our unemployment rate is below 6%, the lowest in 40 years, and thanks to the middle-class tax cut, nine million Canadians are paying less tax. Over a period of five years, that will add up to more than \$20 billion in tax relief for Canadian families.

[*English*]

Our government has ambitiously completed historical and progressive trade deals, including CETA, which will create thousands of good middle-class jobs for Canadians, will strengthen economic relations, and will allow Canadian companies unlimited access to over 500 million consumers.

Government Orders

[*Translation*]

Putting the interests of the middle class at the centre of our trade discussions ensures that Canadian businesses and the Canadian economy will reap tangible benefits.

[*English*]

We have also put in place an infrastructure plan that invests billions in public transit so commuters in my riding of Vaughan—Woodbridge can get home sooner to their families. This we can see is real tangible progress for all Canadians.

[*Translation*]

Our vision strengthens Canada's social fabric and balances the desire for a strong economy, while introducing long-term measures for a healthy environment. This includes pan-Canadian pricing for carbon pollution, an important measure in Bill C-74. Each province will determine how to spend the money generated from carbon pricing. This is the right approach.

• (1335)

[*English*]

I do wish to stress that all the measures in Budget 2018 and laid out in Bill C-74, in my view, only further strengthen our fiscal position.

As an economist and someone with over two decades of experience in the private sector, I have seen and experienced the ups and downs of the global economy, including the 2008 global financial crisis and before that the technology bubble. I know how important it is to maintain a strong fiscal framework.

[*Translation*]

I am proud to say that our plan includes a gradual reduction in the federal debt-to-GDP ratio. According to the International Monetary Fund, Canada has the lowest net debt-to-GDP ratio in all G7 countries.

[*English*]

We have looked at Bill C-74 on a larger scale, so why not look at how the measures we have laid out in this bill would directly affect Canadians in their day-to-day life.

Let us examine the Canada child benefit.

In my riding of Vaughan—Woodbridge, the CCB is assisting thousands of families. The numbers speak for themselves. In one year alone, CCB payments benefited 19,400 children in my wonderful riding, with approximately 10,400 payments and an average tax-free payment of \$5,400. This is approximately \$59 million that is delivered tax free to families in Vaughan—Woodbridge and to 337 other ridings in Canada. This is money which will assist families with paying for their kids' sports, clothes, or can help save for their children's future.

[*Translation*]

Bill C-74 indexes the Canada child benefit beginning in July 2018, that is, two years earlier than originally planned, to help families deal with the high cost of raising children.

It is estimated that this measure will provide an additional \$2.1 billion to families in Ontario alone until 2022-23. That is the kind of leadership Canadians expect from our government.

At this time, the CCB is helping lift millions of families and hundreds of thousands of children out of poverty across the country.

[*English*]

These measures are not only putting more money in the pockets of numerous Canadians families, but they will also positively affect business owners across the country.

In my riding of Vaughan—Woodbridge, the city of Vaughan is home to over 11,000 small and medium-size businesses, employing more than 208,000 people. I am proud to say the city of Vaughan is the largest employment area in the whole York Region.

My riding is home to many businesses, from the large, multinational companies like FedEx and Home Depot, to many family-run firms, including Vision Enterprises, Quality Cheese Inc., Decor-Rest Furniture Manufacturers, to family-run bakeries, which I frequent all too often. When I am home, my family and I enjoy visiting our favourites like Sweet Boutique, La Strada Bakery, and St. Phillips Bakery to just name a few.

[*Translation*]

With Bill C-74, we will strengthen our businesses by lowering the small business tax rate to 10% effective January 1, 2018, and to 9% effective January 1, 2019.

[*English*]

Once fully implemented, those hard-working small business owners will see a tax reduction of up to \$7,500 annually. This measure is a cumulative tax reduction of nearly \$3 billion over the next five years in the pockets of hard-working Canadians across the country.

[*Translation*]

Our government initiated extensive consultations to make sure that entrepreneurs can continue to invest in and grow their business, but also to ensure that all Canadians are paying their fair share of taxes and that the economy is working for everyone.

[*English*]

I know this is crucially important for the many successful private business owners in my riding of Vaughan—Woodbridge who are involved in various industries, from advanced manufacturing, high tech, construction, and the food and beverage sector. I have met with many of these hard-working large, medium, and small business owners, some employing 10 workers and others employing thousands. I am incredibly proud of their hard work and to be their voice in Ottawa.

Our government will ensure that business owners can continue to invest in their businesses and also increase flexibility for owners to build a cushion of savings for personal circumstances, such as maternity leave or retirement.

Government Orders

• (1340)

[*Translation*]

However, we will restrict tax deferrals for passive investments in private corporations. Once a private corporation has amassed significant passive investments, it will no longer be subject to the small business tax rate. This measure will affect less than 3%, or about 50,000, of Canadian-controlled private corporations.

[*English*]

As I noted in my introduction, our government is committed to helping all Canadians succeed, and we are putting money in the pockets of those who need it most.

In budget 2018, our government makes a significant investment in boosting the earnings of low-income workers with a near \$1 billion investment in the Canada workers benefit. The investment will lift 70,000 Canadians out of poverty and, as important, encourage more people to join the workforce.

With the legislative changes that will automatically enrol Canadians, an estimated 300,000 additional low-income workers will receive the new CWB for the 2019 tax year. For example, an individual in my riding who is earning \$20,000 annually, which is not a large sum for a lot of people, and some people make that stretch a long way, will receive an additional \$500 from this measure, where previously no boost was received.

[*Translation*]

As the son of parents who immigrated to Canada with nothing but the desire to work and create a better future for their family, I know that the Canada workers benefit will improve the living conditions of thousands of Canadian workers.

[*English*]

I have touched merely upon a few things that Bill C-74 introduces. The indexation of the Canada child benefit, the Canada workers benefit, and support for small businesses are all measures that will benefit millions of Canadian workers and Canadian businesses from coast to coast to coast.

These measures will lift tens of thousands out of poverty, help families in raising their kids, encourage more folks to enter the labour force, and allow business owners to invest more money to grow their businesses. These are real, tangible, positive outcomes that will better the lives of Canadian families, business owners, and our economy. I am proud of budget 2018 and what is in Bill C-74.

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals always committed to pushing back against omnibus legislation. The member will recall from previous Parliaments that the Conservatives introduced 300- or 400-page pieces of omnibus legislation. The Liberals always decried that, said it was inappropriate, that we should not have all of these measures dumped into one bill. Certainly during the election campaign in 2015, we all recall that the Prime Minister committing to showing more transparency in Parliament, avoiding the egregious type of omnibus legislation we had under the Conservatives. However, lo and behold, we now have the largest omnibus bill in Canadian history, with 556 pages amending more than 44 pieces of legislation.

It is bigger, fatter, more bloated than any omnibus legislation we have had before.

How does the member feel about the betrayal of a solemn commitment made during the election campaign by the Prime Minister on behalf of all Liberal candidates, saying that the Liberals will not do this anti-democratic, non-transparent dumping of omnibus legislation, and then having the Liberals do the worst omnibus bill ever?

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Mr. Speaker, the measures contained in Bill C-74 are real. They impact people in my community and communities across this country, whether it is the indexation of the CCB, implementing the Canada workers benefit, whether it is putting a price on carbon. I could go on and on. Whether it is encouraging women to enter the labour force in greater numbers, closing the wage gap, all of these measures, many of them contained in Bill C-74, are real measures which impact real people every day. They are working hard and trying to save for their families and their future. I am proud to be part of a government that has put forth these measures as making a real difference in people's lives, not some theoretical justification.

• (1345)

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I asked a similar question of the parliamentary secretary a few minutes ago, but there were no answers forthcoming, so I want to see if my colleague could answer some concerns that have been raised.

First of all, my colleague failed to mention that 90% of middle-class families are paying more taxes now than they were two and a half years ago. He also failed to mention the increasing amount of interest we are paying on our national debt. It is \$26 billion this year, and up to \$33 billion by 2021. This is a huge cost in our national budget.

During the last election, the Liberal Party promised that by 2019, one year from now, we would be back to balanced budgets. All of the current estimates indicate that under the government's leadership, the earliest we will balance a budget is 2045. I wonder if my colleague could tell the House when the budget will be balanced.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Mr. Speaker, we are undertaking the necessary investments to grow our economy today and for tomorrow. We are undertaking the necessary investments to invest in families through the Canada child benefit and in businesses much like the five superclusters. One of the superclusters is located near my colleague's riding who is asking the question. Through their hard work and our assistance, Canadians know we have created over 500,000 jobs, with an unemployment rate at less than 6%. It is a 40-year record for participation rates, and a debt-to-GDP ratio which is declining and the lowest in the G7.

Government Orders

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with respect to the last question, it is all about how we do the math. What the Conservatives are not doing is not considering that there is a child benefit that people are getting back. Members are not including that in their math. They are also not talking about the fact that we are lowering the corporate tax rate to 9%. Those are meaningful things that Canadians get to see.

The member talks about the workers benefit that the government is bringing in under this budget. I am curious if he can expand on why he sees that as being important to getting people to work, encouraging people to seek out opportunities so they can continue to strive for and achieve meaningful jobs.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Mr. Speaker, it is great to see my colleague and friend from Kingston and the Islands this morning and his passion. His comments are exactly correct. The CWB will encourage and pull more people into the labour force. We need people entering the labour force. We have a demographic binge where a lot of people are retiring, and we need people coming into the labour force. This will allow low-income workers to benefit and to work hard, as well as remove people from the welfare trap, as one may want to call it in economic terms. This is something that is very important for our government and is going to benefit Canadians for years to come.

Ms. Pam Goldsmith-Jones (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to discuss Bill C-74 and the measures in budget 2018. This budget implementation act is the government's latest phase in growing and strengthening the middle class, promoting equality, and investing in the economy of the future. It is important to take a step back to see how Canadians have fared over these past couple of years. The government's plan to grow the middle class is working. Our plan is working because Canadians are working.

Over the last two years, hard-working Canadians have created nearly 600,000 new jobs, most of them full time. Unemployment rates are near the lowest levels that we have seen in over 40 years. Since 2016, Canada has led all other G7 countries in economic growth. As a result, we are able to continue to invest in the things that matter to Canadians while making steady improvements to the government's bottom line. Two weeks ago, the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities announced that the Government of British Columbia and the Government of Canada have come to an agreement on the investing in Canada infrastructure plan announced in budget 2016. Speaking as a representative from British Columbia, under the agreement, British Columbia will receive \$4.1 billion from 2018 to 2028, making significant investments in our communities' public, recreational, green, and rural infrastructure. Let me also reassure my hon. colleagues that the government is being diligent in making sure that Canada remains the best place to invest, create jobs, and do business. Our future prosperity depends on making sure that every Canadian has an equal and fair chance at success.

For many Canadians, being a parent and raising a family is the most important part of their lives. Employment insurance maternity and parental benefits offer vital income support to parents during the critical period in early childhood when they need to take time off from work to care for their children. Through budget 2018, our government is proposing a new EI parental sharing benefit to support

equality in the home and workplace, by providing up to eight additional weeks of benefits when both parents agree to share parental leave. This "use it or lose it" incentive encourages a second parent in two-parent families to share the work of raising their children more equally. This new EI parental sharing benefit would allow greater flexibility for new mothers and fathers who want to return to work sooner if they so choose, knowing that their families have the support they need; supporting all two-parent families, including adoptive parents and same-sex couples; and allowing parents to share more family and home responsibilities, leading to fairer, less discriminatory hiring practices for women, because men and women have the option to stay at home with their children equally. We need to ensure that the benefits of a growing economy are felt by more and more people.

At this point, I would like to turn to our support for veterans. In my riding and across the country, we are grateful to the men and women who have served and are serving in uniform. It is our responsibility to ensure that they get the services and support they are owed. In West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, we have nine Legions, and nine remarkable ceremonies on Remembrance Day. These continue to grow in terms of attendance and reflect the deep regard of Canadians for veterans. We know it is our duty to uphold the men and women who serve our nation in uniform. We need to listen to and take action to support our veterans who have served with valour, dignity, and sacrifice. The Government of Canada is committed to supporting Canada's veterans and their families. We owe an enormous debt of gratitude to them, and I am pleased to offer comments outlining our commitment.

On December 20, 2017, the government unveiled its pension for life plan, a program designed to reduce the complexity of support programs available to veterans and their families. It proposes a broader range of benefits, including financial stability to Canada's veterans, with a particular focus on support for veterans with the most severe disabilities. Taking a closer look, the three new benefits that provide recognition, income support, and stability to Canada's veterans who experience a service-related injury or illness look like this. The pension for life plan would provide, under pain and suffering compensation, a monthly tax-free payment for life of up to \$1,150 for ill and injured veterans. The plan also proposes, for additional pain and suffering compensation, a monthly tax-free payment for life of up to \$1,500 for veterans whose injuries greatly impact their quality of life. The plan also proposes to provide an income replacement benefit, that is, monthly income replacement at 90% of a veteran's pre-release salary.

Statements by Members

•(1350)

These new elements represent an additional investment of almost \$3.6 billion to support Canada's veterans. These new services and benefits would impact lives significantly. Pension for life would mean that a 25-year-old retired corporal who is 100% disabled would receive more than \$5,800 in monthly support. For a 50-year-old retired major who is 100% disabled, monthly support would be almost \$9,000.

The bill before us includes amendments to the Pension Act and the Veterans Well-being Act to put measures of the pension for life plan into effect. It would also provide income replacement at 90% of pre-release salary for veterans who are facing barriers returning to work after military service.

The government recognizes that psychiatric service dogs play an important role in helping Canadians cope with conditions like post-traumatic stress disorder. Through this bill, the government proposes to expand the medical expense tax credit to recognize costs for these animals for 2018 and future tax years. This measure would directly benefit veterans and others in the disability community who rely on psychiatric service dogs. This measure also complements the work of organizations that support them, such as the Royal Canadian Legion, and Paws Fur Thought, which provide service dogs to veterans and first responders with invisible disabilities.

In conclusion, to face the challenges of today and tomorrow, we will need the hard work, health, and creativity of all Canadians, including our veterans and seniors. One of the ways to help make that happen is by strengthening the programs that make the biggest difference in people's lives and by making those benefits easier to get.

Since 2016, the government has put in place substantial improvements to the benefits and services available for veterans. For example, the government has raised financial supports for veterans and caregivers, introduced new education and training benefits, and expanded a range of services available to the families of medically released veterans. When combined with existing services and benefits to help veterans in a wide range of areas, including education, employment, caregiver support, and physical and mental health, the Government of Canada's investments since 2016 add up to nearly \$10 billion. These investments are the right thing to do to honour our nation's veterans, seniors, and all Canadians.

For that reason, I urge my colleagues to support the budget implementation act.

•(1355)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): We have time for one question before we go to statements by members.

The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the government has failed in the budget and the budget implementation act to take action against tax havens. We are talking about \$10 billion to \$30 billion a year that goes offshore and basically allows Canada's wealthiest citizens and biggest corporations to get off tax free, yet the government does not seem willing to take any action at all on that. It actually restricted the Parliamentary

Budget Officer from getting the information that office needs to tell us about the massive tax gap. As a result, Canadians are asked to wait for things like pharmacare and pay equity.

Why is the government's priorities always with Bay Street rather than main street?

Ms. Pam Goldsmith-Jones: Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, we have all sat here day in, day out, and listened to the leadership of the minister talking about the proactive stance that our government is taking with regard to tax havens and the success she has already met with. Furthermore, going a little broader, it is important to recognize that Canada is the first country in the world to support an ombudsperson to ensure accountability for responsible enterprise when Canadian companies are doing business abroad.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The hon. parliamentary secretary will have three minutes and 50 seconds coming to her when we resume after question period.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

HUMBOLDT BRNCOS BUS CRASH

Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson (North Vancouver, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my very deepest sympathy to the families directly affected by last week's tragic events, to the community of Humboldt, and to all Saskatchewanians.

Having spent my childhood, adolescence, and early adult life in that wonderful province, I was extremely saddened. In a province that is so community oriented and where personal relationships among community members are so strong, there is clearly great sorrow. However, these strong bonds that exist between neighbours and communities have and will be a source of strength as Saskatchewanians struggle to come to grips with the impacts of the accident.

All Canadians mourn with the families, with Humboldt, and with Saskatchewan. On behalf of my constituents, my family, and myself, I would like to express our deepest condolences to the families, the community, and to all Saskatchewanians.

*Statements by Members***HUMBOLDT BRONCOS BUS CRASH**

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, like all Canadians, I was absolutely heartbroken by the news of the Humboldt Broncos tragedy. Although I did not personally know any of the players or coaches, like many Canadians from coast to coast to coast, I, too, have spent countless hours on the bus, first as a player and then as a coach. It is what we have to do in rural communities when we choose to play sports or participate in events.

At the beginning of a season when parents bring their children to the rink to join our team, they are placing their trust in us as coaches and as an organization to protect their children. Their children become our children. They become our family. Just as we would with our own children, we agonize over every detail to ensure the safety of their children on and off the ice.

My heart has been filled with incredible sadness since first hearing this news. The scenario has been played out in our minds over and over again. This indeed is among our worst nightmares.

Since the news of the accident broke, former players, coaches, and volunteers have all reached out to me. Their reaction is the same. We are all numb.

I can imagine what was going on just before the accident: an iconic sports movie playing on the video, a poker game in the back, coaches sitting quietly thinking about the previous game and the night's lineup, and the quiet conversations of hopes and dreams.

As a father, I cannot even begin to imagine the pain the families are experiencing. The community of Humboldt, the surviving players, and the families of the deceased will need our nation's prayers, strength, and support for a very long time. Long after the cameras and the media go away, these communities and these families will need us all as a nation to continue to lift them up. This pain will endure long after the ice from this season has melted. Hearts will continue to break long after the final buzzer goes off.

On behalf of all families in my riding of Cariboo—Prince George and our proud hockey teams, the BC Major Midget League, Cariboo Cougars, the WHL Prince George Cougars, the British Columbia junior hockey league, and the Prince George Spruce Kings, our thoughts and prayers are with those we have lost, those who are still fighting, the community of Humboldt, and the Humboldt Broncos organization.

We ask that we all take a moment to say a prayer for the families involved as well as for the first responders involved in this unbelievable tragedy. This will undoubtedly have an immeasurable impact on them as well. We ask that beyond today we continue as a nation to embrace and lift these families up and hold them in our hearts.

* * *

● (1400)

ANNE-MARIE EAGLES

Mr. Matt DeCoursey (Fredericton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a loving mother, wife, educator, and caring friend of many, Anne-Marie Eagles passed away last month after a long battle with cancer.

Anne-Marie was strong in her faith and had a love of life that she shared oh so well with oh so many.

[*Translation*]

As a dedicated teacher and guidance counsellor, Anne-Marie loved to encourage her students to achieve their dreams and give them the means to do so. In recent weeks, a number of students have shared stories about how Mrs. Eagles has had a lasting impact on their lives.

[*English*]

The outpouring of support at her passing reminds us of the tremendous impact that a simple warm smile and sincerity for the well-being of others can have on a community.

Together we honour the life and legacy of this beloved and inspiring woman and send our thoughts and prayers to her husband Mike, sons Matt and Chris, and to the entire Eagles and Allain families.

* * *

VAISAKHI

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):

[*Member spoke in Punjabi*]

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker, I wish everyone a very joyous Vaisakhi from the NDP and from our national leader, Mr. Jagmeet Singh. May the festival of Vaisakhi fill everyone with hope and happiness.

[*Translation*]

This festival is a celebration of human rights and serves as a reminder that we are all connected, and that everyone must be free from prejudice, oppression, and discrimination, regardless of gender, ethnicity, sexuality, or identity.

[*Member spoke in Punjabi*]

* * *

[*English*]

AIRPORTS

Mr. Stephen Fuhr (Kelowna—Lake Country, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wish to welcome to Ottawa the Canadian Airports Council. CAC is the voice for more than 100 airports across Canada and they work to ensure that Canada is a leader in safe, high-quality, and economically prosperous air transport. Serving as gateways to the world, our airports generate nearly 200,000 jobs and contribute \$35 billion in GDP to our nation's economy.

In my riding of Kelowna—Lake Country, under the direction of airport manager Sam Samaddar, Kelowna International Airport is one of the busiest airports in Canada, serving nearly two million passengers annually and contributing more than \$800 million in total economic output to the province of British Columbia.

I invite all members in this House to join the Canadian Airports Council tomorrow night at a reception from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Chateau Laurier to recognize our airports' contributions to our communities and the Canadian economy.

Statements by Members

If members have an airport in their riding, I will see them tomorrow at the Chateau.

* * *

● (1405)

HUMBOLDT BRONCOS BUS CRASH

Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today I stand in my Team Canada jersey remembering the young men and woman we lost to the horrific tragedy in Humboldt.

As a parent, I know what it's like to send my children on a bus destined for camp, school, or a sports tournament. This story touches the lives of all Canadians. It is about the families and all of the lives that have been impacted and affected. It is about the people who welcomed these young men into their homes as billets. It is about hockey moms and dads. It is about the volunteers who do their best to keep our kids safe on trips away from home.

Through the outpouring of support on Jersey Day and the hashtags #SticksOutForHumboldt and #HumboldtStrong, I know that this has deeply touched individuals across the country.

On behalf of the residents of Elgin—Middlesex—London, we offer our sincere condolences to Humboldt and everyone affected. May God watch over them in the coming days.

* * *

PROJECT WELLNESS

Mr. Dan Ruimy (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada is a place that is filled with incredible and kind-hearted individuals, whose deeds are done without acknowledgement and for the benefit of others. I am proud to say that my riding of Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge is home to many of these hidden heroes, such as George Klassen and his late wife, Sheila. They started their non-profit organization, Project Wellness, in 2006, providing clean water, education, medicine, and food to orphans in Malawi.

Last week I was invited to George's 80th birthday. Words cannot express how inspiring it was to hear his experiences. Since 2006, George has built a total of 39 wells, has taken almost 500 orphans under his care, and continues to successfully drill clean water wells. In a week's time, at the young age of 80, he is leaving to drill the first of five new wells in 2018.

I wish George good luck. He is an inspiration to me and our community. On behalf of all of Parliament, I wish him safe travels. Maybe one day I will be out there drilling a well alongside him.

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TRANS MOUNTAIN EXPANSION PROJECT

Mr. Randy Boissonnault (Edmonton Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the environment and the economy must go hand in hand to ensure the long-term prosperity of all Canadians. With this in mind, and following rigorous reviews, our government approved the Trans Mountain expansion project. Working with our indigenous partners, we have completed the deepest consultations with rights holders ever on a major project in this country. Forty-three first nations have negotiated benefit agreements with the project, 33 of those in B.C.

Despite clear federal jurisdiction, repeated attempts have been made to undermine the project over the past months. We say enough is enough. As such, we have begun financial discussions with Kinder Morgan in order to remove the uncertainty surrounding this vital project. We are also pursuing legislative options that will assert the federal jurisdiction the courts have already told us we clearly have.

The Trans Mountain expansion project is in the national interest. It will be built.

* * *

[*Translation*]

HUMBOLDT BRONCOS BUS CRASH

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, all Canadians over 50 remember where they were when Paul Henderson scored his famous goal. Today, all Canadians remember where they were when they heard about the Broncos tragedy.

On April 6, 16 Canadians died in a bus accident in Saskatchewan. These young people were members of the Humboldt Broncos team. Players, coaches, staff members, and even an announcer were among the victims. In such tragic and difficult times, we all feel united as Canadians.

Whether it is the families of Lebourgneuf, in my riding, who put hockey sticks on their doorsteps, Canadian members of the military in Iraq, me, as I left my hockey stick at the door of the House of Commons, or the Muslim men who brought their sticks to the largest mosque in the country, all Canadians have been affected and wanted to express their condolences.

Hockey is not just any sport, it is our national sport. When we are playing or watching a game, there is no language, race, religion, or nationality. Now and forever, we are Canadians, and we will always be Broncos.

* * *

● (1410)

[*English*]

VAISAKHI

Ms. Kamal Khera (Brampton West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this past Saturday, people of Sikh faith both in Canada and around the world celebrated Vaisakhi, marking the founding of Khalsa by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699.

Statements by Members

During this celebration of prayer, reflection, and unity, our thoughts turn to community. We are reminded of the ways our vibrant Sikh community helps to enrich our national fabric. All across Canada, Sikhs reaffirm the values of equality, social justice, and most importantly, selfless service.

Each year, thousands of Sikh Canadians take part in selfless service, also known as Seva, through free community kitchens, food drives, equality initiatives, and youth outreach programs. These programs, often run through local gurdwaras, such as the Gurdwara Sikh Sangat in Brampton West, provide crucial support to their local communities. I applaud these programs for highlighting values that we share not only as Sikhs, but also as Canadians.

To all those celebrating in Brampton West, across Canada, and around the world, happy Vaisakhi.

[Member spoke in Punjabi]

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RUSTY STAUB

Mr. Marc Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Soeurs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, known to fans as “Le Grand Orange” because of his bright orange hair, Rusty Staub was one of the original Montreal Expos, far and away their first star.

Arriving in Montreal for the 1969 season, Staub helped establish the fledgling team and the professional sport of baseball in the hearts of Montrealers.

[Translation]

On March 29, the opening day of the 2018 baseball season, “Le Grand Orange” passed away and the Montreal baseball community lost one of its superstars. On the field, he was one of the Expos' best hitters. Off the field, he wasted no time integrating into the Montreal and Quebec culture, even taking French courses to better communicate with local media, French fans, and, above all, young people. As a result of his efforts, “Le Grand Orange” left an indelible mark on the hearts of Expos fans.

[English]

It is with great sadness that we say a final goodbye to Canada's first baseball superstar.

Mr. Speaker, through you I say to Rusty, rest in peace. There are some kids up there that need you.

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HUMBOLDT BRONCOS BUS CRASH

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it has been 10 days and the collective soul of our nation is still coming to grips with the tragedy that took place at that rural Saskatchewan intersection involving the Humboldt Broncos hockey team.

Despite the confusion, the anger, and the anguish, over the past 10 days Canadians have come together beautifully with an outpouring of love and support for those who perished, those who survived, and for their families. It has been incredible to see the compassion that Canadians have shown our neighbours in their time of pain.

Tributes like Jersey Day, hockey sticks, athletic tape, and headsets placed on our porches, from Timbits Hockey to the National Hockey League and all levels in between, Canadians have wrapped Humboldt and the Broncos in their arms to mourn and to give comfort to those who need it.

Hockey is Canada. Canada is hockey. Humboldt is Canada. Humboldt is hockey.

This game, this beautiful game, will see the puck drop again in Humboldt, and when it does, all of Canada, and indeed all members of the House, will be cheering for Humboldt and our Broncos.

* * *

[Translation]

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

Mrs. Eva Nassif (Vimy, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this week is National Volunteer Week, and I am delighted to rise to congratulate all those who volunteer in their communities.

I would like to highlight the work of Simone Langevin, who passed away on March 27. She volunteered with the Relais communautaire de Laval for 12 years and was named volunteer of the year in 2017 for her dedicated contribution to her community. Like her, we can be part of a group that is greater than the sum of its parts and that ultimately benefits society as a whole.

I would like to thank all those who give of themselves to their communities. No matter the cause they choose, people who give their time are a treasure because they truly believe in what they are doing.

* * *

[English]

HUMBOLDT BRONCOS BUS CRASH

Mr. Erin Weir (Regina—Lewvan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the NDP to mourn the loss of life in the horrific bus accident 10 days ago. We also pay tribute to the heroic work of Saskatchewan's first responders and extend condolences to everyone touched by this tragedy.

Hockey brings people together as a touchstone of Canadian identity, and nowhere more so than in Saskatchewan. While our province has been too small to support an NHL team, Saskatchewan has produced by far the most NHL players per capita of any province or state in the world.

But the young people who were killed were not just great hockey players; they were pillars of the Humboldt community. They embodied a spirit of public service that inspires all Canadians, one that we should strive to emulate here in this Parliament.

Oral Questions

●(1415)

HUMBOLDT BRONCOS BUS CRASH

Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on April 6 Canada experienced a national tragedy after a collision in Saskatchewan claimed the lives of 16 people and forever changed the lives of many others. Sturgeon River—Parkland's own Conner Lukan and Parker Tobin passed away in this terrible crash. Conner and Parker grew up in Sturgeon River—Parkland and both played for the Humboldt Broncos. They are survived by their friends, family members, and teammates, whose lives they touched.

I would like to thank the first responders, whose actions on the scene saved lives, and also the nurses and physicians who have spent countless hours attending to the needs of the victims and their families. They have the thanks of a grateful nation.

For Lorne and Robin, Ed and Rhonda, no words I say can ease the pain of their loss. However, I want them to know that the thoughts and prayers of the people of Sturgeon River—Parkland and our nation are with them, and that they are in our hearts. God bless.

* * *

HUMBOLDT BRONCOS BUS CRASH

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Cape Breton—Canso, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as a former Junior A hockey coach and the father of a Quebec Major Junior Hockey League graduate, I can speak first-hand to the near sanctity of the team bus. Aspiring young Canadians spend days, weekends, even weeks on what serves as the team's rec room, lunchroom, bedroom, and library. It is their sanctuary. However, when the bus pulls out of the home rink parking lot, parents and billets alike think more in terms of "I hope the team gets a win and brings back some points." I know I can never recall thinking, "I hope they all make it back."

That unspoken confidence in the team bus has been shattered, and the collective heart of a hockey nation has been broken. We mourn together.

We know that the first responders, who inherently and willingly accepted a high degree of danger and risk when they signed on to the job, could never have imagined the horror and tragedy of that night.

The Humboldt Broncos website posted, "They woke up that morning with hopes to win the game but instead they united a nation."

To the family and friends of all involved, know that our country shares your grief, today and always.

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HUMBOLDT BRONCOS BUS CRASH

The Speaker: As members of Parliament, we gather in this chamber to represent the people of Canada and to express their views and their wishes.

[*Translation*]

Today, on their behalf, we honour the memory of those who lost their lives or were injured in the tragic Humboldt Broncos accident.

[*English*]

In the name of all Canadians, and in tribute to the Humboldt Broncos, I ask all members to rise in unity and observe a moment of silence.

[*A moment of silence observed*]**ORAL QUESTIONS**

●(1420)

[*Translation*]**NATURAL RESOURCES**

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, almost 10 months ago, an openly anti-pipeline government took office in British Columbia. We have been urging the Prime Minister to take action ever since, but now the Trans Mountain pipeline conflict has escalated into a crisis. Every time the resource transportation issue comes up, the government's response is the same: delays and obstruction.

Why does the Prime Minister always wait until the eleventh hour to do something about issues that are vital to economic development?

[*English*]

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, may I begin to speak as a Manitoban and as a prairie hockey dad? On behalf of my family and all Manitobans, I offer our sincere condolences to the people of Humboldt and of Saskatchewan. This is a tragedy that we all feel personally in our families and in our communities.

The Prime Minister was very clear yesterday on the government's position of ensuring that the pipeline be built. He offered ways in which the government intends to act. He has instructed the Minister of Finance to engage in financial discussions with Kinder Morgan. He is discussing with his government legislative ways to reassert federal jurisdiction.

This pipeline will be built.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the reason the stakes are so high for Trans Mountain is because of the government's disastrous energy policy from start to finish.

It vetoed northern gateway, something that had gone through an independent, evidence-based analysis. It killed energy east. It has driven out \$87 billion worth of investment in the energy sector. It has brought in Bill C-69, which has further shaken confidence in Canada's economy.

Why is that the Trans Mountain project had to become a crisis before the Prime Minister finally took action?

Oral Questions

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government approved the Line 3 replacement project. It is already under way with construction in Alberta and Saskatchewan. There will be further construction in the coming weeks in Manitoba.

We are in support of the Keystone XL project. We have approved the TMX project. This will result in tens of thousands of jobs being created for Canadians. It will give us an opportunity to expand our export markets. As members know, 99% of the export of oil and gas in Canada goes to one country, the United States.

At the same time, we are investing unprecedented—

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

* * *

[Translation]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today, in committee, the Prime Minister's national security adviser completely debunked the conspiracy whereby the Indian government was behind the invitation of a convicted terrorist to an event in India hosted by the Prime Minister.

Will the Prime Minister stand and withdraw the false accusations he made here in the House on February 27 and issue an apology to the Government of India?

[English]

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am sure there will be further opportunities to respond to similar questions.

Since this is my first opportunity as a member of Parliament from Saskatchewan, may I express my deep condolences to those who have suffered loss in the terrible tragedy that has befallen the Humboldt Broncos and join with all of those in the House who are expressing prayers for the speedy recovery of all those who have been injured?

The demonstration of solidarity in the House of Commons today is extremely important to the premier and the province and all the people of Saskatchewan, a province that both the Leader of the Opposition and I share.

• (1425)

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. minister for his sincere words. I know I speak on behalf of all members of the Conservative Party and all Canadians who have come together over this tragedy. I appreciate the non-partisan sentiments that have brought us all together in tribute to the victims of the crash.

On February 27, the Prime Minister advanced the theory that Jaspal Atwal's presence at a Government of Canada event in India was orchestrated by rogue elements within the Indian government. Today, the Prime Minister's national security adviser said that the Prime Minister's theory is false.

Will the Prime Minister stand and withdraw the false accusations he made on February 27 in this House and issue an apology to the Government of India?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I note that the national security adviser was very clear in the remarks that he made today before the standing committee. I also note that on numerous occasions, when asked similar questions in the House, the Prime Minister has repeatedly said that he agrees with his national security adviser.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the information that has come out of the committee hearing today indicates the government's theory that it was elements of the Indian government that were responsible for Mr. Atwal's presence was completely false, and that the theory being perpetrated was the responsibility of the Prime Minister's Office. Did the Prime Minister approve the release of the false information about his India trip?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman seems to be following a misguided path here, because he says in one breath that he agrees with and accepts the evidence that has been given by the national security adviser. That is good. That is exactly what the Prime Minister said.

* * *

[Translation]

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, on leaving his meeting with the premiers of British Columbia and Alberta, the Prime Minister said he wants to impose a solution on the provinces to try to resolve the dispute over Trans Mountain.

Whether the federal government likes it or not, that solution violates one of the provinces' environmental legislation. In an open letter, the Government of Quebec reminded Ottawa that no project located partially or entirely on a province's territory is exempt from the environmental legislation adopted by that province's legislature.

What of the co-operative federalism that the Liberals promised?

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are very proud of our federal-provincial co-operation and we always have been. Let us be clear: this project is in the national interest. That is why we are moving forward with it. This type of project falls under federal jurisdiction. Let us be clear: the Supreme Court has already ruled on the matter, as everyone knows.

This project is in the national interest and we will continue to move ahead with it.

[English]

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals approved the Trans Mountain project by relying on the environmental assessment process of the Harper government, which they used to denounce. They now use it because it suits them. Ramming a project down the province's throat is not co-operative federalism.

Yesterday the Prime Minister said he will pursue legislative options to reinforce the federal jurisdiction regarding energy projects, which, he said, "we know we clearly have."

Oral Questions

However, it is not clear. Will the government partner with B.C. and first nations in Alberta to seek greater clarity from the Supreme Court of Canada?

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first of all, the Trans Mountain expansion project was approved by the British Columbia government, and there was an environmental assessment process in British Columbia that led to the approval.

Second, we did not use the same rules as the Harper administration. We used different ones, which led to incredible consultation, historic consultation, with indigenous peoples up and down the line. After months of consultation and tens of thousands of conversations, we approved this in Canada's interests.

• (1430)

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the ultimatum over the Kinder Morgan pipeline will not be solved by jumping to the deadline of a Texas oil company, because the issue of social licence for indigenous Canadians remains unresolved.

In the minister's own briefing notes, the government admits that its response to the legitimate indigenous questions are “paternalistic, unrealistic, and inadequate”. That is Colonialism 101.

Did the Prime Minister really think he was going to stop the Kinder Morgan impasse by deliberately excluding indigenous leadership from Alberta and British Columbia from the talks?

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, major projects such as this are by their very nature controversial, and they divide communities. There are many people in British Columbia who think this is a very important project for Canada. As a matter of fact, it even divides political parties. Perhaps the member would want to organize a meeting with the NDP premiers of Alberta and British Columbia to see what kind of consensus he can arrange.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I refer him to his notes about being paternalistic and inadequate. I am very pleased that the Premiers of British Columbia and Alberta tabled the question as to why they were deliberately excluding indigenous Canadians. That is the question. The Liberals are asking Canadians to assume the financial risks for Kinder Morgan, but there is also a significant social risk.

Just how far are the Liberals willing to go to run roughshod over indigenous rights to do the work of a Texas-based oil company?

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member knows that the Government of Canada has engaged in unprecedented consultation with indigenous communities. Up and down the line, we know that 44 indigenous communities have signed benefit agreements with Kinder Morgan, 33 of them are in British Columbia. Others have been involved with us in establishing a monitoring committee co-developed between the government and indigenous communities for the first time in Canadian history.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on April 6, in B.C., the Prime Minister claimed Trans Mountain would be safe, jobs would be created, and it would be built. Forty-eight hours later, Kinder Morgan said that it would not if roadblocks were not gone by May 31.

On April 9, the Canadian Pipeline Association said that the energy sector was in crisis mode. That same day, the natural resources minister said that it was not a crisis. Ministers met urgently, spouted empty words, and ran away. The PM took a day off while the finance minister met the Alberta premiers then went to Peru.

Yesterday he met with both premiers for the first time and announced nothing. He had failed. When will the Trans Mountain expansion be built?

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Leader of the Opposition, in front of a national audience, decided to speak before the Premier of Alberta and before the Prime Minister of Canada. He has powers of intuition beyond the normal. He was in tune with exactly what the premier and the Prime Minister were going to say so well, but he spoke before they did.

We are looking for the Leader of the Opposition's vision of the energy future for Canada, not seeking to speak—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Lakeland.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, at least my leader did not run away from the media.

The Prime Minister's failure is more more than the pipeline. It is a crisis of confidence in Canada's economic and investment reputation. It tells the world Canada is closed for business, destroys competitiveness, and risks the future. It is the latest in a pattern of capital fleeing Canada under the Prime Minister and it is just the tip of the iceberg.

Hundreds of thousands of jobs in all sectors, billions for the economy, for social programs for all, hundreds of millions for more than 40 first nations and national unity are at risk. It has been a year and a half since the Prime Minister said that it was in the national interest. When will Trans Mountain be built?

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. friend says running away from the media. Last week, Country 93.3 in Fort McMurray, *The Globe and Mail*, CBC Radio in Vancouver, 660 News in Calgary, the *Calgary Herald*, Bloomberg Media, CBC/Radio Alberta, the *Toronto Star*, 770 news in Calgary, the Canadian Press, Radio/Canada in Edmonton, the *Daily Oil Bulletin*, *Le Devoir*, Global News, CKNW Vancouver, Global News TV in Edmonton, I had ample opportunity to talk about the government's position to the media and to the country.

Oral Questions

• (1435)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Prime Minister and his government detest and despise Canadian oil. That is the truth. I would remind you that with regard to Alberta oil, on January 12, 2017, in Calgary, the Prime Minister said that “we need to phase them out.” It is unacceptable for a Prime Minister of Canada to say that. Today, the Prime Minister is saying that there is nothing to worry about and that the western pipeline will go forward, but it is not, because the person supposed to sell the project is doing a bad job.

Can the Prime Minister acknowledge that he does not believe in Alberta oil?

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as we have said time and time again, this project is in the national interest. We cannot make that any clearer. That is why we are going to move it forward and ensure that it is built. We are currently talking to our partners. I can also say that Harper's Conservatives were unable to accomplish anything on this file for 10 years. They did not even initiate discussions with indigenous peoples. They did not develop environmental strategies. We believe in developing both the economy and the environment.

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister will agree with me. This is a very serious subject. Not as serious as the rivalry between the Canadiens and the Nordiques, of course. We know that.

However, what I want to say to the minister is very serious. Sadly, this government's record so far is one of failure after failure. First there was northern gateway, which the Liberal government said no to. Then there was energy east, which was cancelled by the company because of the Liberals' policies. Now the issue is Trans Mountain, and the outcome is uncertain.

Does the minister realize that when his boss, the Prime Minister, says we need to phase out Alberta oil, he is sending a terrible message not only to Canadians, but to the world?

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I can only repeat that our government is moving ahead on this project. It is in the national interest. It is important for our country. It is important not only for Alberta, but for Canada as a whole. By contrast, the Harper Conservatives did not get anything done during their 10 years in office. We are moving ahead on this project. The question is not if, but when. We are working with our partners to make sure that we are going to move forward on this project, which is so important for Canada.

[*English*]

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, nine weeks ago, when talking about Trans Mountain pipeline and our motion supporting it, the natural resources minister said “There is simply no need for a motion today that attempts to manufacture a crisis where one does not exist...”

Well, there is a crisis. If that minister spent half the time recognizing the crisis going on in the energy sector as he does compiling the list of interviews that he clearly spent a whole bunch of time doing, he would know that this is a crisis not only on

pipelines but jobs. It is the Liberals' abdication of responsibility to the energy sector that has caused this. When—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Natural Resources.

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I do not talk to the press enough and I talk to the press too much.

All the time we look at ways to embolden and enhance the oil and gas sector and the future of the energy sector in Canada. As a matter of fact, it was only a week ago when the Prime Minister and I were in Fort McMurray, talking to workers and CEOs within the energy sector, understanding the importance of certainty for investment, the importance of investment in the sector internationally, that Canada was a place where people could have confidence. That is why we are determined to see this project, in the national interest, will be built.

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have been warning the Liberal government that its policies are hurting Canada's energy sector, killing competitiveness and jobs. Its carbon tax, its tanker ban, and its disastrous approval process has killed projects like Petronas LNG, northern gateway, energy east. Now we see Trans Mountain dying a slow death. Investment and jobs are leaving Canada as we speak.

When will the Liberals get their heads out of the sand and realize their policies are disastrous for Canada's energy sector?

• (1440)

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, approved pipelines, job creation for the people of Alberta, for the people of western Canada, compared to the 10-year record of the Harper Conservative government of not one kilometre of pipeline built to tidewater, no consultation with indigenous people, court cases that said the Harper government had failed in its constitutional responsibilities, no conversation with the importance of energy and the environment being part of the conversation, why would we want to mimic that record of failure?

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in 2015, in B.C., the Prime Minister said that it was essential for social licence for any project like the Kinder Morgan pipeline. When he okayed Kinder Morgan, using Harper's deeply flawed process and over the objections of cities and first nations, he went back on his word.

He also promised provinces a co-operative relationship, but instead is pushing Kinder Morgan through, in spite of the alarm raised by B.C. over oil tanker traffic increases and increased oil spill risk. Why did the Liberal government break its promise?

Oral Questions

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member talks about the same process that was used by the Harper government. As I said a moment ago, we changed the process. We added layers of consultation with indigenous peoples, because the Federal Court of Appeal said that the Harper government did not consult enough. We sent an expert panel that went up and down the line. There are now 44 indigenous communities that will benefit, 33 of them in British Columbia.

We know that projects like this do not achieve consensus everywhere. We do know that this is in the national interest.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, last year the people of British Columbia elected a government truly committed to our coast. More than two years ago, the Liberal government promised to completely redo Stephen Harper's failed assessment of the Kinder Morgan pipeline project. However, because the Liberals broke that promise, the people of B. C. have taken to the streets and to the courts to defend our beautiful coast and our legal rights.

However, it is not just the Prime Minister who is betraying that commitment. Every single Liberal MP elected from B.C. broke that promise too. My question is simple. Is there just one B.C. Liberal MP who has the courage to stand up to the Prime Minister? Is there just one who will stand with British Columbians—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Natural Resources.

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite forgot to mention the \$1.5 billion oceans protection plan. He did not mention it because, for whatever reason, he is not prepared to admit that this government has established and will establish a world-class system to protect our coasts. Why is that not part of the conversation? This is a coast that the member and his riding know all too well is essential not only to British Columbia but to all Canadians.

Mr. Jamie Schmale (Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for months now, we have been demanding that the Prime Minister take action to get Trans Mountain built, but all we have gotten are slogans and platitudes. This crisis is about more than a pipeline. It is about the confidence that job-creating businesses have in Canada. This crisis will take more than just a layover on his way to Paris to get the problem solved.

When will it get built?

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government is committed to having the pipeline built. We intervened in motions at the National Energy Board when there were attempts to unnecessarily delay the project, and we happened to be successful in that motion. We will be continually alert to attempts to delay because we know that delay adds to uncertainty and uncertainty adds to costs. What the Prime Minister said yesterday was that we would not tolerate unnecessary delays and that we would add certainty.

Mr. Jamie Schmale (Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister continues to demonstrate that he either does not want the Trans Mountain pipeline to be built or really does not care if it even proceeds. Instead, he continues to make matters worse by imposing policies that harm the Canadian

energy sector, like the carbon tax and new regulations that penalize Canadian oil experts.

The failure of the Prime Minister to take leadership has caused this crisis. When will the Liberals finally take this crisis seriously?

● (1445)

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I just do not understand where the preamble comes from. Members opposite talk about “just words”. If they were tuning in to what the Prime Minister said yesterday, or maybe they tuned off after the Leader of the Opposition was finished, not waiting for the Premier of Alberta, not waiting for the Prime Minister of Canada, he would have heard not only words but commitment in significant and substantial ways, because this pipeline will be built.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it has been five months since the Prime Minister approved the Trans Mountain pipeline, but Kinder Morgan is still unable to get its shovels into the ground. The Prime Minister has failed to show the leadership required to solve an interprovincial dispute. The blame for this project's failing to move forward falls squarely at his feet.

When will the Prime Minister stop promising this pipeline and start delivering it?

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Actually it was not five months ago, Mr. Speaker, when the pipeline was approved; it was more than a year ago. Ever since the pipeline was approved, the Prime Minister in his speeches, regardless of where they are delivered, whether in Nanaimo, in Vancouver, in Edmonton, in Fort McMurray, in Calgary, in Winnipeg, in St. John's, Newfoundland, in Fredericton, has the same message. The message is that we have the capacity and the commitment in this government to make sure that we are stewards of the environment, that we are creating good jobs for the energy sector in Canada, while—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Peace River—Westlock.

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister says he wants the Trans Mountain pipeline built, but like every promise he makes, it is all talk and no action. Let us be clear. Since the government has taken power, 125,000 jobs have been lost in the Canadian oil patch. That is devastating for local communities and families. We are six weeks away from losing this project and all the jobs that go with it.

When will the pipeline be built?

Oral Questions

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member quotes 125,000 jobs lost. He does not quote that half of them have been regained. As often is the case in having a discussion with members opposite, we do not get the full picture. For example, how often do we hear them talk about the jobs that have been created by approving Line 3? How many times do we hear them talking about the pipelines we have approved in northern Alberta? Why do they not talk about this government's commitment to work with the private sector to make sure that Canada is at the leading edge of using the resources we have and the—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Edmonton Strathcona.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is now promising to remove the uncertainty around the Kinder Morgan pipeline, yet 28 months into their mandate, the Liberals have yet to deliver their promised strengthened environmental and project review laws. Industry, legal experts, and indigenous leaders alike all agree that this fast-tracked omnibus bill will create even greater uncertainty and fails to make significant reforms.

Will the government finally agree to divide this bill and enable constructive dialogue and to deliver the promised strengthened environmental and energy laws?

Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government has brought forward in Bill C-69 better rules for the review of major projects that will protect our environment, fish, and waterways; will restore public trust and respect indigenous rights; and will strengthen our economy and encourage investment. Reforms to these laws were important because of the gutting of environmental assessment procedures undertaken in 2012 under the previous Conservative government. We are committed to changing the way decisions on projects are made so that they are guided by science, evidence, and indigenous traditional knowledge.

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, after they said yes to Kinder Morgan, the Liberals' logic is hard to follow. On the one hand, they present a new environmental assessment process designed to regain public trust. On the other hand, they cannot tell us which projects will be subject to this process. The process is useless if nothing is assessed. The Minister of the Environment is already giving a free pass to some potentially high-polluting projects.

What is the point of an environmental assessment process if the projects that pose a danger to our environment are not even assessed?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the environment and the economy go together. We proposed improved regulations that will protect the environment, restore public trust, and respect the rights of indigenous peoples. These better regulations provide for one assessment per project, to reduce overlap and support a clearer and more effective process.

• (1450)

[*English*]

SENIORS

Mr. Bryan May (Cambridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the chair of the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities, I was proud to table our committee's study on Canada's seniors, tabled in the House a few weeks ago. Our government has shown that it is committed to improving income security and to promoting social inclusion for seniors.

Could the minister responsible for seniors tell this House what the next steps are for Canadian seniors?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would first like to thank the member for Cambridge as well as all members of the HUMA committee for their outstanding work on behalf of seniors. I would also like to thank the member for Nickel Belt for tabling the motion that led to this report, as well as all members of the Liberal caucus on seniors.

I will also say that we are looking forward to working with the National Seniors Council to review and respond to the important work of the committee.

* * *

[*Translation*]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on February 22, the Prime Minister told Canadians that one of his MPs had invited Mr. Atwal in India. Then, on February 27, he claimed that this was a conspiracy by rogue members of the Indian government.

Today, Mr. Jean, the national security adviser, revealed that he never mentioned the Indian government in his briefing.

Will the Prime Minister do the right thing and withdraw his comments?

[*English*]

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has always supported his national security adviser. Whether by accident or by design, the opposition continues to pursue a faulty and misleading line of argument. To provide the opposition with full information, both classified and unclassified, an offer has been outstanding for more than three weeks now to provide that full briefing to the Leader of the Opposition.

When will that briefing be scheduled by the Leader of the Opposition?

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I think this morning's briefing was fairly clear. Nevertheless, according to the testimony given by the national security adviser this morning, Canadians still do not know the truth about the Atwal affair. Mr. Jean denies saying that there was a conspiracy orchestrated by rogue elements within the Indian government. We do not need a classified briefing to find that out. He said it this morning. Our relations with India, a country that is so important for our companies' exports, remain fragile because of the Prime Minister's actions.

When will the Prime Minister show some leadership and apologize to the Indian government?

[English]

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the speculation about some so-called conspiracy theory largely came from the opposition. That is the problem when one is operating on misinformation and disinformation and a willful ignorance of the facts.

The offer has been made to provide the opposition with a full classified briefing, and so far, they have refused to schedule that meeting. They should schedule the meeting so that the Leader of the Opposition can be fully briefed.

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on February 22, in India, the Prime Minister acknowledged that one of his MPs invited Jaspal Atwal to his events. On February 27 in this place, the Prime Minister acknowledged claims by his security adviser that the Indian government's conspiracy was a possible route to the invitation as well. Today the minister is suggesting that it is us making this claim, when he, in this House, refused to talk about classified information. If an invitation from his own MP is classified, why do we need a special investigation if it is all unclassified?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman fails to understand the difference between classified and unclassified information. He is in desperate need of a briefing to explain the distinction.

The offer has been made to the Leader of the Opposition. The Leader of the Opposition should accept that invitation, and maybe the Leader of the Opposition would then avoid headlines like "Conservatives Duped by False Story".

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today the minister has suggested that the opposition is on a misguided path. Well, the tour guide on that misguided path is the Prime Minister and this minister.

I would put it back to him. If a Liberal MP invited Mr. Atwal, a convicted terrorist, to the Prime Minister's events, and they cancelled that, and that is the only possible explanation for the India scandal, why do we need a classified briefing?

• (1455)

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, maybe the obvious fact is that the Leader of the Opposition, and the opposition generally, is not fully informed of all the facts they need to know to fully understand

Oral Questions

the situation, and indeed, to avoid mistakes like they made last week in getting sucked into a totally false story.

* * *

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, while the repeated use of chemical weapons by Syrian government forces is unquestionably a war crime, the air strikes last week were not only contrary to international law but similar strikes last year failed to end the use of chemical weapons on Syrian civilians. The government has clearly expressed its support for these air strikes, but there is no evidence of any plan for what is next or any diplomatic effort to try to end this crisis.

Where is Canada in pushing for an international solution to the Syrian crisis?

Mr. Matt DeCoursey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have been clear in our condemnation of the use of chemical weapons against people in eastern Ghouta, and we have been working hard with international allies to pursue accountability for what are war crimes. This includes \$9 million for the verification, investigation, and fact-finding activities of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the UN. We are also providing over \$290 million to support NGOs, UN partners, and the Red Cross to deliver life-saving assistance in Syria.

The murderous Assad regime must end the deliberate targeting of civilians.

[Translation]

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is not just chemical weapons that Assad is using against civilians, against his people. Other tactics include cluster munition attacks, torture, enforced disappearances, the blocking of humanitarian assistance, starvation, and displacement.

Does the government intend to contribute to the diplomatic efforts being made to put an end to the terrible suffering of the Syrian people, bring the perpetrators of these crimes to justice, and increase humanitarian aid?

Mr. Matt DeCoursey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have been clear in our strong condemnation of the use of chemical weapons in eastern Ghouta and any violence committed against the people of Syria. Canada continues to work with its international allies to pursue accountability for these war crimes. This includes \$9 million for the investigation activities of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the UN. Let us be clear. Assad's murderous regime must stop deliberating targeting these people.

*Oral Questions***RAIL TRANSPORTATION**

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is national grain week, and many farmers from western Canada will be in Ottawa this week. The grain transportation crisis will definitely be on the agenda. By failing to take action, the Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food have cost farmers and the Canadian economy billions of dollars. Waiting for crises to resolve themselves has become the trademark of the Liberal government. The Prime Minister has tarnished Canada's reputation when it comes to grain exports.

Can the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food inform the members of the House of the government's intentions regarding the proposed amendments to Bill C-49?

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as you know, I have written to both railways to get grain moving faster, and considerable progress has been made since that time. We will continue to work on this.

As for the amendments proposed in the Senate regarding Bill C-49, we received all of them. We are studying them carefully and will share our position with the House very soon, I hope. I hope to have the Conservatives' support so that we can get this legislation through as soon as possible.

[English]

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have said again and again that Bill C-49 will resolve the rail backlog. They refuse to divide Bill C-49. They refuse to use an order in council to force the railway companies to move our farmers' grain to market.

The Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food finally unveiled the truth in Winnipeg recently, saying that "if Bill C-49 passes, it won't solve the issue right away".

How will he respond to the amendments to Bill C-49? Will it be another refusal to act for farmers?

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we care very deeply about the movement of grain in this country. It is an extremely important commodity.

I have written, with the agriculture minister, to the railways to get them to increase the flow of grain to our ports. They are certainly doing that as well. I have also spoken to them about the 90% of the other commodities they carry that are so important for Canadians: forestry products, potash, containers, coal, minerals, and all those other products as well.

* * *

● (1500)

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister's corrupt surf clam decision had nothing to do with reconciliation. Rather, it had all to do with blatantly lining the pockets of Liberal families and Liberal family insiders.

The Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador was in Ottawa late last week raising serious questions about job losses, economic impacts, and the corrupt bid process.

Can the Prime Minister please explain why lining the pockets of Liberal family members and Liberal insiders is more important than the families of Grand Bank?

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cormier (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our decision to increase indigenous participation in fishing is consistent with our government's commitment to forging a renewed relationship between Canada and indigenous peoples. Enhancing access to the surf clam fishery broadens the distribution of benefits from this public resource and is a powerful step toward reconciliation with indigenous fisheries.

I know it is hard for the previous government to admit it, but it completely neglected the first nations. In this public process, we put indigenous peoples first, and we are going to continue to do that in order to ensure that this resource benefits all Canadians.

* * *

[English]

SPORT AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Mr. Gordie Hogg (South Surrey—White Rock, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as a former youth probation officer and little league, football, and basketball coach, I have seen the amazing power of sports to change lives.

Following the incredible successes of Canadians at the 2018 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and now at the Commonwealth Games in Australia, could the Minister of Science and Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities please, like Rusty Staub, knock this softball out of the park? What is the importance of these games for Canadians?

Hon. Kirsty Duncan (Minister of Science and Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our athletes' tremendous achievements at the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games are a source of pride for Canada and reflect the strength of our sport system.

[Translation]

The Commonwealth Games are a springboard to the Olympics and Paralympics.

[English]

We are so proud of our athletes for their podium and personal best successes. They are bringing home 82 medals, and they are an inspiration for all Canadians.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this weekend, armed rebel factions conducted two coordinated attacks against UN bases in Mali. It came a week after two peacekeepers were killed in Mali. These were targeted attacks by a variety of terror groups operating with impunity in Mali, and increasingly UN peacekeepers are the target.

Will the Liberal government finally admit that the Mali mission is not a peacekeeping mission? Will it bring this deployment to the House for debate and a vote?

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, regardless of where our Canadian Armed Forces personnel serve, whether in Iraq or on UN peacekeeping missions, we are going to make sure they have the appropriate mandate, the appropriate equipment, and the right rules of engagement that will be set out by the chief of defence staff to make sure they have the right of self-defence and, more importantly, for the protection of civilians.

* * *

[Translation]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry—Suroît, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the *Kathryn Spirit* caught fire last Tuesday, and 75 firefighters were called to the scene. These firefighters saw thick black smoke billowing from the blaze, and they are extremely worried about what they might have breathed in. I have other questions to ask.

Were all the contaminants removed from the ship as planned? What was the cause of the fire? What will the consequences be? The ship ought to be dismantled safely.

Will the government agree to my request to launch an investigation into this fire?

Mr. Serge Cormier (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government recognizes the risks that abandoned vessels pose to shoreline communities and the marine environment. For the sake of clarification, a small fire occurred in the machine room of the *Kathryn Spirit* during work to dismantle the vessel on April 10. No one was injured, and, to be clear, no pollution was observed.

The Coast Guard has remained and will remain in constant communication with stakeholders regarding the decontamination of the *Kathryn Spirit*. We will continue to monitor the vessel closely so that the local community is kept abreast of developments, and we are going to fix this problem once and for all.

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CANADA REVENUE AGENCY

Mr. Nicola Di Iorio (Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, like most Canadians, my Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel constituents are filling out their tax returns. Doing so will give them access to valuable benefits and credits our government introduced, such as the Canada child benefit and the Canada caregiver credit. This year, our government has improved services to tax filers.

Oral Questions

Can the Minister of National Revenue tell the House about the major improvements that have been implemented to make it easier for Canadians to file their tax returns electronically?

• (1505)

[English]

Ms. Kamal Khera (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, improving services at the agency is our top priority. We have done so for nearly 90% of Canadians who choose to file online with services such as Auto-fill My Return and NETFILE. The express notice of assessment service lets Canadians using certified tax software receive and print their notice of assessment immediately after filing.

I would like to remind all members and all Canadians to file their tax returns by April 30 to ensure that they access the benefits to which they are entitled.

* * *

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Assad regime has repeatedly used chemical weapons against its own people, and our allies have struck to try to take this capability away.

Next month, despite being one of the world's worst offenders of international law regarding the possession and use of illegal weapons, Syria will chair the UN Conference on Disarmament. There can be no equivocating about whether or not this is acceptable.

Canada has boycotted this conference in the past when it was chaired by other rogue states. Will the government condemn this appointment and boycott this meeting?

Mr. Matt DeCoursey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my colleague across the way knows how strongly this government condemns the use of chemical weapons by the Assad regime on people in eastern Ghouta. We have supported the decision by the United States, the United Kingdom, and France to take action to degrade the Assad regime's ability to launch chemical weapon attacks against its own people.

We continue to work closely with our allies in the international community on this and many other issues that concern the Syrian regime and security for the people of Syria. We are providing vital support to the fact-finding mission in Syria and humanitarian efforts.

We condemn the Assad regime and its backers, Russia and Iran, for repeated violations of human rights.

Routine Proceedings

[Translation]

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Mr. Rhéal Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, GPQ): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister made a very bad decision to resolve the dispute between Alberta and British Columbia. In so doing, he essentially threw social licence, indigenous rights, and the provinces' power to decide what happens in their territory out the window. From now on, Ottawa makes all the decisions. Enough of this co-operative federalism malarkey; we all know that Ottawa knows best. British Columbia was no more interested in Kinder Morgan than Quebec was in energy east.

Is that so hard to understand?

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that the relationship between our federal government and the Province of Quebec has always been one of utmost respect. We know it is important to respect provincial areas of jurisdiction. That is what we have been doing since day one.

However, I want to make it clear that the decision to expand the Trans Mountain pipeline was a matter of federal jurisdiction. It is important to know who is responsible for which file. By the way, I would like to compliment my colleague on the very nice shirt he is wearing today.

Mr. Rhéal Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, GPQ): Mr. Speaker, respect, respect.

If Quebec passes legislation on environmental protection or land development, Ottawa can then ignore those laws passed by our elected officials, all in the name of national interest. No, thank you. In Quebec, imposing a pipeline in the name of national interest is out of the question. That is why we support British Columbia.

Since when does acting in the national interest mean going against the interests of First Nations, the interests of Quebec, and the interests of the provinces?

Respect, respect.

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, to quote Premier Couillard, "Our friends in Alberta are very aware of the ways in which their resources can be developed to benefit the entire country. It would be like telling me that I cannot export my hydroelectricity. I would not be very happy. That is what people need to understand."

We here in the government understand where Alberta is coming from.

• (1510)

[English]

Hon. Andrew Scheer: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, during question period, the Minister of Natural Resources misled the House by indicating that the previous Conservative government was not able to complete any pipelines.

I would like to seek unanimous consent to table the list of the four major pipelines that were built under the previous Conservative government, including the approval of northern gateway, a pipeline to tidewater—

Some hon members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. I have to hear the answer and I have to ask the question. Can the members come to order?

Does the hon. leader of the opposition have unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: No.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

MAIN ESTIMATES, 2018-19

A message from Her Excellency the Governor General transmitting estimates for the financial year ending March 31, 2019 was presented by the President of the Treasury Board and read by the Speaker to the House.

Hon. Scott Brison (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, on behalf of 87 departments and agencies, the departmental plans for 2018-19.

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FEDERAL TAX EXPENDITURES

Hon. Scott Brison (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to table a document on behalf of the Minister of Finance, in both official languages, entitled "Report on Federal Tax Expenditures".

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[Translation]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Mr. Serge Cormier (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Pursuant to Standing Order 109 of the House of Commons, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the government's response to the 15th report of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration entitled "Building an Inclusive Canada: Bringing the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act in Step with Modern Values".

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[English]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Ms. Kamal Khera (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 24 petitions.

HUMBOLDT BRONCOS BUS CRASH

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, ever since about five o'clock in the afternoon a week ago last Friday, hearts have been aching in Saskatchewan. Tears have been flowing. Shock and trauma have gripped an entire province. Prayers have been uttered by the faithful of every possible creed, as the cruel reality settled in that a terrible highway crash had devastated the Humboldt Broncos hockey team.

Twenty-nine souls were on the Broncos bus on that drive northeast to Nipawin to meet the Hawks in the SJHL playoff game on April 6. Twenty-three of them were great young hockey players aged 16 to 21. Two were coaches, plus the trainer, the statistician, the play-by-play broadcaster, and the bus driver. Sixteen lives were lost, including 10 players. For the other 13, their lives have been profoundly changed. They were young people, for the most part. They were fit, strong, smart, and talented, working hard to pursue their passion for hockey, living the dream. They were the pride of their families and their hometowns, the pride of the families with which they were billeted away from home, their teachers and mentors, and the Broncos organization, who tried so hard to look after them.

The pain hit hard in Humboldt and in nearby Saskatoon, in eight other Saskatchewan towns, in Winnipeg, and in eight communities across Alberta. However, the anguish knew no bounds. It swept the entire province and the country. After all, this is Canada. Despite the calendar, it is still mostly winter. Hockey playoffs are in full swing virtually everywhere, and hockey, in large measure, shapes our lives. There is hardly a family anywhere in Canada that would be unfamiliar with those buses, which take thousands of our kids somewhere almost every day to play hockey or some other sport they love.

• (1515)

[*Translation*]

Humboldt's pain is being felt by communities across Canada, where buses full of young people going to play hockey or practice another sport they love are a part of everyday life. This tragedy has hit all our communities hard.

[*English*]

This was a tragedy that really struck home. For most of us it was personal, hitting right where we live. It extended into the United States and Europe and rippled around the world from Uganda to Australia and back to the high Arctic. It engaged people like Drake, golf champion Brooke Henderson, Her Majesty the Queen, and thousands and maybe millions more.

Everyone wanted to connect and help with prayers and gestures of solidarity. We left our sticks out on the doorstep. We wore jerseys; we still are. There were editorials and heart-wrenching cartoons. Tons of people raised money and gave money. They played road hockey, pond hockey, floor hockey, and regular hockey. They started marathons. They sold stickers and badges. Some wrote songs and poems. Others sent flowers to vigils, memorials, and funerals, which are still ongoing. Thousands of people are attending to be together, to share and support. There are cards, letters, posters, banners, videos, and miles of green and yellow ribbons on virtually

Routine Proceedings

everyone's lapel. There are messages on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat. From the smallest novice, atom, or peewee team to the top brass of the NHL, the entire hockey community worldwide brought awareness, compassion, and understanding about how big and how painful this situation was, and is.

The outpouring of interest and concern is likely unparalleled. It is a way to show that we care. It is basic human kindness. That, too, is what defines us. Everyone affected is thankful for that.

Together, we thank the first responders, RCMP officers, firefighters, and paramedics from Nipawin, Tisdale, Melfort, Zenon Park, and other places who were on the scene of that horrific crash, doing probably the hardest work of all. We thank the emergency medical teams in the local hospitals, the STARS air ambulance crews who flew the victims there, and the medical staff at the Royal University Hospital in Saskatoon. We thank the trauma teams, the grief counsellors, and the victim services people, who continue to provide aid and comfort, and will for a long time. We thank the teachers, the school boards, and the community volunteers who work with young people especially to help them come to terms with what has happened.

We hold in our hearts all the bereaved and troubled families and friends of the victims, the city of Humboldt, and the entire Broncos organization.

To the injured and the suffering, Brayden, Bryce, Derek, Graysen, Jacob, Kaleb, Layne, Matthieu, Morgan, Nick, Ryan, Tyler, and Xavier, we pray for their healing and recovery, and for hope to replace despair.

For those we cannot see again, gone far too soon, we pledge always to remember their zest for life, their skill and talent, the joy they brought into the lives of so many others, and the potential they represented of the very best of Canada.

Rest in peace and abiding love, Tyler Bieber, from Humboldt; Logan Boulet, from Lethbridge; Dayna Brons, from Lake Lenore; Mark Cross, from Strasbourg; Glen Doerksen, from Carrot River; Darcy Haugan, from Humboldt; Adam Herold, from Montmartre; Brody Hinz, from Humboldt; Logan Hunter, from St. Albert; Jaxon Joseph, from Edmonton; Jacob Leicht, from Humboldt; Conner Lukan, from Slave Lake; Logan Schatz, from Allan; Evan Thomas, from Saskatoon; Parker Tobin, from Stony Plain; and Stephen Wack, from St. Albert. They will forever be heroes in our eyes and in our hearts. The goodness of their lives, and the kindness of so many people now sharing their loss, will help the grieving country find strength and rekindle hope.

I extend deep condolences from the government, the Parliament, and the people of Canada.

Routine Proceedings

• (1520)

[*Translation*]

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last week, a group of people gathered to mark a loss of life of near-unprecedented magnitude in Canada. These people gathered in the cold just before the start of the NHL playoffs, an event that most Canadian families usually do not want to miss.

[*English*]

They brought hockey sticks, not to play with this time, but to hold quietly and say a prayer. This did not happen in Humboldt, Saskatchewan, or even in the town next door. It was more than 5,000 kilometres away, in the community of Mount Pearl, Newfoundland and Labrador. From the heart of our beautiful Canadian prairies to the outermost limits of our nation at the edge of the continent, the tragedy that took 16 lives and shattered hundreds more has connected us all in a way we never expected.

• (1525)

[*Translation*]

Anyone who drives Canada's highways knows the vastness of our country. The feverish pitch of activity in many countries contrasts with Canada's highways and rural roads, the farm fields, small villages, and remote communities.

[*English*]

I am proud to live in the great province of Saskatchewan. We have hundreds of small communities, all spread out. It has always struck me how, despite the hundreds and hundreds of small towns over a space larger than most European countries, people always seem to know someone from one of those towns, no matter where they live. A friend could mention that he is from Hanley, and everyone will know where that is. I once asked a friend of mine how he always seemed to know where so many of these small towns are. They surely could not have taught every town and village in geography class in Saskatchewan. "It's simple," he said. "I played hockey. I've probably been to more than half of them."

It is always a tragedy to lose a loved one. Far too many Canadians lose their lives on our roads and highways every year, but to have lost so many young people, all taken at once, has sent shockwaves through our entire province and our country.

We may be spread out all over to the four corners of our province, but there are many things that connect us together. There are so many reasons why we always seem to know somebody from every corner of Saskatchewan. There are not too many degrees of separation. It is almost like the whole province is one big small town. Everybody feels connected. People support each other, whether they are from Meadow Lake, Nipawin, Estevan, Fort Qu'Appelle, or Humboldt. We care about the people from our province. We cheer them on. We rally together, and we do it with pride.

Hockey has been one of those great unifiers that pull communities together. With that community spirit, sport is one of the greatest unifiers of all. On game night, everyone heads down to the arena for the match. Getting a rink burger is even considered a romantic date. It is where one hears all the town news, gets all the good gossip, and

finds out the big events for the weekend. There are friendly rivalries, memories of legendary games and players, and the fall fundraiser to pay for new boards or new stands.

For the kids who play on these teams, these will be some of the best days of their lives. They develop friendships on the ice and on the bus that become lifelong bonds. Laughing in hotel rooms and holding up championship trophies, they learn to depend on each other and to trust each other. They tap their goalie on the helmet and say something nice, even after he lets in a goal. They learn the valuable lessons of sportsmanship: how to win, how to lose, how to communicate, and how to listen. They learn that hard work pays off. Best of all, they learn what it means to be a teammate.

So many young boys and girls have ridden the bus down those long stretches of highways, in good weather and bad. So many parents have followed along. So many families have opened their doors to billet young kids playing out their dreams. That is why this tragedy has shaken us all so much.

However, in times of crisis, in times of tragedy, a Canadian in Humboldt, Saskatchewan becomes the neighbour of a Canadian in Newfoundland, British Columbia, or the territories. For days, Canadians have been leaving hockey sticks outside their front doors in a show of mourning for the lives lost in the Humboldt Broncos family. In our hockey-obsessed country, a stick left against a garage door or on a front porch is as normal a sight as the school bus pulling up to the curb in the morning, as comforting as mom calling the kids in for dinner. Last week, those sticks became a symbol of a nation coming together to grieve and to support the families and friends of the Humboldt Broncos.

[*Translation*]

We simply cannot imagine what the family and friends of the 16 people who lost their lives in this terrible accident are going through. It is a tragedy that defies understanding. It is a moment in time that brought our country to a standstill and from which we are just now starting to recover.

[*English*]

From a small town in Saskatchewan has flowed a river of grief, one that has washed over thousands of families across the country. Everybody back home knew somebody touched by this tragedy: their doctor's cousin, their sister's co-worker, their son's neighbour.

To the community of Humboldt and to the towns across Canada from which the victims came just to play the game they love, we say we grieve with them and we will remember them. No matter where they live, no matter how quiet the nights seem, no matter how small the town feels, we are all their neighbours now.

To those still recovering in hospital, we are thinking of you and sending our prayers for strength for the challenges that lay ahead. That powerful photo of Derek, Graysen, and Nick holding hands in the hospital has become a powerful image. As Premier Scott Moe said, "Saskatchewan, these are our boys."

Routine Proceedings

The entire country will be there to help support the victims and their families and to keep the game going and win the next one for the Broncos. For those we lost, Dayna, Parker, Darcy, Brodie, Logan, Jaxon, Adam, Mark, Tyler, Stephen, Logan, Conner, Glen, Evan, Jacob, and Logan, may God rest their souls. For them, we will keep the stands full, we will keep the rink lights on, and we will keep the sticks by the door.

• (1530)

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today with heavy hearts we rise to mourn the lives of those we lost in the tragedy that struck the Humboldt Broncos last week. We wrestle with tears and our voices tremble as we remember the names of those who were taken from their families and communities: Tyler Bieber, Logan Boulet, Dayna Brons, Mark Cross, Glen Doerksen, Darcy Haugan, Adam Herold, Brody Hinz, Logan Hunter, Jaxon Joseph, Jacob Leicht, Conner Lukan, Logan Schatz, Parker Tobin, Evan Thomas, and Stephen Wack.

Hockey is a powerful force that binds Canadians together. For anyone who has travelled with players on their way to a game, be it for hockey, basketball, soccer, or baseball, there is a palpable sense of excitement on board the bus, a buzz around the possibilities presented by the upcoming 60 minutes of hockey.

[*Translation*]

However, on April 6, that sense of excitement ended in tragedy. Now, the puck will never drop to open the Bronco's playoff game, but their commitment to their teammates and their love of hockey will never be forgotten.

This event has profoundly shaken our country. Canadians responded as only they know how, with empathy and solidarity, by wearing hockey jerseys, leaving hockey sticks on their front porches, and expressing their love for all those affected by this devastating accident. This reminds us of how tight-knit the hockey community is in Canada and our need to feel connected in moments like this to help make sense of what happened and find a way to eventually move forward together.

[*English*]

On behalf of New Democrats, I want to thank the first responders who arrived on the scene and cared and continue to care for all those affected by this tragedy. Their work is a terrible burden that most of us will never know.

I also want to wish the survivors of the crash and their family and friends the strength to overcome the challenges that lie ahead. Know that they are in our thoughts and prayers.

To the parents, friends, and family who have lost 16 remarkable Canadians, as well as those still recovering from their injuries, I want to extend my most sincere condolences for their loss. Their town, their province, and their country are here for them. I encourage them and I encourage us all to, in Jacob Leicht's mother's words, to be a part of something bigger. From hurt can come good.

[*Translation*]

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent for the member for Rivière-du-Nord to add his remarks?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Rhéal Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, GPO): Mr. Speaker, I too rise to talk about the Humboldt tragedy. I am rising to speak when, like millions of our fellow Canadians, I am speechless and at a loss for words.

Humboldt, Alma, Truro, Yellowknife, Val-d'Or, Sudbury. All of these communities are home to young hockey players. Young hockey players and the men and women who support them, train them, and care for them, that is the story of all of our towns, cities, and regions. That is what living in the north is all about. Hockey is what makes winter fun and what brings our communities together come winter.

It is a dream come true for many young people to travel from town to town to play the sport they love. It is a source of great joy and pleasure. It is supposed to be fun, not tragic.

The tragedy that struck Humboldt has affected us all. We all know young people who play on teams like the Broncos. This tragedy could have befallen any of us, any community, but it happened to Humboldt. The Broncos are the ones who were taken from us, and our thoughts are with them.

They were taken too soon, and it is not fair. It is never fair. On behalf of myself, the members of the Groupe parlementaire québécois, and, I would venture to say, on behalf of all Quebeckers, I offer my sincerest condolences to the families and loved ones of the Humboldt Broncos, to the community, and to the people of Saskatchewan. I wish the survivors a speedy recovery. Our hearts go out to you.

• (1535)

The Speaker: Does the hon. member for Manicouagan have the unanimous consent of the House to speak?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mrs. Marilène Gill (Manicouagan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me to speak in response to the statement by the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness.

On behalf of the Bloc Québécois; the Baie-Comeau Drakkar, of the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League, whose jersey I am wearing today; the city of Baie-Comeau and its mayor, Yves Montigny; and myself, as member of Parliament for Manicouagan, I would like to offer our support as well as our deepest sympathies to the families affected by the Humboldt Broncos tragedy, and to all the communities in mourning.

Routine Proceedings

In rural and remote communities like ours, young hockey players and the team's support staff inevitably spend long hours on winding, and sometimes dangerous, roads as they live out their passion. We are proud and happy when our children and our team set out to achieve their dreams, but we are all aware that there is a risk involved. We all want to take them in our arms, both to comfort them and to congratulate them upon their return home. As a government and as elected officials, we must ensure that our children are safe, so that parents can welcome their children home safe and sound.

We are still reeling from this unspeakable tragedy, one that did, however, give rise to a tremendous feeling of solidarity among young people. As an example, primary school children from the village of Ragueneau on the north shore made cards and sent hockey sticks this morning to the primary school in Humboldt, which is located 3,387 kilometres away.

Flags in Baie-Comeau have been flying at half-mast for the past week. In my region and across Quebec, people are doing whatever they can to support those directly or indirectly affected by the immeasurable loss suffered by the Broncos team, because the fact is, we are all affected. Our children are our heroes.

On behalf of everyone on the north shore, the Bloc Québécois, and all Quebecers, I want to offer our deepest sympathies to all communities affected, and I wish a speedy recovery to everyone who was injured. Our hearts go out to them. We will never forget them.

[*English*]

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent of the House for the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands to add her comments?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour for me to rise today to join my colleagues in offering our condolences to the families, loved ones, and communities in Saskatchewan, as well as across Canada.

[*English*]

I stand here today in a minor hockey jersey from one of our local teams, the Peninsula Eagles, because we know that right across this country, as my other colleagues have said, there is not a community that is not touched, saddened, grieved, in tears over the terrible tragedy that occurred at that Saskatchewan crossroads.

I want to thank the hon. Minister of Public Safety, a son of Saskatchewan, who spoke so beautifully and encompassed a lot of what I thought I might want to say. He said it better. As well, the hon. Leader of the Opposition, also from Saskatchewan, brought beautiful imagery that brings to mind what it is like to watch one's kids grow up playing hockey with their friends, and the lessons they learn. I watch my grandkids now. As my grandkids in Toronto take to the ice on weekend mornings, grandkids in Vancouver do the same. Right across this country, it is something that brings us together. I think that is why the senseless, horrific loss of 16 bright young lives and the serious injuries to their teammates have hit us so hard.

All we can say once again as Canadians is that we are with the Humboldt Broncos, those they play with, those they love, and those

they billet with. As the young men in hospital go through their recovery, God be with them. I commend the bravery and the words of Ryan Straschnitzki, who now is facing life paralyzed and is saying he is going to keep playing hockey. We can bet our bottom dollar he is going to win the Paralympics.

God bless Humboldt. God bless all of Canada, which rose in one voice with one heart to say that this is a tragedy that touches us all. We grieve as one community, one Canada.

• (1540)

The Speaker: I thank all hon. members who have spoken for expressing so eloquently and touchingly the sentiments we all share.

Heaven's hockey team just got stronger.

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. James Maloney (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the eighth report of the Standing Committee on Natural Resources in relation to Bill C-354, An Act to amend the Department of Public Works and Government Services Act (use of wood). The committee has studied the bill and has decided to report the bill back to the House with amendment.

I would like to thank the committee members, the clerks, and the analysts for working so hard to make this happen, and in particular the member for South Okanagan—West Kootenay for introducing the bill and being so accommodating with the committee members.

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to add my condolences from the people of Yukon to the people of Humboldt. Northerners grieve with them at this time.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Orders 104 and 114, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 59th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs regarding the membership of committees of the House. If the House gives its consent, I move that the 59th report be concurred in today.

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

Some hon. members: No.

* * *

[*English*]

PETITIONS

ANIMAL WELFARE

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise today to present a petition that deals with the issue of animal testing.

Routine Proceedings

The petitioners are from throughout the GTA, including Toronto, Mississauga, and Ajax. They ask the government to look at our current laws in relation to animal cruelty and compare them to what is done in the European Union, where half of the global cosmetic market exists and where they have prohibited the importation and sale of cosmetics that have been tested on animals. Norway, India, and Israel have acted similarly.

The petitioners call on the House to act to ensure that we ban the use of animal testing for the purpose of cosmetics.

• (1545)

PHARMACARE

Mrs. Carol Hughes (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasing, NDP): Mr. Speaker, before I start, the good people of Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasing share in the grief of Humboldt, Saskatchewan. Families, friends, and communities within my riding are really troubled by what happened. They wanted me to express their sincere condolences to the families, friends, and communities.

It is always a pleasure for me to rise and table a petition on behalf of the good people of Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasing. This petition is signed by people from Elliot Lake who call for universal pharmacare in Canada.

The petitioners point out that one in five people are unable to fill their prescriptions due to financial reasons. They feel that people should not have to struggle to pay for the prescription drugs they need. They say that Canada is the only country in the world with a universal medicare system that does not include prescription drugs.

[*Translation*]

The petitioners also point out that the estimated savings are in the billions of dollars and add that a universal pharmacare program would be a wise investment. That is why they are calling on the government to work with the provinces on implementing such a program within the framework of our health care system.

[*English*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, before I table this petition, I would also like to bring condolences from the people of Courtenay—Alberni to my colleague in the Conservative Party from Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, to her constituents, to the people of Humboldt, and to the people of Saskatchewan, from Vancouver Islanders, from our junior hockey team in the Alberni Valley, the Comox Valley Glacier Kings and the Oceanside Generals. People in our riding have put hockey sticks outside their doors and have been holding vigils throughout our communities to send strength and stand in solidarity.

Today, I table a petition that calls on the Government of Canada to support Motion No. 151 to create a national strategy to combat ocean plastics and to work with all levels of government to develop the strategy. It is an important issue to the people of coastal British Columbia.

CANADIAN VOLUNTEER SERVICE MEDAL

Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions.

The first is from a number of citizens ask the Government of Canada to reinstate the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal. As members know, it was a medal that was available for the volunteer work done by our veterans and troops until March 1947. The constituents who have signed this petition wish the government would consider bringing this medal back.

The petitioners call on the government to create and issue a new Canadian military volunteer service medal for Canadians in the regular forces, reserve military forces, cadet corps, and support staff, all who have completed 365 days of uninterrupted honourable duty in service of our country of Canada.

PHARMACARE

Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my second petition calls upon the House to consider the needs of communities and members of those communities who do not have access to pharmaceuticals.

As members know, one in five people are unable to fill their prescriptions. People struggle to have the money to pay for prescription drugs. Canada is the only country with a universal medicare system that does not include prescription drugs in that system. We have estimated, and a number of very knowledgeable people have estimated, that we could save billions of dollars if we had a universal pharmacare system.

The petitioners call upon the Government of Canada to actively work to lower prescription drug costs for all Canadians, to work with the provinces, and to implement a universal pharmacare system as part of our public health care program.

* * *

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Ms. Kamal Khera (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if the government's response to Questions Nos. 1511 to 1560 could be made orders for returns, these returns would be tabled immediately.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*Text*]

Question No. 1511— **Mr. Deepak Obhrai:**

With regard to the Access to Information and Privacy (ATIP) sections of departments, agencies, Crown corporations or other government entities, and broken down by each: (a) how many employees or full-time equivalents (FTEs) did each ATIP section have as of (i) January 1, 2016, (ii) January 1, 2018; and (b) how many employees or FTEs are assigned to process ATIP requests, if different than (a)(i) and (ii)?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1512— **Mr. Deepak Obhrai:**

With regard to infrastructure funding: what amount has been actually delivered, as opposed to simply announced, in infrastructure funding between November 4, 2015, and February 12, 2018, broken down by riding?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 1513—Mr. Tom Kmiec:**

With regard to the Canada Revenue Agency's (CRA) administration of the Alberta government's new carbon tax rebates in the last calendar year: (a) what is the total number of rebate payments issued; (b) what is the total monetary amount of these rebates; (c) what is the total number of rebate payments issued to non-residents of Alberta; (d) what is the total monetary amount of rebates issued to non-residents; and (e) what is the total annual administrative cost for the CRA to manage this program for the provincial government?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1514—Mr. Harold Albrecht:

With regard to the livestreaming of events on government Facebook pages during the 2017 calendar year: (a) what is the complete list of events or announcements which were livestreamed on official government Facebook pages; and (b) how many views did each livestream have (i) live (not including views after the conclusion of the event), (ii) in total as of February 12, 2018?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1515—Mr. Harold Albrecht:

With regard to the purchase of "likes" on Facebook by government departments, agencies, Crown Corporations, or other government entities since January 1, 2016: (a) what are the details of all such purchases, including (i) amount, (ii) date, (iii) number of "likes" purchased, (iv) title of page or post which received the likes; and (b) what is the total of all expenditures in (a)?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1516—Mr. Luc Berthold:

With regard to the development of Canada's new Food Guide: (a) has Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada done any studies related to the impact of the Guide on various sectors of the agricultural industry; (b) if the answer to (a) is affirmative, what are the details of the studies, including (i) findings, (ii) who conducted the study, (iii) website where findings are located; and (c) what specific role does the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food have in relation to the development of the new Food Guide?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1517—Mr. Dean Allison:

With respect to Transport Canada's Trade and Transportation Corridors Initiative (TTCI), and the 2 billion dollar commitment over 11 years for the National Trade Corridors Fund: (a) what are the details of all completed applications received for the National Trade Corridors Fund as of December 31, 2017, including (i) applicant, (ii) amount requested, (iii) project description, (iv) province or territory of applicant; and (b) what are the details of all pilot project applications for the 50 million dollar investment for transportation innovation, including (i) applicant, (ii) amount requested, (iii) project description, (iv) province or territory of applicant?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1518—Ms. Karine Trudel:

With regard to the Dairy Farm Investment Program (DFIP) announced on November 10, 2016, to support the productivity of the dairy sector: what farms have received DFIP funding in the federal riding of Jonquière, broken down by name, date of funding and amount received for the (i) City of Saguenay, (ii) Town of Saint-Honoré, (iii) Municipality of St-Ambroise, (iv) Municipality of Saint-Fulgence, (v) Municipality of Sainte-Rose-du-Nord, (vi) Municipality of Saint-Charles-de-Bourget, (vii) Municipality of Bégin, (viii) Municipality of Saint-Nazaire, (ix) Town of Labrecque, (x) Municipality of Lamarche, (xi) Municipality of Larouche, (xii) Municipality of Saint-David-de-Falardeau?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1519—Mr. Peter Van Loan:

With regard to contracts over \$10,000 signed by Canadian Heritage since November 4, 2015, where the final contract value is more than double the original contract value: what are the details of each such contract, including (i) date, (ii)

vendor, (iii) description of product or service, (iv) original contract value, (v) final contract value, (vi) reason why final contract value was higher than original value?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1520—Mr. Larry Miller:

With regard to performance pay for employees at the executive (EX) or higher level during 2017, and broken down by department or agency: (a) how many individuals received performance pay; and (b) what is the total amount paid out during 2017?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1521—Mr. Steven Blaney:

With regard to projects funded under the Canada 150 Signature Project Program: what are the details of each project, including (i) project name, (ii) description, (iii) location, (iv) original funding commitment, (v) final funding amount provided to the project, or funding provided to date if project is not yet completed, (vi) current status, (vii) completion date, or projected completion date if project is not yet completed?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1522—Mr. Kelly McCauley:

With regard to the Name-Blind Recruitment Pilot Project Report provided by the Public Service Commission of Canada: (a) what were the total amounts spent on developing, producing, and publishing the report; (b) how many full-time equivalents worked on the report; and (c) of the employees in (b), what are their occupational groups and levels?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1523—Mr. Kelly McCauley:

With regard to the Industrial Research Assistance Program, since November 4, 2015: (a) how much funding has been contributed, by quarter, to the program; and (b) what are the projects within the program that have received funding, broken down by (i) the amount spent per project, (ii) the city in which these projects are located?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1524—Mr. Larry Maguire:

With regard to drug-impaired driving training for RCMP and Canada Border Services Agency officers noted in the 2017-18 Supplementary Estimates: (a) how many officers have been trained so far; (b) how many officers are currently scheduled to be trained; (c) who is providing the training; (d) where is the training taking place; and (e) how much of the funds noted in the 2017-18 Supplementary Estimates (B) are dedicated to officer training?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1525—Mr. John Nater:

With regard to Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings related to succession plans: (a) how was Louise Fréchette chosen to be Canada's representative at the meetings; (b) to which department, agency, or government entity does Ms. Fréchette report; (c) is Ms. Fréchette considered an employee of the department, agency, or government entity in (b); (d) what instruction has the government provided to Canada's representative at the meetings; and (e) what is Canada's official position regarding succession plans in regard to the Head of the Commonwealth?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1526—Mr. Arnold Viersen:

With regard to the Canadian Passport Order, since November 4, 2015, in order to prevent the commission of any act or omission referred to in subsection 7(4.1) of the Criminal Code: (a) how many passports has the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship (i) refused, (ii) revoked, (iii) cancelled; and (b) what is the monthly breakdown of (a)(i), (ii), and (iii)?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 1527— Mr. Gord Johns:**

With regard to the Recreational Fisheries Conservation Partnership Program and the Coastal Restoration Fund, for each year from 2006 through 2017: (a) what is the annual budget for each year; (b) who are the recipients of all grants and contributions made under these programs, broken down by the constituency in which they are located; and (c) what is the description of each approved project, including how it supports the objectives of the program?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1528— Mr. Robert Aubin:

With regard to the incident involving two-metre-high waves in Yamachiche and the Collision Regulations: (a) does the government intend to amend the Collision Regulations to provide for a victims' financial compensation fund; (b) if the answer to (a) is affirmative, what are the details of the implementation of the compensation fund; (c) if the answer to (a) is negative, what are the detailed reasons for Transport Canada's decision; (d) how many cases similar to the Yamachiche incident have been identified by Transport Canada; (e) did the victims of the cases identified in (d) receive financial compensation; (f) if the answer to (e) is affirmative, what compensation mechanism did these victims use; (g) if the answer to (e) is negative, what are the reasons for Transport Canada's refusal to provide for a financial compensation mechanism; (h) does Transport Canada plan to publish a detailed investigation report on the Yamachiche incident; (i) if the answer to (h) is affirmative, when will this report be published; (j) if the answer to (h) is negative, what are the detailed reasons for Transport Canada's decision; (k) has Transport Canada estimated the financial cost of the damage to the affected properties in Yamachiche; (l) if the answer to (k) is affirmative, what was the estimate provided by Transport Canada; and (m) if the answer to (k) is negative, what are the reasons for Transport Canada's refusal to provide an estimate of the financial cost of the damage to the affected properties in Yamachiche?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1529— Mr. Robert Aubin:

With regard to the agreement between Transport Canada and Air Canada on the safety of Air Canada's entire operations, including its pilot training: (a) what are the details of the agreement; (b) what are the details of the measures taken to date by Air Canada as a result of the agreement; (c) what is Transport Canada's detailed assessment of the measures taken to date by Air Canada; (d) what did Transport Canada determine was the level of risk of the safety of Air Canada's entire operations before the agreement was made; (e) what has Transport Canada determined is the level of risk to date, since the agreement was made; (f) what are the issues associated with managing pilot fatigue identified by Transport Canada during its review of Air Canada's safety management system; (g) how long had Air Canada had its system in place for the safety of its entire operations before reaching the agreement with Transport Canada; (h) what were the reasons for the six-month delay between the first Air Canada incident in July 2017 and when the agreement was reached with Transport Canada, in January 2018; (i) what was the annual failure rate for Pilot Proficiency Checks (PPCs) when Transport Canada inspectors carried out the PPCs for Air Canada pilots between 2005 and 2016; (j) what was the annual failure rate for Pilot Proficiency Checks when industry Approved Check Pilots finished the PPCs for Air Canada pilots between 2005 and 2016; (k) has Transport Canada estimated the savings achieved by Air Canada regarding the safety of its entire operations before the agreement; (l) if the answer to (k) is affirmative, what are the details of the estimate; (m) how many agreements have Transport Canada and Air Canada entered into since 2005 on the safety of its entire operations; (n) what agreements have been made between Transport Canada and other airlines on the safety of their entire operations and all of their pilots; and (o) what are the details of the agreements in (n)?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1530— Mr. Robert Aubin:

With regard to the fares charged by Air Canada for regional air transportation and Air Canada's virtual monopoly in several regional markets: (a) how many times has the Minister of Transport met with Air Canada officials; (b) what are the details of the issues discussed by the Minister of Transport and Air Canada officials during the meetings in (a); (c) what are the details of Transport Canada's analyses of the fares charged by Air Canada; (d) has Transport Canada requested an opinion or a review from the Commissioner of Competition; (e) if the answer to (d) is affirmative, (i) when did Transport Canada request this opinion or review, (ii) what are the details of this request for an opinion or a review, (iii) what were the responses from the

Commissioner of Competition to this request for an opinion or a review; (f) if the answer to (d) is negative, what were the reasons behind Transport Canada's refusal to request an opinion or a review from the Commissioner of Competition; (g) what is Transport Canada's position on establishing a financial compensation mechanism; (h) what is Transport Canada's position on setting a floor price; (i) what are the detailed reasons for Transport Canada's position in (g); (j) what are the detailed reasons for Transport Canada's position in (h); (k) how many regional air carriers in Quebec and elsewhere in Canada have withdrawn from the regional air transportation market each year since 2003; (l) what is Transport Canada's detailed position on the withdrawal from the regional market by each of the regional air carriers in (k); and (m) what is Transport Canada's detailed position on Air Canada's pricing strategy in regional aviation markets?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1531— Mr. Robert Aubin:

With regard to the five-year update to CSA A23.1 and its lack of clarity regarding the sulphur content in aggregate for use in concrete: (a) does the Standards Council of Canada, or any other government department or agency, provide financial support to the Canadian Standards Association; (b) if the answer to (a) is affirmative, what is the amount invested to date; (c) if the answer to (a) is negative, what are the reasons for this lack of financial support; (d) what is the total number of employees assigned by government departments and agencies to the five-year update of CSA A23.1; (e) does the National Research Council's revision of the Building Code provide for an update to CSA A23.1; (f) what are the details of the work to date to improve the clarity of CSA A23.1; (g) what organizations were consulted by the Standards Council of Canada and the Canadian Standards Association; (h) what are the details of the work by the Canadian Standards Association to develop a scientific standard for pyrrhotite content in concrete; (i) what are the differences between the 2009-14 five-year review and the 2014-19 five-year review with respect to developing a scientific standard for pyrrhotite content in concrete; (j) is the Canadian Standards Association proposing to develop a scientific standard for pyrrhotite content in concrete and, if so, how; and (k) if the answer to (j) is negative, what are the reasons given by the Canadian Standards Association or any other government department or agency?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1532— Mr. Tom Kmiec:

With regard to immigration to Canada, between December 7, 2016, and December 6, 2017: (a) how many economic class immigrants have been admitted to Canada; (b) how many family class immigrants have been admitted to Canada; (c) how many refugees have been admitted to Canada; (d) how many temporary student visas were issued and how many individuals were admitted to Canada on a temporary student visa; (e) how many temporary worker permits were issued and how many individuals were admitted to Canada on a temporary worker permit; (f) how many temporary visitor records were issued and how many individuals were admitted to Canada on a temporary visitor record; (g) how many temporary resident permits were issued; (h) how many temporary resident permits were approved by the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship; (i) for (a) to (h), what is the breakdown by source country by each class of migrant; and (j) for applications for the categories enumerated in (a) to (h), how many individuals were found inadmissible under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act in (i) section 34, (ii) section 35, (iii) section 36, (iv) section 37, (v) section 40?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1533— Mr. Arnold Viersen:

With regard to studies conducted by, or on behalf of, Health Canada, since January 1, 2016: (a) what studies have been done on the side effects of Mifegymiso, including (i) date, (ii) methodology, (iii) who conducted the study, (iv) location, (v) finding; and (b) what data has been collected on the side effects of Mifegymiso, broken down by (i) each of the known side effects of Mifegymiso, (ii) Health Canada's estimate on the number of Canadians affected by each of the known side effects of Mifegymiso?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 1534—Mr. Mark Warawa:**

With regard to the Prime Minister's trip to India in February 2018: (a) what was the trip's itinerary; (b) for any receptions, dinners or similar events on the itinerary, who was on the guest list, broken down by event; and (c) what are the details of any reception or dinner invitations which were rescinded or revoked by the government, including (i) individual or organization which had their invitation rescinded, (ii) event for which original invitation was sent, (iii) reason for rescinding or revoking invitation?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1535—Mr. Mark Warawa:

With regard to the February 2018 New Delhi reception invitation which was issued to Jaspal Atwal: (a) on what date did the Prime Minister's Office become aware of the invitation; and (b) what departments or agencies were aware that Mr. Atwal received an invitation and when did each department become aware of the invitation?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1536—Mr. Ron Liepert:

With regard to the claim by Outlook India magazine that the government withdrew the publication's invitation to a February 2018 reception in New Delhi, because of the magazine's criticism of the Prime Minister: what is the government's official reason for revoking the invitation of the magazine or its editors?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1537—Mr. Ron Liepert:

With regard to the Prime Minister's trip to India in February 2018: (a) for the purpose of facilitating the issuing of visas, did the Government of Canada provide, by diplomatic note or otherwise, the Government of India with a list of (i) delegation members, (ii) other individuals who would attend delegation events or have interactions with the delegation; and (b) if the answer in (a)(i) or (ii) is affirmative, (i) how and by whom was each list communicated, (ii) on what date was each list communicated, (iii) broken down by categories in (a)(i) and (ii), and broken down by list, who was named on each list?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1538—Mr. Martin Shields:

With regard to the Prime Minister's trip to India in February 2018: (a) who were the members of the Canadian delegation, including (i) name, (ii) organization, (iii) title; (b) for each delegation member, which ones (i) were required to reimburse taxpayers for all expenses related to the trip, (ii) were required to reimburse taxpayers some expenses related to the trip, (iii) were not required to reimburse any expenses related to the trip; and (c) for each delegation member, why was he or she chosen to be a delegation member?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1539—Mr. Martin Shields:

With regard to government expenditures on clothing, shoes, other apparel, or fashion accessories for the Prime Minister and his family, since November 4, 2015: what are the details of all such expenditures, including (i) vendor, (ii) date, (iii) amount, (iv) description of goods purchased, including brand and quantity?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1540—Mr. Charlie Angus:

With regard to the trip to India in February 2018 taken by the Prime Minister and several ministers: (a) for each leg of the Prime Minister and each individual minister's travel across India, (i) what was the place of origin and destination, (ii) what was the means of conveyance, (iii) who were all the individuals travelling with the Prime Minister or ministers, and what was their reason for travelling with the Prime Minister or minister, (iv) were any registered lobbyists travelling with the Prime Minister or ministers and, if so, who were the individuals, and for whom or what are they registered to lobby, (v) were any individuals affiliated with a commercial or non-profit entity that receives grants, contributions, or contracts from the Government of Canada travelling with the Prime Minister or ministers and, if so,

who were the individuals, with which entity are they affiliated, and what is that entity's business with the Government of Canada; (b) how were articles of Indian national dress worn by the Prime Minister acquired, broken down by article of clothing, and what was their individual and aggregate total costs, if applicable; (c) for any invitation-only events at which the Prime Minister was present, (i) was there a process by which invitees were screened by Canadian officials either in advance of invitation, after being invited, or upon request of a minister or other official, (ii) what was the process in (c)(i), (iii) were there any known lapses in or breaches of the process in (c)(i), (iv) has there been an investigation into known lapses or breaches of the process in (c)(i) and, if so, what were their conclusions; and (d) for every specially-invited guest of the Prime Minister on the trip to India, (i) what were the names and reasons for invitation of any invited guests, (ii) what was the cost, broken down by leg of travel, accommodations, and any honorariums or per diems claimed against cost by any invited guest of the Prime Minister?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1541—Mr. Charlie Angus:

With respect to the Innovation Superclusters Initiative: (a) what was the full assessment, evaluation and selection process and criteria used to select the five successful supercluster entities representing industry-led consortia, namely, the SCALE.AI Supercluster, the Next Generation Manufacturing Supercluster, the Ocean Supercluster, the Protein Industries Supercluster, and the Digital Technology Supercluster, from other applicants; (b) what are the Lead Applicants and Partner Applicants as well as participating or enabling firms, individuals and other entities in each of the five successful supercluster entities in (a); (c) what were the names of the industry-led consortia that submitted unsuccessful applications, broken down by region and economic sectors as defined by Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada; (d) what were the Lead and Partner Applicants in the unsuccessful applications; and (e) what is the breakdown by supercluster and by fiscal year, over the next five years, of planned spending in the Innovation Superclusters Initiative?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1542—Mrs. Rosemarie Falk:

With regard to the Prime Minister's trip to India in February 2018: (a) what are the titles and summaries of all agreements signed between the Prime Minister and the Government of India on the trip; (b) for each agreement in (a), what is the website address where the text is located; and (c) if the text of any agreement in (a) is not available on the government's website, how can the public obtain copies of the relevant texts?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1543—Mr. Tom Lukiwski:

With regard to the Prime Minister's trip to India in February 2018: (a) what are the details of all expenditures, including airfare and travel costs, related to Vikram Vij's participation on the trip, including (i) vendor, (ii) amount, (iii) date, (iv) description of goods or services provided; (b) what are the details of any meals which Mr. Vij prepared for the Prime Minister or other delegation members or guests on the trip, including (i) date, (ii) number of individuals for whom a meal was prepared, (iii) menu, (iv) description of event; and (c) what are the details of any Canadian food products which were exported to India for use in the meals in (b), including (i) date of export, (ii) description of product, (iii) quantity of product, (iv) value of product, (v) meal in which product was used?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1544—Mr. Gord Johns:

With regard to the Recreational Fisheries Conservation Partnership Program and the Coastal Restoration Fund, for each year from 2006 through 2017: (a) what is the annual budget for each year; (b) who are the recipients of all grants and contributions made under these programs and how much did each receive, broken down by the constituency in which they are located; and (c) what is the description of each approved project, including how it supports the objectives of the program?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 1545— Ms. Sheila Malcolmson:**

With regard to the five proposed anchorages east of Gabriola Island, BC: (a) how many consultation sessions were organized by the government; (b) where did these consultation sessions take place, broken down by (i) city, (ii) constituency; (c) what groups and individuals were invited to the consultation sessions; (d) what groups and individuals participated in the consultation sessions; (e) which Members of Parliament attended the consultation sessions; (f) how many online consultation sessions took place; (g) which bands, leaders, Indigenous communities and organizations did the Minister of Transport consult with, broken down by (i) date, (ii) location, (iii) name and title of the Indigenous group or community, (iv) attendees, (v) recommendations that were made to the Minister; (h) regarding the consultations in (a), by which criteria did the Minister decide which bands, leaders, communities and organizations to consult with; (i) what are the details of the discussion questions brought to each meeting; (j) how many meetings has the Minister held with Snuneymuxw First Nation, broken down by (i) date, (ii) location, (iii) attendees, (iv) recommendations that were made to the Minister; and (k) what are the details of any briefing notes or correspondence related to the meetings referred to in (a), including the (i) title, (ii) date, (iii) sender, (iv) recipient, (v) subject matter, (vi) file number?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1546— Mrs. Karen Vecchio:

With regard to the book cover for Budget 2018: (a) how much did the government spend on the cover, including any artwork, graphic design, or photography; and (b) what is the breakdown of all expenses, including, for each expense, the (i) amount, (ii) date, (iii) vendor, (iv) description of good or service, (v) file number?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1547— Mr. Deepak Obhrai:

With regard to the trip to India by the Prime Minister and the conspiracy theory advanced by a Privy Council Official that the Government of India was responsible for Jaspal Atwal receiving an invitation to a reception: does the government have any proof to corroborate this conspiracy theory and, if so, what are the details of such proof?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1548— Mr. John Barlow:

With regard to the trip to India by the Prime Minister and other ministers in February 2018, and for each member of Cabinet who was on the trip: (a) what were the details of each of their itineraries; and (b) for each meeting listed on the itineraries in (a), what is the list of attendees?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1549— Mrs. Shannon Stubbs:

With regard to all expenditures on hospitality (Treasury Board Object Code 0822), between January 1, 2018, and February 1, 2018, by the Office of the Prime Minister and the Privy Council Office: what are the details of all expenditures, including (i) vendor, (ii) amount, (iii) date of expenditure, (iv) description of goods or services provided, (v) file number, (vi) number of government employees that the hospitality expenditure was for, (vii) number of guests that the hospitality expenditure was for?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1550— Mr. Phil McColeman:

With regard to the Veterans Affairs Canada offices: (a) how many veterans physically visited the following offices in order to utilize services, broken down by month, since January 1, 2017, (i) Corner Brook, (ii) Sydney, (iii) Charlottetown, (iv) Thunder Bay, (v) Brandon, (vi) Saskatoon, (vii) Kelowna, (viii) Windsor, (ix) Prince George; and (b) for each of the Veterans Affairs Canada offices in (a), (i) what was the monthly operating cost, broken down by standard object and line item, for each month since January 1, 2017, (ii) what is the number of full-time equivalents who physically worked in each office, broken down by month?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1551— Ms. Sheri Benson:

With regard to the Visa Office at the Canadian High Commission in Singapore: (a) what is the total number of sponsorship requests the Singapore Visa Office received in each year from 2012 to 2017; (b) how many applications were processed in each of the years in (a) and, of those processed, what percentage was approved in each of those years; (c) which group of asylum seekers had the highest acceptance rate through the Singapore Visa Office in each of the years in (a); (d) which group of asylum seekers had the lowest acceptance rate through the Singapore Visa Office in each of the years in (a); (e) what number of Pakistani Christian asylum claims have been handled by the Canadian Singapore Visa Office in each of the years in (a); (f) what number of Pakistani Christian asylum claims have been accepted by the Singapore Visa Office for resettlement in Canada in each of the years in (a); (g) what number of Pakistani Christian asylum claims were rejected by the Canadian Singapore Visa Office for resettlement in Canada in each of the years in (a); (h) of those Pakistani Christian asylum claims rejected by the Singapore Visa Office for resettlement in Canada, how many Pakistani Christian asylum claims filed for a judicial review in each of the years in (a); (i) of those Pakistani Christian asylum claims rejected by the Singapore Visa Office for resettlement in Canada, how many Pakistani Christian asylum claims filed for a judicial review and received a "second interview" by the Singapore Visa Office in each of the years in (a); (j) how many Pakistani Christian asylum claims which received a "second interview" from a judicial review were accepted for resettlement in Canada by the Canadian Singapore Visa Office in each of the years in (a); (k) does the Singapore Visa Office conduct independent evaluations of asylum claims from Pakistani Christians; (l) what role, if any, does the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' assessment of asylum seekers have on the Canadian Visa Officers' decision; and (m) is a Canadian Visa Officer in Singapore allowed to work for the Canadian government, as well as a private international immigration firm, or would that be considered a conflict of interest?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1552— Mr. Mel Arnold:

With regard to the new Arctic Surf Clam licence in Atlantic Canada and Quebec: (a) which Indigenous groups comprise the Five Nations Premium Clam Company; (b) what are the details of all correspondence and briefing notes prepared for the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs and the Minister of Indigenous Services, since May 31, 2016, related to the decision to award the Five Nations Premium Clam Company a new surf clam licence, including (i) dates, (ii) senders, (iii) recipients, (iv) titles, (v) subjects, (vi) summaries, (vii) file numbers; (c) what are the details of all correspondence between the government, including Ministerial Exempt Staff, and the Five Nations Premium Clam Company, since May 31, 2016, including (i) dates, (ii) senders, (iii) recipients, (iv) titles, (v) subjects, (vi) summaries, (vii) file numbers; (d) what are the details of all correspondence between the government, including Ministerial Exempt Staff, and the Chief of the Ełsipotog First Nation, since May 31, 2016, including (i) dates, (ii) senders, (iii) recipients, (iv) titles, (v) subjects, (vi) summaries, (vii) file numbers; (e) what are the details of all correspondence between the government, including Ministerial Exempt Staff, and Premium Seafoods, since May 31, 2016, including (i) dates, (ii) senders, (iii) recipients, (iv) titles, (v) subjects, (vi) summaries, (vii) file numbers; (f) what are the details of all correspondence between the government, including Ministerial Exempt Staff, and the Member of Parliament for Sackville-Preston-Chezzetcook, since May 31, 2016, including (i) dates, (ii) senders, (iii) recipients, (iv) titles, (v) subjects, (vi) summaries, (vii) file numbers; and (g) what are the details of all meetings related to the new Arctic Surf Clam licence, including (i) dates, (ii) lists of attendees, (iii) locations, (iv) agendas?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1553— Mrs. Cathay Wagantall:

With regard to the federal carbon tax or price on carbon: (a) did the government conduct a gender-based analysis of how it would affect men versus women; and (b) if the answer to (a) is affirmative, what are the details, including (i) specific findings, (ii) who conducted the analysis, (iii) date the analysis was completed, (iv) methodology?

(Return tabled)

S. O. 52

Question No. 1554—Mr. Peter Kent:

With regard to government expenditures in relation to the Prime Minister's attendance at the Young Changemakers Conclave and, specifically, the event at Indira Gandhi Stadium in New Delhi on February 24, 2018: (a) how much did the government pay to sponsor the event; (b) does the government consider the map of "India" displayed at the event to be an accurate representation of India's borders; and (c) if the answer to (b) is negative, what actions has the government taken in order to address the validity of the representation displayed on the map?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1555—Mr. Jim Eglinski:

With regard to expenditures related to the preparation and presentation of Budget 2018: what are the details of all expenditures, including (i) date, (ii) vendor, (iii) amount, (iv) description of goods or services, (v) contract date and duration, (vi) number?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1556— Mr. Mike Lake:

With regard to federal student loans, in 2016-17: (a) how many loans have been forgiven; (b) how much debt has been forgiven; (c) how much student debt is sent to collection agencies; (d) of the debt in (c), how much has been recovered; (e) what is the base cost of contracting the collection agencies in (c); (f) what is the overall labour cost of the recoveries; and (g) how much has been collected in student debt interest?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1557—Mr. Mike Lake:

With regard to the Senate selection committee in 2017: (a) how many Senate openings were advertised, by province, and (i) what were the dates of these, (ii) how many applications were received for each posting, (iii) how many interviews of applicants were conducted for each posting; (b) how many full-time equivalents (FTEs) work on the committee; (c) of the FTEs in (b), what are their corresponding pay scales; (d) how much has been spent by the selection committee, broken down by (i) accommodation, (ii) travel, (iii) per diems, (iv) incidentals, (v) office renovation, (vi) office set-up; (e) how much has been budgeted for 2018; and (f) how much was spent on travel for candidate interviews?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1558— Mr. Mike Lake:

With regard to the Conference Secretariat, in 2017: (a) how many conferences have been organized; (b) what is the cost breakdown of each conference that has been organized; and (c) for each conference, (i) how many external contractors have been commissioned, (ii) who are the contractors?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1559— Mr. Mike Lake:

With regard to fitness facilities, including gymnasiums, swimming pools, boxing rings, weight rooms, etc. installed or renovated in government buildings since November 4, 2015, what are the details of each, including (i) address, (ii) building name, (iii) description of facility, (iv) total cost of development or renovation of facility, (v) number of employees who have access to facility?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1560— Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie:

With regard to the Prime Minister's trip to India in February 2018: (a) were the outfits for the Prime Minister, his family and members of the delegation paid for with taxpayers' money; (b) if the answer to (a) is affirmative, how much did the outfits for the Prime Minister, his family and members of the delegation cost; (c) in which city and by which company were the outfits for the Prime Minister and his family made; (d) what was the total cost of the Prime Minister's family's trip to India; (e) who covered the cost in (d); (f) how many people were part of the Canadian delegation, broken down by department; (g) what was the total cost of the trip; and (h) what was the total cost of having Canadian chef Vikram Vij come and prepare a meal at the Canadian High Commission in India?

(Return tabled)

• (1550)

[*English*]

Ms. Kamal Khara: Mr. Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

REQUEST FOR EMERGENCY DEBATE

TRANS MOUNTAIN PIPELINE EXPANSION PROJECT

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

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am seeking leave for the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing an important matter requiring urgent consideration pursuant to Standing Order 52.

On Sunday, April 8, Kinder Morgan Canada Limited announced that it would not proceed with the construction of the federally approved \$7.4 billion Trans Mountain pipeline expansion after May 31, without explicit agreement that there would be no further legal challenges and no further disputes or obstacles by provincial and municipal governments.

Both the federal government and the official opposition agree that the Trans Mountain expansion is in the national interest. In response to Kinder Morgan's announcement, the federal government called an emergency cabinet meeting. An emergency meeting was held between the finance minister and the Premier of Alberta on Wednesday, April 11, and the Prime Minister returned from an international trip to meet with the Premiers of Alberta and British Columbia on Sunday, April 15.

The threats of punitive economic measures between provincial governments have escalated significantly, including announcements of intent to restrict energy supply between three provinces. Representatives of the Canadian Energy Pipeline Association, CEOs of major Canadian banks, and investment management portfolios warn that this situation is a crisis and that the impacts extend well beyond the pipeline itself to confidence in Canada overall.

Billions of dollars of investment in the Canadian economy, billions of dollars in future government revenues for social programs and services, tens of thousands of energy jobs and hundreds of thousands more in other sectors, \$400 million in equity partnerships with 43 indigenous communities, market access for Canadian oil, and national unity are all at risk.

I trust you will agree, Mr. Speaker, that this is an emergency and will grant leave for the adjournment of the House to discuss this important matter that clearly requires urgent consideration.

Government Orders

SPEAKER'S RULING

The Speaker: I thank the member for Lakeland for her intervention on this matter, which I know is of interest to many members in the House. I find that it does meet the exigencies of the Standing Order and therefore grant the request for the emergency debate, to be held later tonight.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2018, NO. 1

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-74, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 27, 2018 and other measures be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Speaker: I wish to inform the House that because of the ministerial statement, government orders will be extended by 28 minutes.

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary for Small Business and Tourism.

Mrs. Alaina Lockhart (Parliamentary Secretary for Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by offering condolences to Humboldt, to the team, the families, the billets, and the entire community from the people of Fundy Royal. Our hearts are with them.

I rise today to speak to Bill C-74, the first budget implementation act. This budget builds on the investments made in our previous budgets and really takes it to the next level to ensure that all Canadians have an opportunity to benefit from the growth that we see in the economy. Today I would like to focus on a few of the items that are having, and will have, a profound impact in my riding of Fundy Royal.

The riding of Fundy Royal is predominantly rural, nestled between three southern cities in New Brunswick, and bordered on the north by the beautiful Bay of Fundy. Although the area is peppered by communities that are unique in their own way, there is a common thread that runs through them—

The Deputy Speaker: I would ask the hon. parliamentary secretary to hold that thought temporarily. There is one item in the previous debate, just before statements by members, that we had three and a half minutes remaining for the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade.

• (1555)

Our speaking order is being formalized as we speak. We will wrap up questions and comments of the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade and then we will go to the member for Calgary Rocky Ridge for his intervention, after which we will carry on with the rest of the order. We will get back to the hon. Parliamentary Secretary for Small Business and Tourism in due course.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Kitchener—Conestoga.

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a large portion of the budget bill, over 200 pages, is devoted to the carbon tax. Could my colleague indicate what the cost per family will be? Apparently the Liberal government understands what it is and knows what it is, but is unwilling to share that information.

There have been estimates that the carbon tax will cost about \$1,100 per family. That is the lowest estimate. The highest estimate puts it somewhere around \$2,500 per family, which is a huge cost to the average family, especially to the middle-class families that the government purports to want to support.

Could my colleague come clean with the House of Commons and with all Canadians and indicate what the actual cost of the carbon tax per family will be?

Ms. Pam Goldsmith-Jones (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today, wearing this jersey from the 2010 Vancouver Winter and Paralympic Games out of deep respect for the families of Humboldt.

With regard to the question, I am very pleased to respond to the attention being paid with regard to putting a price on carbon pollution. It is an extremely important signal and something our government is deeply committed to in order to begin the transition to a low carbon economy. It is an integral aspect of the approval of the Kinder Morgan pipeline, together with the extensive consultation that has gone on with the 43 first nations in British Columbia which will be part of a brighter economic and cleaner environmental future.

Ms. Filomena Tassi (Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with respect to the consultation that has taken place, the hon. member respects and values consultation. I would like her to share with the House the consultation she engaged in with respect to the pre-budget and the implementation of previous budgets, as well as this BIA, and the response she has received from her constituents with respect to what our government has delivered.

Ms. Pam Goldsmith-Jones: Mr. Speaker, I would like to particularly comment on the six budget meetings I held last week in the riding. Each was sold out and ranged from our trade agenda, because there is a lot of support for our progressive trade agenda and particularly full benefits of CETA and the TPP. We held a wonderful Squamish round table for the things our budget would do for women in entrepreneurship, women in technology, and women in trade. We held another public meeting in West Vancouver with the chamber of commerce, which very much focused on the tax reforms proposed by the Minister of Finance. They were very appreciative of the ability of our government to listen to the concerns expressed last summer and to realize the real movement in this budget, because of listening to people. Generally speaking, people are very happy.

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always an honour to rise in this place, even during difficult times such as today when it is with somewhat of a heavy heart one rises after the tributes we heard on the terrible tragedy in Saskatchewan.

Government Orders

It is also sometimes difficult to rise in trying times such as these when so much is at stake for the future of our country, even as we grapple with the ongoing crisis over the Trans Mountain expansion and the implications that a failure of that project would have for all future projects in Canada.

This budget implementation act necessarily brings us back to the budget that it implements. The bottom line of any budget, and really the first thing that anyone wants to know about a budget, is whether it is going to be a surplus budget or a deficit budget. Any analysis, criticism, or commentary has to take place in the context of the size and scope of any surplus or deficit. All the choices of inclusion or omission from a budget have to be viewed through that lens.

In the case of a deficit, it is customary to address the question of when the budget will return to surplus. I say this is customary because indeed it is. In fact, all 13 provincial and territorial governments either have a balanced budget or have a specific timeline or projection for when their budget will be balanced, and it is contained in their budget.

The finance minister is currently running a significant deficit, and neither the budget nor this implementation act make any mention of the means or timing of a return to balance. I raised this with the minister when he appeared before the finance committee last month. I asked him why he is the only finance minister in Canada who has no plan for a balanced budget, and why he did not even address the issue in a 400-page budget document. He said, "No matter how many times the Conservative members ask us to follow the playbook of the previous Conservative government, we won't do it." I may disagree with the minister on the point of whether or not he should follow the Conservative playbook, but at this point I think most Canadians would settle for this government merely following its own playbook.

On page 12 of the 2015 Liberal platform, its playbook, it reads:

We will run modest short-term deficits of less than \$10 billion in each of the next two fiscal years to fund historic investments in infrastructure....

After the next two fiscal years, the deficit will decline and our investment plan will return Canada to a balanced budget in 2019.

On page 72 under the fiscal plan and costing chapter it reiterates, "We will run modest deficits for three years so that we can invest in growth for the middle class and credibly offer a plan to balance the budget in 2019." Later on in the same chapter it says, "After the next two fiscal years, the deficit will decline and our investment plan will return Canada to a balanced budget...." The Liberal playbook refers to balanced budgets, and in fact, the Liberals promised balanced budgets. They promised small deficits and a return to a balanced budget.

Given that the Liberals promised a balanced budget by 2019 in the 2015 election, given that they promised only short-term deficits of less than \$10 billion, and given that they promised these short-term deficits only to fund historic investments in infrastructure, the question is why they are now implementing a structural deficit in a budget with over a \$20-billion deficit. Why does the finance minister repeatedly refuse to give any timeline for a balanced budget at all? Why does he bizarrely criticize the Conservatives for even asking about a balanced budget when he ran on an election platform that contained that very promise?

In fact, the finance minister got lucky this past year. The Canadian economy benefited from a whole host of factors, for none of which the finance minister can take any credit. Commodity prices were better than forecast. The world economy has had perhaps its best year since the great recession. The American economy was positively booming with a record-setting stock market run. Real estate price inflation has continued in Canada. Interest rates have remained low. Even with all of these factors in his favour, the finance minister still ran a promise-breaking deficit in this budget following what will surely be one of the strongest economic years in this Parliament.

● (1600)

If the minister promised to return to balanced budgets, he has completely failed to deliver, and it is more than reasonable for opposition members to ask if not now, then when. Given that a return to balance was a huge part of the Liberals' election promise, we would not be doing our jobs as an opposition holding the government to account without asking that question and no answer has been given so far. Still, there really is nothing in the bill to address that question either.

There is, however, in the original budget a troubling item contained on page 290, and that is a recognition of the fact that Canadian oil sells at a significant discount to world prices due to a lack of pipeline capacity in general and the routing of existing pipeline capacity mostly to the oversupplied Cushing, Oklahoma hub rather than to tidewater or to other refinery areas with spare capacity. This discount from world prices, which the government commented on in the budget itself, has grown significantly worse in the past few months.

This difference between the price that our producers get and world prices has a significant impact on business profits and jobs in the industry. The discount has an enormous impact on tax revenues to both the oil-producing provinces and to the federal government itself and it dictates the viability or non-viability of future projects. Simply put, this discount means that we are actually exporting tax revenue and public services to the United States.

Using round numbers, Canadian exports are about three million barrels a day. If Canadian producers take a \$20 discount, that means the industry loses \$60 million a day, or roughly \$22 billion per year. A significant portion of that \$22 billion will be taxable income at both the federal and provincial levels. The federal government loses billions in tax revenue because of this price differential, so it cannot be ignored as a factor in the budget.

Government Orders

What is truly alarming today, given the debacle over the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain expansion, is that the finance minister, in his budget, assumes that both Trans Mountain and Keystone XL will be built at a reduced price discount. We obviously know that these assumptions are being challenged right now. Both projects at best will delay projected revenue from profitable oil production, but in typical fashion, the finance minister has just assumed that the pipelines will be built even though a host of opponents are doing everything they can, including breaking the law, to prevent these pipelines from getting built.

The finance minister surely knows that he has cabinet colleagues who oppose the energy industry, that he has caucus colleagues who campaigned in the last election against the Trans Mountain expansion, and that the most senior unelected adviser to the Prime Minister is notoriously anti-pipeline. Therefore, it was a fairly bold assertion for him to simply assume the Trans Mountain and Keystone XL pipelines would be built. Both projects are behind schedule. Both continue to be opposed by extremists committed to everything from vexatious litigation to violent clashes with police while defying court orders, trespassing, and destroying private property.

Given the government's track record, what credibility does it really think it deserves on pipelines? The finance minister's budget assumes the pipelines are going to be built, and yet one of the first things the government did after it was elected was to kill the northern gateway project, which was a pipeline to tidewater approved previously. The proponent was working through the conditions and the concerns that had been raised about the project when the Liberal government used an arbitrary tanker ban to ensure that it could never be built.

Then the Prime Minister completely failed to get Barack Obama to approve Keystone XL, which added another couple of years to the delay of that project. The finance minister is counting on this project to reduce the differential that has to be taken into account in his tax revenue projections.

We know energy east was killed by the government's decision to move the goalposts on its proponent by absurdly deciding to make both upstream and downstream emissions part of the criteria. I say absurd because the emissions from fossil fuels moved through a pipe are mostly determined by the type of vehicle the fossil fuel is put into by the end consumer.

● (1605)

Now the government is even pushing through Bill C-69. At the environment committee, the president of the Canadian Energy Pipeline Association said, "It is hard to imagine that any pipeline project proponent would be prepared to test this new process or have a reasonable expectation of a positive outcome at the end of it." He went on to say, "If the goal is to curtail oil and gas production and to have no more pipelines built, this legislation may have hit the mark."

What is the finance minister going to do if the capital flight that has been under way for months cannot be reversed? What is he going to do if nobody will invest and create jobs in the resource sector? What is he going to do if interest rates exceed his expectations? What is he going to do if there is a real estate price correction? What is he going to do if the NAFTA renegotiations end

in trade restrictions that damage Canadian access to the American market? Even with everything going his way he cannot balance the budget. Was he going to do it if any of these eventualities happen or any of the hundred other unforeseen events should happen? Now is the time to establish a fiscal cushion to prepare for the inevitability of difficult times ahead.

The budget is not balanced. There is no plan to balance it. There is no date for the budget to be balanced. There is no plan that will get pipelines built, which has a significant impact on the finance minister's ability to balance future budgets. There is no apology by the Liberals to Canadian voters for breaking their promise on the deficit in the first place. There is nothing in the budget implementation act to address any of these issues.

What does this bill do? It makes certain changes to the Income Tax Act to implement changes announced by the Minister of Finance last summer on the taxation of Canadian-controlled private corporations, and other tax changes that we are now getting to the point where the CRA has to actually implement them.

We know that on July 17, the Minister of Finance dropped his bombshell announcing that too many wealthy Canadians were using complex corporate structures to avoid taxes. He went on to announce, following a brief summertime sham consultation, that the Liberals would ram through private corporate tax changes to severely restrict dividend payments between related shareholders, the so-called sprinkling, eliminate the dividend tax credit, which would create the double taxation of passive income with rates at about 73%, and make it virtually impossible to sell a business to a relative, among other things.

I am sure that every member of this House heard from small business owners who do not have a pension, do not have a minimum wage, do not have the protections of employment law, and cannot collect employment insurance. They have to be 100% liable for the conduct of their own employees, who they also cannot sue for gross negligence. What all of these people, these hard-working business owners, heard in the summer was the wealthy finance minister called them tax cheaters.

What happened after that announcement was remarkable. Business owners and tax experts all across Canada spontaneously rose up and with diverse voices unanimously spoke in opposition to every aspect of the minister's proposals. This grassroots opposition did cause the government to partially backpedal on some of its plans contained in this bill. The part of last summer's announcement that many found the most egregious was the double taxation of passive income. Therefore, in December, the finance minister backpedalled and said there would be a limit under which the double tax would not apply. What he did instead in the budget, was he said there would now be a tie-in between passive income and access to the small business rate, which will now be reduced or eliminated for small business owners who have passive incomes of greater than \$50,000.

Government Orders

My suggestion to addressing the problem that he created back in the summer was simply a complete retraction of what the Liberals had announced then, and an apology to all of the hard-working small business owners across Canada who were deeply wounded by the bold assertions the finance minister made. Let us face it. The reason the finance minister and the Prime Minister believe that small businesses are really just tax dodges for the wealthy is that they themselves use private corporations to dodge taxes. All the while he was pointing his finger at shopkeepers, farmers, plumbers, realtors, accountants, doctors, lawyers, engineers, taxi drivers, and restaurant owners, the finance minister, that wealthy-born one percenter, was found to have failed to disclose the private corporation he used for tax planning purposes to shelter income and future gains on his French villa. Contrary to his past statements and all expectations of a minister of the crown, much less a finance minister, the finance minister still owned millions of dollars of Morneau Shepell shares.

● (1610)

How was that fact concealed from the public for almost two years? The shares were held in a private numbered company the finance minister registered in Alberta, presumably for tax-planning purposes. It was owned by him, his wife, and another Ontario numbered company. For the first time in the span of a few months, the finance minister was found not only to be personally using complex corporate structures to avoid paying tax but was using them to avoid requirements of the Conflict of Interest Act.

It is high time for this finance minister to end his war on small-business owners and to apologize for his own hypocrisy instead of proceeding with changes to the Income Tax Act contained in this bill.

If passed, this bill would also hand over to the CRA responsibility for dealing with the changes to the tax on split income and the reduction of the limit on the small-business tax rate for small businesses with over \$50,000 in passive income.

As shadow minister for national revenue, I could not help but notice that 2017 was a particularly tough year for the Minister of National Revenue and her agency. Every time we turned around, it seemed the agency had a half-baked plan to raise additional tax revenue at the expense of some vulnerable group or another, such as when the minister spent the entire months of October and November insisting that the CRA had done nothing to deny the disability tax credit to type 1 diabetics, despite the fact that it was obvious to everyone except her, and perhaps her parliamentary secretary, that of course the CRA had changed its forms in May 2017 to make it harder to qualify.

The agency also changed its folio to state that after 2017, it would tax employee discounts and meals, but the minister again seemed to be the last person at the agency to be aware that this was being done, before she ordered a reversal. The agency also appeared to be targeting single parents, restaurant-server tips, and disabled Canadians, who suddenly had problems qualifying for the disability tax credit.

On top of that, tax preparers complained about an ever-increasing backlog of corrections and appeals caused by sloppy or incompetent assessments, and a scathing Auditor General's report confirmed that

the agency's call centre hangs up on people 64% of the time and gives incorrect information to 30% of the rest who get through.

To an agency already struggling, and a minister who is clearly not in control of her department, this bill would now add a complex reasonableness test for dividends paid to related shareholders of private corporations. Let us think about that. An agency that hangs up on people and is wrong almost a third of the time when it speaks to taxpayers would now have to answer questions about things like the reasonableness of the payment of dividends, questions about share classes, questions about labour contributions, questions about property contributions, questions about the financial risks assumed, and a great catch-all, questions about such other factors as may be relevant.

How on earth can Canadians expect that they will get reliable answers to these questions, given the track record of both the current government and the CRA's call centre? These questions have been asked here in this House and at committee meetings and even at public meetings attended by the minister, and nobody from the government has been able to give anything but the most vague and hypothetical answers to these questions. Canadians might be forgiven if they are a bit worried that nobody knows the answers to these questions and that the legality of thousands of Canadians' tax planning is going to be at the mercy of future court decisions.

It would be very easy to go on for a lot longer about different aspects of this act, such as the implementation of the higher taxes on beer, wine, and spirits and the escalator clause; and certainly about the carbon tax, which is also part of the government's horrific mismanagement of its natural resources policy and an outrageously regressive tax on the poorest and most vulnerable members of society. However, time marches on, so I will wrap up.

I would like to conclude by urging members to vote against this bill, given that it would increase taxes; would fail to even address the very concept of a balanced budget; would do absolutely nothing to get pipelines built, the very same pipelines the budget needs for its own tax revenue; would help facilitate this minister's war on small business through the changes to the taxation of private corporations, and of course, would enable the job-destroying, poverty-inducing carbon tax. Therefore, I will be voting against this act, and I urge all other members to do so as well.

● (1615)

Ms. Filomena Tassi (Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for his speech. I have a great deal of respect for him. However, I have a difference of opinion with respect to the response of business and small business to the budget. I consulted with business owners and small business owners, and they were very pleased that we were actually reducing the taxes to be paid. We reduced the taxes in 2015 from 11%, ultimately to bring them down to 9% in 2019. The other thing they were pleased with was the amount of consultation we had with them to get this right so it would help them.

Government Orders

I am curious about the view the member has stated, because my experience has been the opposite. In fact, I sent out a householder, and I had a number of small businesses that commended and thanked our government for the changes we would be making.

In the budget we did something that I think is very important, which is set a guide for a new gender results framework. I would like to know whether the hon. member supports that.

• (1620)

Mr. Pat Kelly: Mr. Speaker, there was a whole lot in that question. I will start with the last point and state that in my riding, what men and women want most is economic security through a job. They feel that their livelihoods are threatened by the government's agenda, in particular in the resource sector. Having the word "gender" hundreds of times in a budget does not give women, men, or anybody else a job or the economic security they are looking for through employment.

I respect the hon. member. As she mentioned, in this House there are differences of opinion. We are here today to exchange some of these differences.

With respect to consultation and the impact on small business people, I find it strange that the Liberals want extraordinary credit for going back and reversing a decision to break a campaign promise on the small business tax rate. It was a promise to merely do what the previous government had already promised to do in its final budget. I do not think there should be too much credit given to the government for that.

Mr. Wayne Stetski (Kootenay—Columbia, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I met with a number of small businesses in my riding during the furor, I guess would be the best way to describe it, on the original Liberal government proposals. Absolutely we need to do better for small businesses. For example, I would like to see a limit to the credit card charges our businesses pay.

I am going to read the title of the budget to make sure I get it right. The Liberals claim that it is a gender and growth budget. I want to be a little more specific than my colleague across the floor. Would the Conservatives agree that we need pay equity now?

Mr. Pat Kelly: Mr. Speaker, I did not get a chance in the limited time we had earlier to answer some of the previous questions. The question about pay equity or the issue of gender equality in the workplace and in pay is surely going to be best addressed through a strong economy. The way this budget simply repeats phrases and adds the word "gender" on every page is going to do nothing to actually make any change that will be meaningful in any way to women in the workplace or achieve anything that will bring economic security to women or men.

The member mentioned credit card rates. It reminded me of a meeting I had with some small business owners recently in Prince Edward Island. They were restaurateurs. They talked about the impact it has on their businesses. They pointed out that in a typical transaction, the government and the credit card company are paid the most, because restaurant margins are less than what either of those two bodies make in a transaction.

I want to go back to the earlier comments about consultation and what small business owners had to say. In my riding, it was

universal. I had very large round table meetings both in my riding and in other parts of the country, and I had a very different experience than the member for Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas. The finance minister's changes were universally panned. People recognized in them the attack they are on their livelihoods.

• (1625)

Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if my colleague would comment on some of the comments Liberals have made about the economy in Canada. Former ambassador Frank McKenna, who was also the premier of New Brunswick, talking about the cancelled energy east pipeline, said, "We're buying 700,000 barrels a day for eastern refiners from other places in the world at world prices. There's no other country in the world that would do anything as dumb as this." McKenna also said that we have given up our leverage in NAFTA talks.

Former finance minister Manley has said that there is nothing to address competitiveness in this budget.

I stand here in an Oshawa Generals jersey today, because in Oshawa, we have to trade. We are a city that builds cars. The competitiveness issue is really starting to hit us.

How much time does Canada have if the Liberal government does not wake up and smell the roses on the importance of these issues the Liberals brought up?

Mr. Pat Kelly: Mr. Speaker, the member for Oshawa makes some excellent points. Importing 700,000 barrels a day at world prices while we are sending oil into the United States at \$20 a barrel less than the same oil they are then transferring north is crazy.

I hope it might be helpful to some of the members on the other side to hear some of the luminaries from their past, who are Liberals, tell them that they are wrong on energy issues. They are wrong everywhere they go on pipelines. Only the Liberal Party could have contradictory messages on pipelines, with candidates in one part of the country being pro-pipeline and candidates in other parts of the country being anti-pipeline, and manage to alienate both sides of the pipeline issue over energy east and Keystone. None of this is going to make—

The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments, the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, although the debate this afternoon is taking us a little far afield from the budget, I want to pick up on the point the member for Calgary Rocky Ridge made. I could not agree more with former premier Frank McKenna that it does not make sense to be importing crude at high-value prices and exporting low-value bitumen, which always gets a low price, because it is solid, unlike the crude that comes into eastern Canada. Would he agree that it would be a good plan to stop importing foreign oil to eastern Canada and to process bitumen within Alberta and use it in the domestic market in Canada?

Government Orders

Mr. Pat Kelly: Mr. Speaker, this is an argument usually used by opponents of the industry who say that they are not really totally opposed to the whole industry and shutting it down, but could we not defy the market and build infrastructure to process our product rather than export it raw? If we upgraded bitumen in Alberta, would the member propose the most aggressive expansion of the oil and gas industry in Alberta and the most aggressive possible expansion of the distribution of these fuels? I think likely not, but who knows?

Mrs. Alaina Lockhart (Parliamentary Secretary for Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I wish to inform the House that I will be splitting my time today with the member for Gatineau. I would also like to extend condolences to Humboldt, to the team, the families, the billets, and to the entire community, on behalf of the people of Fundy Royal. Our hearts are with them.

Today I rise to speak on Bill C-74, the budget implementation act. This is a budget that builds on the investments made by the previous budgets. It takes it to the next level to ensure that all Canadians have an opportunity to benefit from the growth we are seeing in the economy.

Today I would like to focus on a few items that are having, and will have, a profound impact in my riding of Fundy Royal. The riding of Fundy Royal is predominantly rural, nestled between three southern cities in New Brunswick, and bordered to the north by the beautiful Bay of Fundy. Although the area is peppered with communities that are unique, each in their own way, there is a common thread that runs through them: a tenacity to grow, prosper, and to build a better life for our next generation.

I came to Ottawa with a mission to address the concerns of my constituents, concerns I hear daily, about the sustainability and growth of our communities and the local economy. This became a bigger challenge shortly after I was elected when the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan announced it was indefinitely suspending operations at the Picadilly mine. I am proud of how local leaders responded, how we quickly found a path forward, and how the federal government was there as a partner. At that time, our government did not waver in its commitment to Fundy Royal, and this budget is a continuation of the commitment to everyday Canadians who are facing challenges and are committed to progress.

I have always subscribed to the theory that a high tide raises all boats. Many of the commitments in budget 2018 will make sure that the most vulnerable in our communities are provided with the resources they require to find stability in their lives and participate more fully in society. These are measures that build on our monumental investments in the Canada child benefit, which supports over 16,000 children each month in Fundy Royal; skills training investments; flexibility in EI, which allows Canadians to return to school to upgrade their education; and a new national housing strategy, which will provide updated and additional rental units in our communities.

We are also building on investments for seniors, who are an important part of our families and communities. In addition to the special provisions for seniors in the housing strategy and the increase to the guaranteed income supplement for single seniors introduced previously, budget 2018 goes further for seniors in New Brunswick.

A commitment to a healthy seniors pilot project will see \$75 million to combat challenges produced by an aging demographic and determine best practices to keep seniors healthy and in their homes.

Budget 2018 also recognizes the struggles of those who are working hard to join the middle class. The Canada workers benefit was introduced to encourage more people to join the workforce. This will offer real help to over two million Canadians while raising 70,000 out of poverty.

Budget 2018 also recognizes the reality of seasonal work and the integral part it plays in rural economies like Fundy Royal. To support seasonal workers who have exhausted their EI benefits, my colleague from Acadie—Bathurst announced an agreement with the Province of New Brunswick just last week. This will provide the province with \$2.5 million immediately to directly help workers who have been impacted. The seasonal worker program offers income support as well as training and work experience for seasonal workers in the Restigouche-Albert region of New Brunswick, for those in the fisheries, agriculture, forestry, and tourism industries.

Our government continues to focus on growth in Atlantic Canada, and investing in the great people, communities, and ideas in the Atlantic region. That is what this budget does. It empowers women, parents, employees, small businesses, industry, and our regional economies.

For instance, spruce budworm is a native insect that periodically kills large numbers of balsam fir and spruce trees across eastern Canada. We saw this happen about 30 years ago. We know it is cyclical, and the threat is present again today. The economic impact of these disturbances has the potential to wipe out up to three million hectares of crown land in New Brunswick alone, and negatively impact up to 1,900 jobs every year if left unchecked.

I would like to thank my colleague from South Shore—St. Margarets for reflecting on this already during the debate on budgetary policy. I can very well attest to the threat that the outbreak poses in Fundy Royal. Forestry workers in Fundy Royal have a sense of relief knowing that our government is committing nearly \$75 million over five years to combatting spruce budworm. This will support the work of the healthy forests network to continue with its early intervention strategy, which has been showing very promising results over the past several years.

We have thriving fisheries in Fundy Royal, and the continued growth of these fisheries requires ongoing investments in small craft harbours. This budget commits \$250 million on a cash basis over two years, starting in 2018-19, for projects like extending the breakwater in Alma.

Government Orders

•(1630)

Fundy Royal is one of the most beautiful places in Canada. Not only is it home to the Fundy Biosphere, but also to the Hammond River, the Kennebecasis Valley, and the Fundy Trail. I am proud of the work that our local environmental organizations are doing, and I am glad that this budget will provide the resources needed to preserve and safeguard our environment. This budget makes one of the largest investments in nature conservation in Canadian history, \$1.3 billion, to protect more land, waters, species at risk, and preserve biodiversity. It is up to all of us to protect the environment so that future generations of Canadians can continue to hike the Fundy Footpath, mountain bike on the bluff, or kayak in St. Martins.

The Conservation Council of New Brunswick says that this groundbreaking investment by our government shows it is listening and acting to an unprecedented degree on Canadians' deep connection to nature and our desire to see the forests, parks, lands, and waters we love, and the wildlife that calls these places home, protected. Lois Corbett, the executive director of the council, said "This is a huge breakthrough and a day to celebrate for New Brunswickers and folks clear across the country who love nature, wildlife, and the outdoors."

Canada's new tourism vision places high importance on our rich natural surroundings, especially Parks Canada sites. More than 22 million people each year visit the national parks, historic sites, and marine conservation areas administered by Parks Canada. I am delighted to note that admission to Parks Canada sites, including Fundy National Park, will now be permanently free for those aged 17 and under.

One of the most exciting parts of my job as the member of Parliament for Fundy Royal is talking to future generations of political leaders. In December, I received a letter from a student at Three Oaks Senior High School in Summerside, P.E.I., in the riding of my friend, the member for Egmont. Kate was asked to write a member of Parliament about an issue of concern to her. She spoke about mental health with conviction, saying there are growing number of cases of anxiety, depression, and even suicide, and that it is becoming normal in our daily lives which should not be occurring in our society. She said that we need to stop the issue before it becomes worse. We agree with Kate. In our efforts to support veterans, we have further extended support by ensuring that the medical expense tax credit will now recognize the costs of psychiatric service dogs, provide assistance to the amazing organizations that support veterans, and invest in research for first responders who suffer from these invisible disabilities.

Our government is also supporting research for autism, as well as diseases such as Alzheimer's and dementia.

This budget is revolutionary, in that it focuses on Canada's future. It puts people first, and focuses on what matters most to the people of Fundy Royal. It invests in the protection of our environment, and promotes equality and prosperity for those from Hillsborough to Nauwigewauk and around the world. I am proud to stand and speak to this budget, one that recognizes the potential growth of our country and focuses on equality.

As part of this year's budget, the finance minister announced our government's women entrepreneurship strategy that will help women grow their businesses by accessing financing, talent, networks, and expertise. The women entrepreneurship strategy is part of a broader effort to address gender-related barriers that have impaired the progress of women in business. As a former small business owner, this is near and dear to my heart. I know the potential is there if we provide a path forward for more women to succeed and grow as entrepreneurs.

Like many others in Fundy Royal and in the House, I am driven when I think about our youth and the future they should have in Canada. It is why I became involved in politics, to ensure I am part of a movement to make sure they will have a prosperous future in our home province of New Brunswick. By becoming the first woman elected in Fundy Royal, I, like all of the men elected before me, am confident that I can make a difference, not only in the lives of these youth, but also in the lives of all Canadians.

Each progressive budget that has been presented by our government is a step in the right direction, and this budget is no different. I am confident that it will provide lasting challenges for generations to come.

•(1635)

Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like the member to comment on a couple of things that she left out about the budget. In Canada now, we are basically seeing business investment at about 11% of GDP, which is 16th out of 17 OECD countries. Business investment in Canada, per worker, is 40% to 50% less than in the high-productivity countries like the United States and Switzerland, especially the United States, with our competing against them. Taxes in the United States are going down. We are basically at 19% now, from 34.6%. At the same time, her government is increasing taxes that were 17.5% in 2012. Now they are 21%, also with increases in CPP, EI, carbon taxes, and high electrical costs. Even the former Liberal finance minister, John Manley, who is the president and CEO of the Business Council of Canada has said, "Budget 2018 overlooks Canada's competitiveness challenges."

I come from a community in Oshawa. We depend on being competitive, and the government and its provincial partners are making us less competitive. Could the member please tell us what in the budget, if anything, is going to help address the competitiveness issue that Mr. Manley and many businesses in my community are worried about?

Government Orders

• (1640)

Mrs. Alaina Lockhart: Mr. Speaker, part of our path forward as a country and for our economy is to make sure we have an innovative economy that includes all people in Canada. That is what the budget focuses on, ensuring that Canadians have an opportunity to participate in the economy, making sure they have the skills training they require, and making sure women are in a position where they can overcome the barriers that have been there for them, not only in small business but also in trade and other areas.

It is important that we invest in Canadians at this time, and it is our Canadian people who will drive this economy forward in the future.

[*Translation*]

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

I could focus my question on the fact that tax loopholes still exist for corporate CEOs or on the Liberal government's inaction on combatting tax havens, which is costing us billions of dollars. However, since the hon. member talked about the Maritimes, I would like to focus my question on the reality of seasonal work in a number of industrial sectors in her region. I think it is a shame that the Liberal government still fails to understand this issue and is failing to take action and use the employment insurance program to help seasonal workers, who, far too often, are left in the lurch because the program is not adapted to their reality.

I would like my colleague to explain why there is no pilot project and why her government has not addressed the five-week spring gap problem.

[*English*]

Mrs. Alaina Lockhart: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for allowing me to elaborate. As I mentioned in my speech, there is in fact a pilot project that was announced for the area of Restigouche—Albert, for New Brunswick, that specifically looks at seasonal workers.

We are looking at not only giving them aid in the immediate term, but also looking at the long term, at encouraging them to return for training, to look at other areas they could improve, and strengthening our workforce.

Seasonal work is a reality in Atlantic Canada. We need to make sure that our EI system supports not only the workers, but also the employers, who are focused on maintaining that workforce and ensuring it is there for them season after season. We have put forward a plan that not only addresses the needs of the workers but also the employers.

Ms. Filomena Tassi (Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for the speech, and also for including women in that. She mentioned the women's entrepreneurship strategy. We know that budget 2018 is guided by a gender results framework. I wonder if she could comment on the importance of ensuring that framework includes the results of engaging and empowering women.

Mrs. Alaina Lockhart: Mr. Speaker, one of the things we are focused on right now in New Brunswick is how to strengthen our workforce. I mentioned the measures we are taking to strengthen the

workforce with the EI system, but there are also measures in the budget that look at strengthening the workforce by making sure women are in a position to benefit from the growing economy that we are seeing in Canada.

The women's entrepreneurship strategy is one excellent example. It is \$1.6 billion over the next several years, which will focus on breaking down the barriers to accessing capital, to networks, and to attaining the expertise needed. Women have wonderful ideas and have participated in our economy, but there is potential for so much more. The budget focuses on making sure they become a vital part of our economy.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Steven MacKinnon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise once again on behalf of the people of Gatineau. They did me the supreme honour of electing me to represent them in this House, and I am grateful to them every day for this honour and the weighty responsibility that comes with it. I am proud to rise today to support this bill and our government's budget plan in general.

Today is our first day back in the House since tragedy struck the community of Humboldt, Saskatchewan. Like Humboldt, Gatineau is a hockey town, a town where parents work hard every day to help their kids take part in organized sports like hockey, a town where parents put their kids on buses and send them off on long overnight trips to all kinds of destinations in the United States, Ontario, the Maritimes, and other parts of Quebec. On behalf of the people of Gatineau, I want to express our deepest condolences and dismay at what has happened. Our thoughts are with the parents and communities affected by this horrific tragedy.

In Gatineau, we introduced a plan based on our national election promises that focuses on the middle class and investing in our communities. That includes public transit, so this year I was very pleased to participate in announcing the Rapibus extension as well as other major construction projects in Gatineau, such as the Parks Canada artifact storage facility, the Library and Archives Canada Gatineau 2 document preservation facility, and the revitalization of Terrasses de la Chaudière. We are investing heavily in federal public assets in Gatineau.

I can assure my constituents that I will continue to fight for more investment in public transit. One of the files I am working on is a sixth interprovincial link between Quebec and Ontario, which people have been debating for the past 100 years. I made it my mission to champion that link, and I will continue to advocate and fight for it until the day the announcement is made.

More generally speaking, our budget plan is working. It is working for parents and for our most vulnerable seniors, whose guaranteed income supplement has gone up by 10%. It is working for infrastructure in Gatineau and across the country. It is working for our small businesses.

Government Orders

I have been very pleased to meet business people in my riding on several occasions. They are very satisfied and very happy that we have delivered on our commitment and are lowering the small business tax rate to 9% beginning next year. Our plan is also working when it comes to unemployment, which is under 6% at just 5.9%. That is the lowest unemployment rate ever seen for as long as Canada has been recording these statistics. Since the second quarter of 2016, GDP growth has been 3.7%, the best rate of any major industrialized country. Wage growth in Canada is tracking at approximately 3%. Once again, that rate is higher than anywhere else in the world. Year after year, the projected debt-to-GDP ratio is going down. Our plan is clearly working. It is improving Canadians' quality of life and prosperity and helping us keep our campaign commitments and the solemn promise we made to hard-working Canadians.

• (1645)

I want to highlight two initiatives in this budget. People sometimes become cynical at election time. People make choices based on personalities and specific commitments, but also based on philosophies. Here are two initiatives that Canadians would never have seen under a Conservative government, because these are not the kinds of things the Conservatives would ever choose. These two initiatives will benefit those who need it the most in our society, specifically people working hard to join the middle class. They are people working hard to become more prosperous and to be more productive citizens for themselves, for their children, and for future generations. Of course I am talking about the Canada workers benefit and the Canada child benefit.

What is the Canada workers benefit? We know that there are people who are receiving social assistance or other benefits. Perhaps they have a family member who is ill. Perhaps they work part time. Perhaps they are caring for their children. Regardless of their circumstances, they find it difficult to make the decision to get off social assistance and enter the labour market with confidence because they may be penalized by doing so. They might not earn enough to justify getting off welfare or other social programs. Obviously, with such a low unemployment rate, everyone benefits when the number of people in the labour force increases. We also want these people to have the dignity that comes with productive work and personal growth. We want them to feel as though they are contributing to the economy and becoming productive citizens.

The Canada workers benefit was created specifically to help those people and provide them with direct assistance. This year, eligible workers will automatically receive the benefit after filing their tax return, without submitting an application. They will be entitled to an increased Canada workers benefit. Our initiative will affect two million Canadians and lift 70,000 people out of poverty. They will be eligible for up to \$1,300 in benefits tax free.

There is also the Canada child benefit, which will be indexed this year for the first time. In my riding of Gatineau alone, 11,260 payments were made in January 2018 for 19,860 children. An average payment of \$540 a month represents a total of \$6.1 million in the pockets of Gatineau parents. I am proud of this, because this money is going directly to those who need it most. These people must make choices for their children. They need to spend money to enrol their children in sports or piano lessons, or to invest in a

registered education savings plan. We committed to make these choices, and these are choices that a Conservative government would never have made or maintained, because it wants to eliminate the deficit at any cost. One has to wonder what a Conservative government would cut. This is also a tax-free benefit that is automatically reinvested in our economy and in local businesses.

• (1650)

I am proud of these two measures. Unfortunately, I do not have enough time to talk about the other wonderful initiatives in this year's budget.

I am particularly proud of the fact that we are keeping our word and fulfilling our commitments to the people who need it most. They can access these resources and become good, highly productive citizens who can keep contributing to the Canadian economy.

• (1655)

[*English*]

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am glad that my glass was full with water every time the hon. member blamed the previous Conservative government for the past.

I want to talk specifically about deficits. On this side of the House, we have asked about that on numerous occasions and the finance committee has asked on numerous occasions. The member will recall that the promise in the last election by the Prime Minister was to have minor deficits and to balance the budget by 2019. We now know that the budget will not be balanced until far off. The finance minister is not even admitting when the budget will be balanced.

My question for the hon. member is this: When will the budget be balanced?

Mr. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, lessons on deficit and debt from the Conservative Party are lessons that we do not normally take. The last balanced budget presented in this House was, of course, presented by a Liberal government. It was absolutely a pride to create a fiscal situation that benefited the previous government when it was first elected. However, the Conservatives automatically, immediately, and systematically, in a structured way, took us back into deficit, and then for 10 years there were deficits as far as the eye could see.

We will take no lessons from the other side of the House with respect to deficits. Those people borrowed and begged every year they were in office, and now they get up and decry it. They should be ashamed of themselves.

Government Orders

[Translation]

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, people come to my office every week because they are unable to access the benefits to which they are entitled. These people are often poor and unable to get the Canada Revenue Agency to process their files. It is maddening to see the number of documents they are asked to produce, for example, to prove that their children really do live with them. I really do not know where they would be if not with their parents. In every case, these people are poor and could have used that money.

Some people have not received any benefits since 2009, and the government has never helped them get that money. These people come to my office and I help them as best I can to figure out their file with the Canada Revenue Agency. In some cases, they have missed out on \$20,000 in benefits.

The member believes that the Canada child benefit lifts all children out of poverty. However, the reality is that many parents never access these benefits and the government is not doing anything to help them. They do not even have access to in-person services and are forced to fight for these benefits. We try to help them as best we can but, sadly, some cases are overlooked because the Canada Revenue Agency does not send me a list of those who might need help.

What are my colleague's thoughts on that?

Mr. Steven MacKinnon: Mr. Speaker, we made a commitment in the last election, one that we are working hard to fulfill. That commitment was for automatic enrolment of the people my colleague was talking about. There are indeed people who do not file tax returns. However, we encourage everyone to file a tax return so that we can determine whether they are eligible for benefits. I am especially proud of the fact that, starting this year, eligible workers will automatically receive the Canada workers benefit, without needing to apply.

I just listed a few statistics about my riding, and we can get the figures for my colleague's riding or other ridings. These are, of course, benefits that automatically go into Canadians' bank accounts, under the Canada child benefit, and they are tax free. Yes, we are working very hard.

The member mentioned the people she meets in her riding. I too am meeting people, and we handle their files with care. There are some exceptions, but I am certain that with a little bit of work, we will be able to make sure that Canadians automatically receive the benefits they are entitled to.

● (1700)

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to speak after my colleague from the Outaouais region, the hon. member for Gatineau, for whom I have a great deal of respect and esteem, despite his oversights, to put it politely.

Before getting down to the nitty-gritty of this budget, let us establish the facts. What was the state of Canada's economy when the Liberal government was elected nearly two and a half years ago? There is no denying that the Liberals are an extraordinarily lucky bunch. When they came to power, the house was in order. Canada had a budgetary surplus, not a \$2.9-billion deficit. We like to

compare ourselves to the best. Let us compare ourselves to the G7. Canada had the best debt-to-GDP ratio of all G7 countries. Let us not forget that, when we came to power, we had just come through the worst economic crisis on the planet since the Great Depression of the 1930s. In the most challenging economic times, our government was able to keep Canada afloat, allowing it to emerge from the crisis with one of the strongest economies possible.

Then, unfortunately the Liberals came to power. That is the problem. Let us not forget that they were elected on a promise to run small deficits for three years and to return to a balanced budget in 2019. That was the Liberal Party's solemn promise. That promise then vanished into thin air as small deficits grew into deficits three times larger than planned and, worse yet, as achieving zero deficit by 2019 went from hypothetical to unrealistic. These people have absolutely no idea when they will return to a balanced budget. We will be in deficit for the foreseeable future.

The finance department says that, if nothing changes, Canada could, technically, in theory, return to a balanced budget in 2045. Our economy would certainly struggle in the meantime. The Liberals were elected on promises that they have now broken. They promised a small deficit, but ran up a big one. They promised a zero deficit and a balanced budget. They said the deficits would support an infrastructure program to stimulate the economy, but that is not what they delivered. They promised hundreds of billions in infrastructure spending, but the finance department's reports show that very little of the infrastructure funding has actually been handed out. The government is using these chronic deficits for routine spending, not investment.

This is economics 101. It makes perfect sense for the head of a household to borrow money to buy a home and then pay that money back, but anyone borrowing money from the bank to buy groceries has a problem. That is not an appropriate way to manage money. Anyone who tries to do what the Liberal government is doing is headed for a brick wall.

My Liberal colleague from Gatineau talked about how amazing the Canada child benefit is, about how the government is lifting people out of poverty and giving them all kinds of money. They have no trouble handing out money that is not theirs, money they are borrowing from our children. A deficit is just deferred taxation, and that is one thing this government is very good at. It is constantly maxing out its credit card.

Government Orders

•(1705)

That is why we completely disagree with the government's policy. The minister, the member, and our Liberal colleagues seem to have forgotten that in their first iteration of the Canada child benefit, which was to be absolutely extraordinary, they forgot a small detail: they forgot to take inflation into consideration. Any accountant at any firm who forgot to factor in inflation would be dismissed with a swift kick in the backside. The government, however, still crows over its lofty principles, claiming to be doing the right thing and giving more money to children. I can see why this is the party for families, the party for children. By working for children, the government is making them foot the bill down the line.

The government boasts about its lofty principles, but reality is catching up to it. For example, the Liberals are always repeating how they are going after the so-called 1%, the richest Canadians. The top 1% of Canadians with the highest salaries are going to pay. The Liberals forgot to mention that these people already pay 70% of the taxes in Canada. They said that these people would definitely pay more taxes. Is that right? Not exactly. In a report released last fall by the Department of Finance, and not by the Conservative Party, we learned that not only do the so-called 1%, the wealthiest Canadians, not pay more taxes, they pay less. The wealthy paid \$1.2 billion less under the current Liberal government even though the Liberals kept repeating that they would make the rich pay more in order to give to the poor. Not only are the rich paying less taxes, but the poor were given money we do not have because the Liberals are running up a deficit. They went into deficit financing.

Clearly, this government says one thing and does the opposite. It was elected on promises it cannot keep. Faced with their greatest economic challenge yet, the Liberals are doing nothing.

[*English*]

Now I want to raise the question of competitiveness with the United States of America, our great ally and partner but also our greatest competitor.

We all recognize that the president is not exactly the same kind of man that we had when we were in office. We can like him or we can dislike him, but we have to deal with him. That is the reality of politics. What we see now in the new administration, the Trump administration, is someone very aggressive, someone very productive, and someone who is first and foremost helping small business in America, and big business too. He is helping the business community of America.

What we see in the government is everything but that. Worse than that, it has no plan. The Liberal government has no plan to address the serious issue raised by the new administration in America. There is nothing in the government's budget to help our small business community to face and address the issue of the new competitiveness of America. There is nothing to address the fact that maybe NAFTA will collapse. That would not be good, so we have to be ready for that.

We do not want it to collapse. We were the party that created NAFTA, the first free trade agreement, in 1988, thanks to the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney. We can be proud of this heritage. We also recognize that the other governments pushed that forward, even

if at that time they said they were not going to be part of that deal. That was good. Now we have to address the new reality that maybe NAFTA will not be run again.

What can we do? What will the government do? There is nothing in the budget. What is the government doing to help our businesses address the issue of the new help being given by the American administration to their business community? It is doing nothing.

•(1710)

[*Translation*]

That is also worrisome. The budget needs to address today's realities. However, today's global economic reality is not about the collapse of oil prices as it was in the past. On the contrary, oil prices have risen. It is not about dealing with the worst economic crisis. It is exactly the opposite. We are experiencing an economic boom.

It is not about the collapse of the American economy, like it was in 2008-09. On the contrary, the American economy is booming. However, we are dealing with an aggressive protectionist American President. That is his right. We respect his choice and he makes his own decisions of course. We are dealing with a very aggressive protectionist American President and the government is doing absolutely nothing. The American President strongly supports the private sector and helps entrepreneurs a great deal, unlike Canada, whose government led an unspeakable attack against our entrepreneurs last summer with the reprehensible plan it tabled on July 11, in the middle of the summer, if memory serves. Fortunately, thanks to the extraordinary work of the member for Carleton, Canadian business people across the country united and put a stop to the Liberal government's plan, which sought to punish them for creating jobs and wealth. It is a good thing that we were there.

There is nothing in this budget to help business owners or meet their needs. The government is going on a spending spree, as we have mentioned, and is creating deficits. We are talking about a 20% increase in spending. Twenty percent in three years is a lot. It represents \$60 billion. A 2% or 3% increase would be in keeping with inflation. A little is okay, but in this case, we are talking about hyper-inflation, not inflation. A normal increase would have been 6% in three years. However, this government has increased spending by 20% in three years. Such is the hallmark of the Liberal government. We think this is very bad. The spending was supposedly for investments in infrastructure, but there have not been any infrastructure investments. The government is investing just 0.1% of our GDP on creating wealth and jobs in our country. This is not what the government promised during the election campaign. It promised to run small deficits. This is no surprise, given that the Prime Minister may not have studied at the great schools of economics. This is no guarantee, but three years ago, the Prime Minister introduced an unprecedented economic policy, or economic philosophy. I remind members that when the hon. Joe Oliver tabled the final budget of the previous government, the leader of the Liberal Party said that the budget would balance itself.

Government Orders

[English]

I was in university when I was young. I studied a lot, and I have never seen the fiscal or economic theory elsewhere, other than from the present Prime Minister, that a budget balances by itself. If there is someone else who has some information about that, I will welcome it. I really want to understand how someone can seriously speak such stupidity, but that is the signature of the present Prime Minister.

[Translation]

The Liberals have attacked businesses in several ways, by raising their taxes and reducing the government assistance they might be eligible for. The best way to help our businesses is to tax them less. However, in the past three years, the government has done something entirely different. First, it imposed a carbon tax, which will come into force across Canada in a few short months. Next, it reduced all the tax credits we had introduced for research, recruitment, and business development. The tax credits we brought in have been abolished by this government. That is the kind of thing that makes businesses owners lose confidence. This is troubling. All the economic indicators of business confidence are negative. Private investment in Canada is down 5% since 2015. Compared with the United States, it is not just a drop of 5%, it is actually another 5% to 9% on top of that. That is a difference of 14%. Canadian business owners feel uncomfortable and are investing less, while American business owners are investing three times more, relatively speaking. That is not a good thing.

• (1715)

Foreign investment in Canada has fallen by 42% over the past year. This means that less wealth is being created, since nothing is better for a nation's economy than foreign investment. It is a real source of wealth creation. When entrepreneurs create jobs and wealth, it is basically because their products are sold abroad, whether in Europe, Asia, or the United States. This is about the Canadian dollars, yen, euros, or even pounds that might be invested in our economy. That is the real source of wealth creation. That is why we are very worried about the fact that foreign investment has fallen by 42%.

As a final point, I want to talk about the debt. I have a bit of an obsession with the debt, because those folks over there were elected on a promise that they would run up small deficits and balance the books again by 2019, but they are not keeping their promises. On top of that, the debt generated by deficits is money that we cannot spend for our children. Quite the opposite, it is our children who will be forced to pay because of today's mismanagement. This government will go down in history for bringing Canada's national debt to \$1 trillion. This is not "billions of bilious blue blistering barnacles" for those familiar with Tintin, but rather \$1 trillion. This has "Liberal government" written all over it.

All these bad signs have shaken people's trust in their political leaders. A party can be elected on a certain campaign platform and then change direction based on external factors; however, in this case, there are no external factors. It is nothing but bad faith that has led the Liberal government to run up such huge deficits, rather than the small deficits promised and the balanced budget promised by 2019. Instead, it has absolutely no idea when we will return to a balanced budget. This government has just catapulted Canada

towards the sad reality of a trillion-dollar debt. That is right, I said \$1 trillion.

For all these reasons, we will vote against this budget. We feel it is an irresponsible, wrong-headed budget that will force our children to pay the price. It does nothing to help our economy and our entrepreneurs prepare for the new reality of a powerful neighbour that is both our number-one partner and our number-one competitor, the United States of America.

We hope this government will get public finances under control and take the bull by the horns so that one day, maybe a year and a half from now, we will be fortunate enough to have a realistic and responsible government led by the hon. member for Regina—Qu'Appelle.

Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I really enjoyed my hon. colleague's speech even though I subscribe to neither his opinion nor even remotely his economic theory.

In the budget, we allocated almost \$100 million to Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions to support economic development in Quebec. My colleague's party opposed that investment during the sitting that lasted all night. I would like to know if my colleague agrees with his colleague from Beauce.

Is he against Canada's regional economic development agencies, including the one for Quebec?

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Mr. Speaker, it is so easy to spend money you do not have and to send the bill to our grandchildren. My colleague can go ahead and bring up the \$330 billion in this budget, but the reality is that we are living beyond our means.

The member talked about regional economic development. For the first time, a single person, the member for Mississauga—Malton, is responsible for this file. I have great respect for him, and no offence to the charming hon. member, but when the time comes to work on regional economic development, he will naturally think about his region. What a surprise. I see him shaking his head.

Need I remind my colleague that Bombardier publicly asked for a contribution for the C Series, which is assembled in Mirabel, and that the government loaned Bombardier twice as much money for the Global 7000 than for the C Series, even though the company had not asked for money for the Global 7000? Why? Because the Global 7000 is assembled in Mississauga. Shocking.

• (1720)

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech, which was just as inspired and dynamic as usual. I will give him a chance to catch his breath, but I want to continue talking on regional development with him.

Government Orders

I want to talk about regional development in a corner of Quebec that is quite a bit closer to his riding than mine, but that concerns us all. I want to talk about the Davie shipyard, which has already had to lay off more than 800 workers over the past few months because it did not get the Liberal government contract to carry on its operations, when we know that the Canadian Coast Guard and the Royal Canadian Navy have needs to be filled.

When he was in the region, the Prime Minister promised icebreakers. However, it is already mid-April, spring is around the corner, and no contract has been signed.

I would like my colleague to say a few words about the consequences to the economic development of the Quebec City region when good jobs disappear because of the Liberals.

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Mr. Speaker, I will talk about two things. First, with tongue in cheek, I might say that the Liberal icebreaker policy is to wait until there is no more ice, then there will be nothing to break. That is a stupid joke, but that is okay. I wanted to make it. Now, let us get down to business.

I am from Quebec City. I am 53 and I was a journalist for 20 years. I have heard a lot about the Davie shipyard in my time and, unfortunately, it has not always been good things. However, one of the Davie shipyard's great successes was the *Asterix* supply ship. Our government signed the letter of agreement so that the Davie shipyard could design and build a supply ship for the navy. It was to be built from an old ship at the Davie shipyard.

These people finished building the supply ship on time and on budget. It was a great success. They are now ready to build the second supply ship, the *Obelix*. The table has been set, but unfortunately the government is refusing to move forward. What is worse, the Prime Minister went to Quebec City in January. He turned on the charm for the people at the Davie shipyard—and interestingly, this time he wore his suit instead of dressing up like a dock worker—but nothing came of it. There was a lot of talk but no action.

We are holding the line. The government must give the Davie shipyard the contract for the *Obelix*, not as an act of charity or because the workers are nice people, but because the Davie shipyard deserves it, because those workers built the *Asterix* on time and on budget. They are prepared to build the *Obelix*. That would be good for all of Canada.

[English]

Hon. Tony Clement (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want the member to drill just a bit deeper on infrastructure. During an election campaign and then in budget after budget the government promised the infrastructure. Where is the infrastructure? The infrastructure will ensure we have more Chinese billionaires in the belt and road initiative, but where is the infrastructure for Canada?

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Mr. Speaker, it is not as expected.

The Liberals were elected saying that they would invest a lot of money. That was why they asked Canadians for a small deficit. The government does not invest in infrastructure. It invests in deficits to give money to people, but the children will have to pay for the money we do not have right now.

When we were in office, the Conservatives had a realistic plan for infrastructure, \$85 billion under the Hon. Denis Lebel, who was a member in the House for more than 10 years. We are very proud of what he did. We had a realistic plan, with a budget and a zero deficit. It was not a huge plan for absolutely nothing with a huge deficit that our children would have to pay.

Ms. Filomena Tassi (Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the focus for the government was clear from the very beginning. The commitment in our platform was clear, that we were going to invest in Canadians because we believed in Canadians. Those investments have been working.

For example, there has been the creation of over 600,000 jobs since November 2015. Some of those jobs are being carried out as a result of our infrastructure investments. There have been 300,000 young people who have been lifted out of poverty with our Canada child benefit, which we know today has been indexed, and 70,000 workers will be lifted out of poverty with our Canada workers benefit.

Would the member agree that investing in the middle class is a good thing and that the numbers we are seeing and producing because of our investments are in the interest of Canadians?

• (1725)

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for her French. A few weeks ago, she spoke a few sentences in French, and I welcome each and every member to speak the other official language.

When I talk about the other official language, I am not saying that French is the second official language. French and English are at the same level of official languages.

[Translation]

In response to the member's comments, I would first like to point out that, under our leadership, Canada outperformed every other G7 country, creating nearly 200,000 jobs per year despite the economic crisis. I also want to make it clear that the reason the Canadian economy is doing so well today is that the price of oil is three times higher now than it was when we had to deal with the worst global economic crisis since the Great Depression. In addition, our top trading partner and customer, the United States, is experiencing an economic boom that is creating opportunities for our businesses to sell more. That is a huge boost for the economy.

What the government can control is the budget, but its spending is out of control. Yes, the government is giving money to families. I know this because they have been saying so forever. The problem is that it is not the government's money. The government is running deficits. Sure, we all want to help kids, but the government is helping them so much that those kids are going to have to pay the price later on.

*Government Orders**[English]*

Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened to my colleague's speech. He gave a great example of how sometimes the head of the household has to decide whether to borrow money for a mortgage, or a car, or the kids' education. However, I ask him to look at who is running the country, a trust fund baby who has never even thought about a mortgage or a loan for a car. What is that? He is putting money aside for the education of his kids. This is something that is not done. When we look at the finance minister, it is pretty much the same thing.

The member talked about the importance of balancing the budget. If we have people running the country who have never had to balance a budget themselves, does he think they will ever balance the budget?

I am sure the Prime Minister was given this little plastic card called a "credit card". If he puts it into a machine and punches in four numbers, money just keeps coming out. I think he thinks Canadian taxpayers are the same as that credit card.

Does the member think the budget will ever be balanced under the finance minister and the Prime Minister?

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Mr. Speaker, as a family, we have to balance our budget. Yes, we have to borrow money to buy a car or a house. That is normal, because we need that. We cannot wait to have a half a million dollars in the bank so we can pay cash for our house and car. However, we do not borrow money to pay for lunch or dinner, but that is exactly what the government is doing right now.

The government gives money to people that we do not have, and this is the worst way to administer. We send the bill to those we are supposed to help, which is not the way to balance the budget correctly. When we have a leader who says that the budget will balance itself, well, we have that kind of stupid action.

[Translation]

Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour for me to rise in the House this evening to talk about the budget.

First of all, on behalf of the people of LaSalle—Émard—Verdun, as well as all Canadians, I would like to extend my condolences to all those affected by the tragic event that has befallen Humboldt, Saskatchewan. This was an absolute tragedy. We offer our prayers, condolences, and thoughts to all those it has affected. We hope that, through this tragedy, we will forge stronger ties across the nation.

It goes without saying that my constituents in LaSalle—Émard—Verdun will benefit from many elements of this budget. Some of my colleagues have already discussed these measures, such as housing, the child benefit, and benefits for workers seeking retraining. I would like to talk about one element of the budget that I personally think is very important for Canada's future. I am often asked why I went into politics. I used to be a university professor. I was full professor in a fantastic faculty with an exceptional teaching staff and amazing students, whom I must admit I miss very much. It was a good gig. Why change careers to go into politics?

● (1730)

[English]

The answer often turns, at least in terms of part of the answer, on funding for fundamental research in this country. As a university professor over the 10 years under the previous Harper government, I saw the literal destruction of research funding in Canada. There were cuts to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, cuts to NSERC, cuts to CIHR. Colleagues and students across Canada whose funding was compromised by these very radical cuts in our education system struggled. Colleagues struggled, but worse was that students struggled. Graduate students struggled.

My funding for graduate work for my doctorate was funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council in a period when funding was more generous. How many people were unable to have that education that I was fortunate enough to get through SSHRC funding during the period of the Conservative government? How many are out there that we just do not know about, because they did not get the funding? How many good research projects that would have funded graduate and post-graduate students did not get funded in Canada because of the Harper cuts? How many good, innovative, brilliant students and academics went to other countries and never came back because of the budget cuts to basic research funding under the Harper government?

What is worse is the number of academics, intellectuals, and experts in various domains who left simply because they were sick and tired of hearing academics being run down by Stephen Harper and the people around him. That is why I jumped into politics. I gave up a good gig because I thought that everybody had a responsibility to make sure that we could do everything in our power to make sure that we could change that government, and we succeeded.

Before I go on, I just want to inform the House that I will be splitting my time with the member for St. John's East.

The election day came in 2015. Immediately, in budget 2015, we stopped the gap in terms of the deficit in basic fundamental research funding in Canada.

[Translation]

David Naylor and his colleagues were tasked with reviewing the state of basic research in Canada. In budget 2017, we invested a great deal of money in that part of the puzzle, specifically in innovation and skills. Budget 2017 really was about innovation and skills. Still, basic research in this country needed additional support.

Government Orders

We waited for the Naylor report, and once we received it, we appointed a new chief science advisor. This measure was very well received by the scientific community. Then we began rebuilding. In budget 2017, we invested a lot of money in superclusters and in strategic funds for innovation. We made an important announcement today at Bell Helicopter, north of Montreal. That is another very innovative company in this country. We also invested to help young people learn how to code with the CanCode initiative. However, we waited until budget 2018 to create and build a future together through basic research with a \$3-billion investment over five years in Canada's research organizations.

• (1735)

[*English*]

That is \$1.7 billion over five years to support the next generation of researchers in Canada. This is curiosity-based research. It is research that is driven by the intellectual curiosities of basic research. It is absolutely critical that in addition to any innovation spending and any spending on skills training that we do, we also buttress curiosity-driven research.

In Canada right now, in Montreal, Toronto, and Edmonton, we are going through a boom in the artificial intelligence economy. That is wonderful, and our government is investing in that, as are provincial governments across Canada, as are private sector partners as well. Why are we at that state? It is because 20 years ago, when Yoshua Bengio, Geoffrey Hinton, and Richard Sutton were doing machine learning and other bits of artificial intelligence and were not necessarily getting any traction in other parts of the world, they were being funded in Canada by NSERC. They managed to convince, in very rigorous competitions for funding, enough of their colleagues that their research should be funded, and it was. Having seen the other side, I can say that these academic funding competitions are tough, very rigorous, and held to the highest standard, with experts from Canada and around the world participating as a matter of academic duty. Now, 20 years later, we are beginning to see the economic fruits of that research. Sometimes it will work and sometimes it will not. However, the point is that we need to be funding basic research in a big way, and \$1.7 billion over five years to the three major agencies is absolutely critical.

In addition to funding basic research, we also need to fund infrastructure for research. Hence, the Canadian Foundation for Innovation, the CFI, is receiving \$1.3 billion over five years for labs, equipment, and infrastructure...I have that number wrong. It was \$1.3 billion in total, of which \$763 million will go to the CFI. That is critically important, because it wanted and needed a stable budget. It often does the structural work that makes the curiosity-based research possible.

To conclude, when I look at this budget, I see the fulfillment of one of the major reasons that I went into politics. It was absolutely critical to help restabilize the research picture in Canada to make Canada a destination for research. I would like to think we have succeeded.

Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member is a learned colleague. He mentioned how he received a government grant to pay for his education. My educational experience was a bit different and was probably more similar to the experience of most Canadians: I went to work on the line at GM. I had a part-time job

and I put myself through school. He has his perspective and I have mine.

The member really did not talk about business and how this budget pretty much ignores small business. I guess he believes in the Liberal policy for small business, that being to start with a large business like Kinder Morgan, regulate and tax it to death, and when there is a problem, put money into it to subsidize it, and then after that business fails, there is a business plan for small business. A big business is made into a small business.

I would like the member to comment on whether there is anything in the budget that would help streamline regulation or lower business taxes or anything that says the government will balance the budget in any time certain in the next few years. Is there anything about increasing Canada's competitiveness overall? We are losing out to our biggest competitors, such as the United States, and we are losing out around the world. Even former Liberal John Manley, who was the finance minister, recognizes that.

• (1740)

Mr. David Lametti: Madam Speaker, I am rather amused by the tone of my colleague's question. My parents came to this country with no formal education, and the one thing that they wanted their children to get was a formal education. Yes, I went to a number of very good universities on scholarships, and they were earned by merit. I earned the Social Science and Humanities Research Council money through a competitive process. I earned that money. I also worked on construction sites in the summer and worked my way through college.

The member seems to insinuate things quite often but his insinuation that everyone else had a silver spoon except him is completely off base. I stand by my education. I stand by the work I put into getting that education. I stand by the work I did to get funding for that education through competitive processes.

What we are trying to do in this budget is to give those same opportunities to Canadians who come from a socio-economic background similar to mine.

Mr. Wayne Stetski (Kootenay—Columbia, NDP): Madam Speaker, Bill C-74 contains 556 pages and would amend 44 acts.

I looked at some of the things that would be impacted by this legislation, such as carbon pricing. Climate change is probably one of the most important environmental issues of our time. It is top of mind for people in my riding of Kootenay—Columbia.

Pensions are important. I held a telephone town hall and almost 4,000 people stayed on the line to talk about pensions. Veterans are another important issue to Canadians. Cannabis is a hot issue in my riding. Part of my riding traditionally gets a fair bit of its economy from cannabis; these are outdoor growers. The Canada Infrastructure Bank would privatize our infrastructure projects. Mineral exploration and mining are very important in my riding.

Government Orders

When I look at this list, I see that every one of the items on this list deserves individual debate and discussion. I am wondering if the member would agree that these items should be split out and debated separately because of their importance, not only to my constituents of Kootenay—Columbia but to all Canadians.

Mr. David Lametti: Madam Speaker, the hon. member asked a legitimate question. These are all important issues, and the budget is important.

I do not know that my answer will satisfy the member. These other issues are included because they have a financial aspect to them and it is important to include them in the budget. That is a matter on which we may very well reasonably disagree, but that certainly would be the answer to that concern on his part.

Mr. Nick Whalen (St. John's East, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to stand today on behalf of the people of St. John's East in support of budget 2018. Budget 2018 proposes real and tangible benefits for my riding of St. John's East and reflects many issues raised by my constituents in the consultations I have had with them over the past year.

In my short remarks, I will focus on three aspects of the budget: specific supports to St. John's East and Newfoundland and Labrador; economic growth that benefits all Canadians; and support for the opportunities in trade, pharmacare, and innovation that will grow the future Canadian economy.

Budget 2018 proposes many important investments for Newfoundland and Labrador, including \$250 million to renew the network of small craft harbours and work with municipalities where investments and divestitures can enhance local communities and support a safe and prosperous fishery. I visited eight small craft harbours in and around my riding over the break weeks, and it was lovely to see what great work the small craft harbours do and what the priorities for improving the safety and the industriousness of those harbours would be.

There will be \$80 million in 2018-19 and \$150 million in 2019-20 to the provinces for training and support for seasonal workers who have exhausted their EI benefits. The new Canada workers benefit is expected to provide almost \$40 million to support 5,000 additional low-income workers in my province. There is \$48 million in new funding for ACOA, of which \$8 million is dedicated to women entrepreneurs. In 2018-19 alone, Newfoundland and Labrador will receive \$750 million through the Canada health transfer and the Canada social transfer.

There is also enhanced support for research and researchers, including those at Memorial University in my riding of St. John's East, by investing nearly \$4 billion across the country to help researchers solve the problems of today and create the innovations of tomorrow.

The benefits of budget 2018 are not only for St. John's East, obviously. They are intended to be enjoyed by the entire country. It is clear that the fastest and best way to grow our economy is by identifying and correcting systemic biases holding good people back. Budget 2018 identifies and addresses unfairness against women and indigenous people. Levelling the playing field for those groups will drive economic growth.

Women in Canada are among the world's most educated, and it is time we acknowledged that by ensuring greater participation of women in the workforce. It is not only the right thing to do, but the smart thing to do for our economy. That is why this budget puts gender at the heart of its decisions. Advancing women's equality in Canada will drive economic growth, while boosting the income of Canadian families. More women in leadership positions will not just grow the economy, create jobs, and strengthen communities; it will also lead to innovation and changes in the workplace that will benefit everyone.

In this budget, the government is providing leadership to address the gender wage gap. Through the increased transparency required by pay equity legislation, we will see how our government is meeting its commitment that women working in federally regulated sectors receive equal pay for equal work. We will also seek to introduce GBA+ legislation to make gender budgeting a permanent aspect of the federal budget-making process going forward.

The push for a level playing field does not end with gender equality. We will also be working to create a fair playing field for Canada's indigenous people by forging a new relationship based on trust, respect, and a true spirit of reconciliation.

Through budget 2018, the government is working to help close the gap between the living conditions of indigenous people and those of non-indigenous people, facilitate self-determination, and advance the recognition of rights. We will do this by, first, building on significant investments of \$11.8 billion in the past two budgets, and second, by investing in priority areas identified by first nations, Inuit, and Métis nation partners in the spirit of reconciliation.

We are committed to ending long-term drinking water advisories on public water systems on reserve by March 2021 and will make greater investments through budget 2018 to ensure that this happens more quickly. Nearly one in five indigenous people live in housing that is in need of major repairs, and others live in housing that is overcrowded. We are working to ensure that they get the support they need to enjoy safe, adequate, and affordable housing, something the majority of non-indigenous people take for granted. These investments will ensure that indigenous people can benefit from similar conditions for growth as their non-indigenous counterparts.

By addressing existing inequalities, we can grow the economy and create a better country for all Canadians.

●(1745)

Canada's future is bright. We have a lot to be optimistic about. Future opportunities in trade, pharmacare, and innovation will make it even brighter. This government knows that Canada's economic success also depends on strong trade relationships in an increasingly globalized world. Canada is a trading nation, and if done properly, trade can be a positive force for change. That is why this budget funds Global Affairs Canada with up to \$75 million over five years to establish a stronger presence for Canadian diplomatic and trade support in China and Asia. This includes bolstering the number of Canadian diplomats and trade commissioners on the ground in China, as well as new initiatives to promote Canada's trade with China and other Asian markets.

We are continuing to work with the United States and Mexico to modernize the North American Free Trade Agreement. We know that this agreement has been beneficial to the lives of workers and families in all three partner countries. Under NAFTA, North America has become the biggest, most comprehensive trading bloc in the world, comprising a quarter of the world's GDP, even though we represent only 7% of the world's population. That is why we are working hard to renegotiate an updated and improved North American Free Trade Agreement that would benefit all three countries and foster greater opportunity for the middle class.

Trade maintains the high standard of living enjoyed by many people in St. John's East. They are proud of Canada's improved global brand as a reliable partner in fair, progressive, environmentally conscious, and gender-balanced trade. Our country is one of innovators. Curiosity, courage, creativity, and a collaborative spirit are what leads to the kind of innovations and technologies that improve our daily lives and drive our economy and our country forward.

Science and technology, along with stronger international trade, are rapidly changing the way Canadians live and work, bringing new challenges and more opportunities. Nowhere is that more evident than at Memorial University, the university of Newfoundland and Labrador, where our Genesis Centre is fostering numerous young, smart, and innovative companies that are doing great things in oceans tech and health care in the digital economy, providing opportunities in clean energy and home improvement. Innovation is an integral part of Newfoundland and Labrador's growth.

On February 15, 2018, the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development announced groundbreaking funding for Canada's five superclusters. I am proud and happy to say that this includes an ocean supercluster, which is based in Atlantic Canada and will use innovation to improve competitiveness in industries that we know very well in St. John's East: fisheries, oil and gas, clean energy, and oceans tech. The OECD predicts that the ocean economy will double by 2030, and St. John's is poised to enjoy that growth, partially due to budget 2018.

Many of my constituents in St. John's East are calling for a national approach to ensure that no Canadian needs to choose between food or heat and the medicine he or she needs. That is why I am excited about the creation of a new advisory council on the implementation of national pharmacare that was announced as part of this budget. The council will begin a national dialogue that would

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include working closely with experts from all relevant fields, as well as with national, provincial, territorial, and indigenous leaders. The council will report to the Minister of Health and the Minister of Finance, and will conduct an economic and social assessment of domestic and international models. As we move forward with some version of national support for access to pharmaceuticals, I think everyone would agree that this will improve the lives of the majority of Canadians.

Our government is investing in new generations of Canadian research and researchers by proposing \$1.2 billion over five years to the granting councils for fundamental research to provide increased support and training opportunities for researchers, students, and high-quality personnel.

There are so many great components to this budget. Once again, I am proud to say that I stand on behalf of my fellow citizens of St. John's East in support of this budget. If I were to highlight one thing, it would be the small craft harbours in my riding. For centuries, they were the lifeblood of the community. When Newfoundland joined Confederation, they became federal assets, and they provide one of the main connections that ordinary citizens have to their federal government. In places like Pouch Cove, Bauline, and Portugal Cove-St. Philip's, we really get an opportunity to see how the Government of Canada can make positive change in the lives of people. Those small craft harbours have been neglected, and by having this additional funding in place we will be able to make them safer and more economically useful for the fishers who create their livelihood and the livelihood of their communities out of those ports.

* * *

●(1750)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Ms. Filomena Tassi (Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. There have been discussions among the parties, and if you seek it, I think you will find unanimous consent for the following motion:

That, notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practice of the House, during the debate tonight pursuant to Standing Order 52, no quorum calls, dilatory motions or requests for unanimous consent shall be received by the Chair.

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Does the hon. member have the unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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(Motion agreed to)

* * *

• (1755)

[English]

BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2018, NO. 1

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-74, an act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 27, 2018 and other measures, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Madam Speaker, my colleague said that there were many more great things in the budget that he would like to enumerate. I am sure he would have liked to enumerate the fact that taxes for the middle class have gone up by 90%. He would have liked to say that there are new taxes on small businesses and employees, and that we are borrowing another \$18 billion to facilitate the budget. That is on top of all the other deficits this budget has incurred, not to mention the carbon tax, which estimates say will cost a family of four between \$1,100 and \$2,500 per year. All of these costs are going to make it that much more difficult. The debt alone is going to cost \$26 billion just in interest this year. That is not paying down any of the debt. It will be \$33 billion by 2021.

Does the member actually believe that these are helpful expenditures, when they are simply going to be pushed forward and will need to be paid for by our children and grandchildren?

Mr. Nick Whalen: Madam Speaker, the hon. member touched on a lot of different aspects, but I will focus on the one related to deficit spending. I agree with what the Minister of Finance has said. The appropriate metric for measuring Canada's progress on reducing debt is the debt-to-GDP ratio. We see that it is going down now. It has gone down each year under our government's tenure, and it will continue to do so.

When we focus merely on deficit without looking at the overall growth of the economy, we are seeing the trees and failing to see the forest. We need to see the overall economic growth that Canada has enjoyed over the first two years of the government's mandate, which has greatly surpassed expectations and provided for additional economic growth that renders the deficit spending less than the overall growth of the economy, so that we see an overall reduction. Therefore, Canada's fiscal position is stronger under our government. Even though there are modest deficits being run, they are less than the overall growth of the economy. This is more than the previous government can say, because it grew the debt-to-GDP ratio over its tenure, and we have reduced it.

Ms. Filomena Tassi (Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I was very pleased that both my hon. colleague and the speaker before him mentioned the commitment to research and the \$1.7 billion over five years being invested in research. In my riding, I have three post-secondary institutions, and I cannot tell you how thrilled they are with the commitment of the government to research. In fact, the president of one of the post-secondary institutions has stated that this has breathed a whole new life into the institution.

I would like to ask the hon. member about the importance of this investment in research and how not only researchers but all Canadians would benefit from this very important investment.

Mr. Nick Whalen: Madam Speaker, St. John's East is the home of Memorial University, the university of Newfoundland and Labrador. There are over 18,000 full-time students at the institution. There is an engineering faculty, a business faculty, and social sciences. There is a new science building, to which our federal government has contributed \$100 million in infrastructure funding. There is a world-class medical school. Within each of these departments and programs, there are researchers who are solving today's problems. However, they often cannot do that without the support of additional faculty, without research staff, and without Ph.D. students who are working on those problems with them. In order to build those labs, build that base of knowledge, and have that work done, they need additional funding and support.

The granting councils have been underfunded for a long time. The recent report that led to our increase in research funding called specifically for a massive injection of federal government dollars into primary research so that these problems can be solved. Ultimately, and we see it within the incubators at our national universities, companies develop out of this primary research, and those companies go on to sell products not only in Canada but in global markets. The people who work in those companies have high-quality, interesting jobs that keep them in their local communities and at the universities, and drive the cycle of growth that we need in the 21st century.

[Translation]

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am delighted to have the opportunity today to discuss the budget. First, I would like to talk about some things having to do with gender equality.

The budget bemoans the unequal sharing of caregiver responsibilities. Page 45 of the budget notes that 92% of EI parental leave is paid to women, while 8% is paid to men. The gap between 92% and 8% is very large, but there is nothing to indicate that it is the result of sexism or lack of autonomy. Most women claiming EI parental leave benefits are relatively young, between 25 and 34 years old. These women grew up in a relatively different world from that in which many members of the House grew up, especially in terms of equal opportunities for women. About 34% of these young women have a university degree, compared to 26% of men the same age. The young women most likely to have children today have a huge educational advantage over men.

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However, they are also much more likely to take parental leave. Why is that? Maybe it is because they want to. Maybe it is a personal choice, and that is all there is to it. Maybe in the privacy of the discussions that take place between couples, women are statistically more likely to express a preference for spending more time with an infant child. Some ideologues might see this as a problem resulting from patriarchal social programming, but I would argue that as long as women are freely making this choice, there is no problem. I would note as well that parental leave is for those caring for newborns. It may be that the division of caregiving responsibilities is somewhat different for older children. Perhaps women are more likely to take on caregiving responsibilities for infants because some women choose to breastfeed.

In practical terms, if a mother wants to breastfeed her child, we can hardly expect her not to take parental leave. I am sure that the government and private-sector employers can do more to make it easier for women who must breastfeed their children at work. This will not change the fact that it is still not feasible for the non-breastfeeding parent to care for the child and to bring the child to the breastfeeding mother's workplace every time the child is hungry. Most families face these types of practical considerations and must take them into account when they are allocating child care responsibilities.

In an attempt to increase the GDP, the government has presented a budget that restricts women's latitude by reserving part of the parental leave for each of the parents. It creates a restrictive system instead of a system in which parents have the choice to share parental leave as they see fit. Our approach is to give people more freedoms, not less, because we believe that the quest for equality is about promoting well-being, autonomy, and equality itself. It is not about promoting an ideology or increasing the GDP.

• (1800)

The leader of our party introduced a private member's bill to eliminate taxes on the EI benefits paid during parental leave, regardless of who is taking the leave, when it is taken, or for what reason.

• (1805)

[*English*]

I have made these points before, and I think they are particularly important. When I have spoken about the problems with the government's proposed change to the way that parental leave works, I have had a lot of positive feedback from young parents, young women in particular.

However, one young woman said that this was clearly a budget designed for women, written by men. In other words, it speaks about gender equality, but it does so in a way that is out of touch with the practical realities that young families experience. It introduces changes to the way parental leave works that limits the flexibility that families have. By spending money and introducing what it calls a "use it or lose it" approach to parental leave, it says it has to be divided up in a particular way if they are going to get all of it, as at least some of it has to be allocated to each person.

Of course, this does not work for single parents, families where, for various reasons, one person may be unable to take the leave as it

presently exists. Members of Parliament cannot do that. We just had our third child, and it had to be my wife who took all of the parental leave because of the nature of the position I am in. With the nature of her work, she was able to do that. The inflexibility of the system that the government is proposing is out of step with what many people are looking for.

Now, why did this person I spoke to say that this is a budget designed for women but written by men? Part of it is that what many young parents are looking for, in particular when it comes to parental leave and the way they approach work in general, is a greater degree of flexibility. They are not looking for the government to dictate and limit their choices to a greater degree. They are looking for greater flexibility. Many young women want to be able to work and earn income, and they also want to have a greater degree of flexibility from the stereotypical traditional job, where they have to get up early and commute, not working from home.

Many people I spoke to are looking for an ability to have earned income, but to do so in a way that is more flexible. I think that is true for all parents. It is something that we as policy-makers could do a better job of recognizing and responding to, trying to find policy changes that enhance flexibility rather than inflexibility.

I was thinking about this, and we need to get beyond this sort of old paradigm about the way that parents choose to divide up their relationship between working outside the home or being with their children. This was an old paradigm, and parents were stuck. They were either a stay-at-home parent and did not earn income, or they were a parent working outside the home, having to be away. They did not have any flexibility.

That old paradigm, because of changes in society, but also because of changes in technology, is very much breaking down. More and more people are able to work from home, and it is much easier to do so. It is practical and realistic for someone to be at home with their family during the day and yet have their own home-based business, or to perhaps have that flexibility to be at an external workplace some of the time and work from home at other times.

This is what more and more people are doing, and it responds to the desire that people have for that flexibility, to be able to be both at home and earning income at the same time.

To some extent, this was my reality before getting elected. I was the vice-president of an opinion research company that was based in a different city. We did not have a local office. I appreciated the opportunity to be able to be at home, and to be working from home. We had hired child care at our house but, at the same time, I was present. If there was a situation where I was needed, then I could be involved in some way. It was only my older daughter at the time, and since then our family has grown.

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The reality for more and more parents is that they are looking for flexibility, and wanting more parental leave is an expression of that flexibility. I would argue that rather than worrying about this pursuit of greater flexibility by parents, we should recognize and celebrate it as a choice that people are making. We should also recognize that despite the old model under which a person had to choose between either being at home or working outside of the home, the opportunity to more easily work from home provides parents with more choices. It provides more people with the ability to work, if they wish to, while also being present at home if they wish to be.

Policy-makers, through budgets, should look for ways of supporting people who want to have that greater degree of flexibility. One of these ways might be to make it easier to earn income while on parental leave. Rather than limiting flexibility in the way that the government proposes to, what about making it easier for someone to access parental leave while still taking some files home? I have talked to women in my riding, for example, who felt it was very important to take parental leave, but who also said it would have been easier if they could have taken some files home from work in the context of that leave. They were not able to do that because of the way the leave was structured; there was a very aggressive clawback for any earnings they made. That would be one thing we could do if we were thinking in the direction of improving flexibility instead of increasing inflexibility.

Another way would be to simplify the working from home tax benefit. Right now, the tax deductions associated with using one's home as a workplace are very complicated. We could develop a simplified formula to make that easier, so that the people who are considering working from home could quickly make that calculation and realize they would derive a benefit from it.

In general, I think the right approach is to listen to what families are telling us, and listen to what the reality is for many young parents. They want to be able to continue to work, have flexibility, and share responsibilities, but not be constrained in how they do it. That involves a very different approach from what the government is doing.

Why is the government proceeding in the way it is? It seems less to me about equality and more about GDP. It talks about getting more people into the workforce and that this will increase GDP. What we should be doing is increasing empowerment, giving more flexibility and choice to people. However, rather than using the "use it or lose it" approach of the government, if we gave more flexibility to the people, I think we would see an increase in GDP as well. I do not think that is what we should be aiming at, but that is a desirable ancillary benefit.

Having discussed these particular issues around gender equality in the budget, I want to speak more broadly about the problems we see in this budget. Again, let us be clear. The government promised that it would run three deficits of less than \$10 billion, and that in the final year it would balance the budget. What do we have? We have no plan to balance the budget ever. Its balanced budget will be later than flights out of Toronto were this weekend. There is no plan for this to happen at any point in the future. The government thinks that is okay, because it says it is investing. A plan to spend money, which is what this is, should be a plan, in that it should have a clear-sighted set of constraints and timelines. Every single province in this country

either has a balanced budget or a date by which they plan to get to a balanced budget. We might be skeptical in some of those cases about whether they will realize it, but every province either has a balanced budget or a timeline in terms of when they are going to get there. This is apparently the only finance minister in the country who does not think he needs to have that timeline, or at least he is not able to present it.

We need to have a balanced budget, and we need to have the associated stability to encourage investment over the long term. When individuals see rising taxes and an inability to balance the budget, it has a negative effect on investment, and we have seen the impacts of that.

● (1810)

What also has a negative impact on investment is when the government seems to no longer understand the importance of nation-building infrastructure. A central part of how this country became what it is was because of the vision of Sir John A. Macdonald, our first prime minister, our first Conservative prime minister, who realized we needed to have the national infrastructure associated with the railway for security and economic reasons so that essentially Canadians could access each other, protect each other, and do business with each other.

Pipelines, what we have been talking about so much today and in recent days, are the nation-building infrastructure of the 21st century. They are what allow us to prosper together. On this side of the House, we embrace the idea of pipelines as vital nation-building infrastructure that allow the whole country to prosper together. We have members from all across this country who understand this and are proud supporters of our position on it.

What has the approach been of the government? It directly killed the northern gateway pipeline, a pipeline that had already been approved by the previous Conservative government. It indirectly has been killing other pipelines. It killed the energy east pipeline by piling on conditions. Now the Trans Mountain pipeline is at risk through the Liberals' neglect and lack of action. What the government has now said is that it is considering nationalizing it.

It has become clear that the government has no interest in actually building pipelines. When it sends a signal that the only way it can build a pipeline is by nationalizing it, that is not exactly a positive signal to send in terms of investment. How about the government focus on enforcing the law, on having a plan to making those investments secure. How about the Liberals take a consistent position where they actually support the nation-building infrastructure we need in terms of energy east and the northern gateway pipeline.

I was recently in New Brunswick. At least one member of the government was annoyed and complained to the newspaper that I was in New Brunswick talking to his constituents. I will not apologize because I think it is part of my job to hear what constituents in Liberal ridings are saying, especially when what they are saying is not reflected by their MPs. I was in New Brunswick, and there is a great deal of demand on the east coast and across this country for the energy east pipeline for the kind of benefits that come with nation-building infrastructure.

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I said that the government is not making much progress in building pipelines. I should make one exception to that, of course. It put hundreds of millions of dollars into the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, which is a Chinese-controlled development bank that is building a pipeline in Azerbaijan. Canadians are investing in an infrastructure bank that is building infrastructure in Asia, that is building a pipeline in Azerbaijan.

I do not think that is what people thought Liberal MPs from Alberta meant when they said that they would support pipelines. When members, like the member for Edmonton Centre, said that they would support pipelines, I think people in Edmonton Centre thought that meant here in Canada, not in Azerbaijan. Instead of getting infrastructure built here in Canada, instead of getting pipelines built here in Canada, in its desperate bid to curry favour with all kinds of unsavoury regimes, including in this case the PRC regime, the government is spending money to get Canada into this infrastructure bank to build infrastructure such as pipelines in Asia, infrastructure that it is not building here in Canada.

This is an important issue. This is a lot of money we are spending overseas. What is the government's rationale for joining the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank? It says it is because Canadian companies can then get opportunities associated with these infrastructure projects. Well, I say that Canadian companies can get those opportunities here in Canada. I will also say that I was in the headquarters of the Asian infrastructure bank in Beijing, and it told us that it already has open staffing and open procurement policies, which means Canadian businesses can already bid on those same opportunities regardless of whether Canada gives hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars to those programs.

This is a misguided budget. It does not help Canadians. It invests in totally the wrong areas. That is why I am proud to oppose it.

• (1820)

Ms. Filomena Tassi (Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I must say that I am very impressed with the hon. member's French, and I am going to try to get to the level that he is able to speak it. I know it is something that he has really committed a lot of time to, and I think it is very important and I commend him for that.

With respect to today's topic, the Liberal government was very clear in our platform that we were going to invest in Canadians. It was a different approach than that of the opposition members, but we were very clear that was the approach we were going to take. The reason we did that is we believed it was the best investment we could make. We believe in Canadians and knew they were good investments to invest in Canadians. The result was 600,000 jobs created since 2015, over 300,000 children raised out of poverty with the Canada child benefit, which will be indexed with this BIA. Over 70,000 workers approximately will be raised out of poverty with the Canada workers benefit. We have the best balance sheet in the G7, with the lowest debt-to-GDP ratio.

Does the member not believe in making these investments in Canadians and the middle class or does he deny the results?

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, sometimes in political debate we get caught up in the jargon and use phrases that have been

focus grouped in detail but are not at all clear as to what they actually mean.

The member spoke about investing in Canadians. A suggestion for investing in Canadians is to cut their taxes. That would be an investment in Canadians that I think a lot of people are looking for. We see all kinds of ways in which the government is increasing taxes on Canadians so that it can fund a narrower group of people. For example, the government is spending \$1 billion on superclusters. It is giving money to big corporations, when what we have seen is that the most effective way to grow the economy is not by giving subsidies to superclusters and picking winners and losers in the economy, but by giving Canadians back more of their own money so that they can then invest and spend on things that are important to them.

With respect to what the member was talking about in terms of results, I will say that the status of the economy is always affected by a wide variety of different factors. I know, for example, that the members opposite wanted to entirely blame the Conservative government when there was a global financial recession. However, we are seeing worrying indicators in terms of business investments that are a direct result of the policies of the current government that will have a negative impact over time, and I think many analysts know that.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I am going to resist the temptation to pick up on the pipeline debate and will go to the bulk of the presentation by the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, which I thought was a really interesting discussion around child care in a budget that is supposed to be about gender. I think we really do need to look at what kind of child care arrangements the Government of Canada can help facilitate, recognizing, as he said, that one size does not fit all. I was disappointed that in a budget that was about gender there were not the funds that we need to create the opportunity, for those families that want it, to have high-quality early childhood education enriched child care.

To push the point a little further, I wonder what he thinks of the Green Party's policy, which is to promote opportunities for workplace child care, with tax benefits to employers where the situation is appropriate, such as not in a high-risk environment. A lot of workplaces can provide workplace child care so that the mom or the dad has the advantage of much more time in close proximity to his or her children when at work.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, I will also resist the temptation to comment on pipelines. I am sure my friend and I will have plenty of opportunity to discuss them in the future.

In terms of child care and looking at what options the government can facilitate, I think that parents are the best child care decision-makers. I think there are a lot of different types of child care arrangements that can work. The member spoke about one that I think is reflective of the kind of flexibility people are looking for.

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For some people, their ideal would be to work from home, over the Internet or phone, while having their children there. For some people, the ability to bring their children with them to work is important. It may be more realistic in the context of the kind of work they do. I see a cultural shift happening where it is more and more acceptable to bring one's children to things, even things that in the past people may have raised their eyebrows and wonder why a child was there. From time to time, I will bring my children to meetings that I have. When we have round tables in my office, from time to time, we try to set it up so that there are toys and parents can bring their kids to play while the parents are participating in political discussions. I think those kinds of things are important.

From a government perspective, in terms of the spending power of the government, let us not decide where the ball is going. I do not think we should be picking winners and losers in terms of the economy. I also do not think we should be picking winners and losers in terms of the kind of child care arrangement. We should be looking for a way to support families in the context of the flexibility that they expect. The way we initially proposed to do that was by providing direct support to families, but there may be other ways, such as tax credits around initiatives that are undertaken by employers. Again, seeking the greatest possible flexibility in the context of how we do that is the way we should go.

• (1825)

[Translation]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague, whom I recently had the chance to get to know better during an international trip we took together.

I know that politically we are not necessarily on the same page. To me, for example, socialism is not a bad word. It is something we can consider in the fight to achieve a balanced budget and increase the government's tax revenues.

I would like to know whether he believes that the Liberals broke their promise by not closing the tax loopholes that allow the CEOs of the largest companies, who earn millions of dollars annually, to not pay their fair share of taxes, when workers and the middle class do not have access to these measures and options. The Liberals promised to close the loopholes, but that did not happen in the last budget. I would like my colleague's comments on this.

[English]

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, I certainly enjoyed getting to know the member, the NDP House leader, and others better on our recent trip. I could go further into that, but as we established, what happens in Ramallah stays in Ramallah.

Do I agree that the Liberals have broken their promises? Absolutely they have and in so many different areas. While we have a philosophical disagreement on many points with the NDP, I think we can agree on this point. We have a government that thinks it can take more and more from Canadians in taxes and that somehow that will benefit Canadians, and that by giving money to well-connected insiders and to those connected with superclusters, somehow that is going to benefit those who need it the most.

I think it was our finance critic, the member for Carleton, who said it best in that the Liberals have a theory of trickle-down government, that if the government has it, somehow it is going to benefit the majority of Canadians. Our belief is that investing in Canadians actually involves letting them keep more of their money in the first place. That is what we think a budget should do, and we are disappointed that it does not do that.

Yes, absolutely across the board, especially when it comes to the Liberals' commitment with regard to running a balanced budget by year four, the government is far out of step with many of the things it promised.

[Translation]

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Madam Speaker, I have a short question. My daughter is turning one on Saturday. I was wondering, if the Liberals are allowed to continue down the same path, will there be balanced budgets and pay equity by the time my daughter turns 18?

[English]

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, my hope is that we will have a Conservative government after 2019, which will balance the budget in due course. However, if, against the odds, we are stuck with Liberal governments for longer than that, I think we will have to wait for our grandchildren at least before we have a balanced budget.

Mr. Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member of Parliament for Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook.

I appreciate the opportunity to discuss Bill C-74 and the measures of budget 2018.

With the budget and with this budget implementation act, we are taking the next steps in the government's plan to grow and strengthen the middle class by promoting equality, investing in the economy, and the future.

Before I speak about the contents of the bill, I would like to walk hon. members through some important numbers that show our plan to grow the middle class is working. My riding of Surrey Centre has one of the youngest populations. It is a middle-class riding and it is an emerging centre of innovation. The proof is in the numbers.

Over the last two years, hard-working Canadians have created nearly 600,000 new jobs, most of them full-time. Unemployment rates are near the lowest levels we have ever seen in over 40 years. I am proud to say that since 2016, Canada has led all the G7 countries in economic growth. Our plan is working because Canadians are working. As a result, we are able to continue to invest in the things that matter to Canadians, while making steady improvements to the government's bottom line.

Let me also reassure hon. members that the government is being diligent in ensuring Canada remains the best place to invest, create jobs, and do business. We know that Canada's future success rests on ensuring every Canadian has the opportunity to work and to earn a good living from that work.

Government Orders

Building on these goals, I would like to spend the rest of my time on what steps the government is taking to promote our shared values, bolster services to Canadians, and strengthen their protection at home, abroad, and online.

Canadians know that it is an interconnected world. New technologies offer great benefits to Canadian families and tremendous opportunities to businesses, small and large.

It is no exaggeration to say that the digital age has revolutionized how Canadians live and work, as well as how our institutions function. Digital technologies have changed the way we work, how we shop, how we access services, including government and financial services. These changes have brought with them vast benefits and challenges. They include efforts to preserve cybersecurity and protect the privacy of Canadians. Unfortunately, cyber-attacks are becoming more pervasive, increasingly sophisticated, and even more effective. Successful cyber-attacks have the potential to expose the private information of Canadians, cost Canadian businesses millions of dollars, and potentially put Canada's critical infrastructure networks at risk.

With this budget and the budget implementation act, the government is implementing a plan for security and prosperity in the digital age to protect Canadians against cyber-attacks. This includes significant investments to fund a new national cybersecurity strategy. The strategy focuses on three principal goals: to ensure secure and resilient Canadian systems; to build an innovative and adaptive cyber-ecosystem, and to support effective leadership and collaboration between different levels of Canadian government, and partners around the world.

Canada's plan for security in the digital age starts with a strong federal cyber-governance system to protect Canadians and their sensitive personal information. To that end, budget 2018 commits over \$155 million over five years, and \$44.5 million per year ongoing to the Communications Security Establishment to create a new Canadian centre for cybersecurity.

By consolidating operational cyber expertise from across the federal government under one roof, the new Canadian centre for cybersecurity will establish a single, unified Government of Canada source of unique expert advice, guidance, services, and support on cybersecurity operational matters. This will result in faster, better coordinated, and more coherent government responses to cyber-threats. The new centre will provide Canadians and Canadian businesses with a clear and trusted place to turn to for cybersecurity advice, to advance partnerships, and dialogue with other jurisdictions, the business community, academia, and international partners.

Given the importance of protecting Canadians from growing cyber-threats, I strongly encourage all members of the House to support consolidating various government cybersecurity functions into the new centre.

• (1830)

Budget 2018 will also help bolster Canada's ability to fight cybercrime by providing \$116 million over five years and \$23.2 million per year ongoing to the RCMP to support the creation of a national cybercrime coordination unit.

The national cybercrime coordination unit will create a coordination hub for cybercrime investigations in Canada and will work with international partners on cybercrime. The unit will also establish a national public reporting mechanism for Canadians and Canadian businesses to report cybercrime incidents to law enforcement.

Taken together, these investments will allow Canadians to continue to benefit from digital connections in a way that protects them, their personal information, and our infrastructure from cybercrime.

Let me very quickly tell the House about the new national cybersecurity strategy.

The new strategy will ensure secure and resilient Canadian cyber systems to improve the government's ability to investigate cybercrime, develop threat assessments, keep critical infrastructure safe, and work in collaboration with the financial and energy sectors on bolstering their cybersecurity.

Second, by investing in an innovative and adaptive cyber-ecosystem the government will support integrated cyber-learning placements for students and help businesses improve their cybersecurity posture through the creation of a voluntary cyber certification program.

Finally, by strengthening leadership, governance, and collaboration, the government will be taking the lead, both at home and abroad, to advance cybersecurity in Canada by working closely with provincial, territorial, private sector, and trusted international partners.

For Canadians, the national cybersecurity strategy will provide Canadians with a clear and trusted federal source for cybersecurity information, practical tips to apply to everyday online activities, and heightened awareness of malicious cyber-activity.

For Canadian businesses, the strategy will increase cybersecurity guidance for small and medium-sized enterprises and provide them with the tools and resources they need to improve cyber-resilience.

In a digital and globally connected world, I can reassure hon. members that the government is taking action to promote our shared values, bolster services to Canadians, and strengthen their protection, at home, abroad, and online, including establishing this country's first comprehensive cybersecurity plan.

A strong, safe, and secure Canada means our institutions are working effectively with the resources they need. Budget 2018 commits to a number of measures that will bolster the efficiency of Canada's safety and security institutions, without compromising our shared values as an open, inclusive, and welcoming society.

Whether through the guarantee of a fair and equitable justice system or the knowledge that their private information is secure, Canadians deserve to feel safe and protected in a rapidly changing world.

Government Orders

• (1835)

Mrs. Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): Madam Speaker, I have been hearing new buzzwords today from the government, everything about research and innovation. I am not hearing anything anymore with respect to infrastructure funding, the terminology that was big and bold in the Liberals platform on how the Liberals would bring our economy back to where they thought it should be all at the cost of just small deficits. Obviously things have not worked out well there.

Would the member like to explain why things are not working well for the Liberals with respect to their infrastructure plans and why they had to remove \$2 billion of funding that Canadians were expecting to help grow the economy directly in Canada with infrastructure spending.

Mr. Randeep Sarai: Madam Speaker, I am very pleased that I was asked that question. Over 4,000 infrastructure projects have been approved. In my own riding, I am pleased to say that \$2.2 billion have been approved for a new light rail system in Surrey Centre, which will go to Surrey Newton and connect Fleetwood—Port Kells as well. I am proud to say that the Broadway corridor will also be getting its SkyTrain line. British Columbia is extremely excited at the new infrastructure projects.

With respect to waste water, the Lions Gate wastewater treatment plant has already received \$750 million, is being built, and is going to make it one of the most ecofriendly wastewater plants. It was much needed and the previous government ignored it for many years. Now we will have safe water going to our oceans and our waterways.

When it comes to British Columbia, we are extremely happy.

My riding also received over \$950 million in the last budget for our public transportation system, including new buses, new SkyTrain stations being renovated, new escalators being put in, and pre-work being done on the LRT line.

I cannot thank the finance minister enough for his budget and for what it has done. The citizens of my riding and all ridings around my neighbourhood are pleased with the infrastructure announcements.

• (1840)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. Unfortunately, I think he is seeing the Liberal government's performance through rose-coloured glasses.

For example, there is a housing crisis in Quebec and Canada. Housing is expensive. With great fanfare, the Liberals announced major investments in social infrastructure, including affordable social housing. In the last budget, they announced \$11 billion for affordable social housing, a not inconsiderable sum. This seems like good news. However, on closer inspection, it turns out that only \$10 million of the new funding will be spent this year. That is less than 0.001% of the amount they announced. The investments they announced will not happen until after the 2019 election or even after the 2023 election.

Does my colleague think it is a good idea to announce spending that will not happen for two more election cycles, when he does not even know if he will still be in the House by then?

[*English*]

Mr. Randeep Sarai: Madam Speaker, I have met municipal members, mayors and councillors, from all across British Columbia, some during their lobbying week out here. They could not have been happier. They were ecstatic with the news of the new national housing strategy and the money being given to them.

I met with those who provide child care and food for the homeless. They were ecstatic. In my riding, 160 new units will be built for those who are now on the streets. They will be in beds, in homes, in those safe facilities by the end of June. There will be 250 new beds in our riding, which is a collaboration between the federal funding and B.C. housing. These are just in Surrey Centre. I could go on and on.

People need to know that when we have infrastructure announcements, there is a process, just like with everything else. Plans have to be made and permits issued. Those are not in the hands of the federal government necessarily. They involve the municipalities, the provincial governments, environmental engineers, and consultants who have to do their due diligence and their work before shovels hit the ground.

Perhaps my colleague might want to look into that, to see why some of those projects may be taking more time. The agencies on the ground that help with those who need housing the most, the most vulnerable, are very happy with this budget.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Darrell Samson (Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am delighted to speak to budget 2018. This is a very important budget that continues the work we began so long ago.

[*English*]

I will be focusing, first of all, on my region of Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook, a community I describe as a half-circle around the cities of Halifax and Dartmouth. We have some urban but also rural communities. It is a growing community. As well, we have the highest number of seniors. Those are big issues. We need to continue to grow the economy, create jobs, and make sure we support our seniors.

Today I will focus mostly on veterans, women, youth, and indigenous people. Before I do so, I want to share with the House the important work our government has done thus far for the economy. When I look at the unemployment rate of 5.7%, the lowest in the last 40 years, something great is happening on the ground. I am sure that all members in this House can confirm that jobs are being created in their communities, which is important.

Government Orders

I also want to talk about the Canada child benefit. All members in this House have many families in their ridings that are receiving extra money, about \$3,000 more than the previous government was offering. This is tax-free money. As an example, in my riding of Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook, \$5.6 million is being given monthly to support families with young kids. Think about that. In my riding alone, it is \$5.6 million monthly. That is \$60 million a year, and everyone sitting in this House today is receiving similar amounts of money. That is essential, and that is an investment in our young people and families.

I should add that we have created over 600,000 new jobs, most of which are permanent jobs.

This budget also has an additional investment in our health care system. In Nova Scotia, health care is very important to us. We need to continue supporting our communities, making sure that we have enough doctors and the supports required. We are seeing investments in mental health, a new sum invested in the last health accord, which is crucial. We are making sure that the investment will support individuals and families with mental health challenges.

I spoke earlier about keeping seniors at home. There is an investment there. In this budget we are also seeing \$20 million over the next five years invested in autism and another \$20 million for dementia support and research. As we know, that is a big issue in Canada, more so in Atlantic Canada, as we have the highest number of seniors in the country. Those are big investments, because those are big issues that need to be supported by government, and that is where we are investing major amounts of money.

Now I would like to talk about veterans. We have invested about \$10 billion over the last two and a half years to support veterans. This is an extremely important investment. We need to make sure that we support those who have supported our country, as well as their families. These are men and women who have been out there risking their lives every day. We are investing \$3.6 billion in the pension for life. That is a large amount of money. I held many town halls across my riding last year, and the pension for life was a major item these individuals wanted and needed. The lump sum may work for some but does not work for most.

• (1845)

We were able to add an option. They have an option that, by default, is a pension, but they also have the option to get a lump sum.

How much support is there? An individual determined to be 100% disabled can receive up to \$1,150 a month. If the individual's injury happened in Afghanistan, for example, and the person is 25 years old, with a life expectancy of about 82 for a man and 84 for a woman, we would multiply that by 57 years. That alone would give about \$700,000 or \$800,000. However, someone severely injured may also have an opportunity to receive another \$1,500 a month, in addition to the \$1,150, which brings it to \$3,150 a month, which would bring it to about \$38,000 or \$40,000 a year. Again, if we use the same formula, that would be about \$1.75 million from ages 25 to 82. There is a third criterion, which is a 90% pre-release salary that could also be included. That investment in our veterans is extremely important as a disability pension.

That is not to say what we are already done. In April, we increased the \$310,000 lump sum to \$360,000, which is a \$50,000 addition, depending on the percentage of the disability.

While I was making my tour, some asked what would happen if they took the lump sum. Could they still access the pension? This is something remarkable our government has done. The answer is yes. We break down the sum they have already received, and if they received a little extra, that sum is deducted. Some individuals could receive, depending again on the percentage of injuries, another \$800 a month. There would be a deduction of \$200 to \$300 a month to catch up the amounts that were overpaid. This has been built to support all veterans who have experienced some disability in the workforce.

In this budget there is a \$42-million investment for maintenance and repairs in cemeteries and graves, as we have over 45,000 grave sites to improve over time. This will be a way of reaching out very quickly on that.

I want to touch on a couple of investments, such as the new women entrepreneurs strategy, which is a \$1.6-billion investment over the next three years to support entrepreneurs in growing their businesses. We also have put in \$150 million over five years that is tailored to more regional challenges. We have received a lot of support from women's associations for that.

We have continued the summer jobs for youth amount we put in place two years ago, and we also invested \$448 million in an enhanced youth employment strategy to give young people opportunities and internships in various areas so they can have experience and build on it as they enter the workforce.

Finally, there is a major investment in indigenous areas for children and families. We invested billions of dollars in health care and millions on a clean water strategy.

I have focused on just a few key areas. There are many other areas I could have shared with the House, but I am thankful for this opportunity.

Government Orders

• (1850)

Mrs. Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): Madam Speaker, I appreciated listening to the member across the way talk about veterans and this new pension the Liberals have put forward that is supposedly so good for our veterans. However, the example the member gave and the one in the budget document refer to maximums that would be available based on injuries. The example in the budget book talks about an individual who serves a full 25 years before stepping on a land mine or being involved in an IED incident and ending up 100% disabled. From what I understand of our veterans and those who have served in the infantry, that is a pretty unrealistic situation for the majority of those who end up that severely injured.

I wonder if the member could give me an idea of how many of our severely injured veterans actually serve a full 25 years before finding themselves in that kind of predicament and being able to receive that level of funding.

Mr. Darrell Samson: Madam Speaker, again, it varies. The example I gave is of someone who is injured at 25 in Afghanistan. We look at the formulas. For someone who has been in the military for 25 years, the formula can work differently. There are a lot of supports there. We could apply the third category, which is 90% of the pre-release salary, which would be very strong support. We could also apply the other categories. It all depends on the level of disability. That is the real question. There is this support system and the pension for life. Again, the option is still available. There are lots of opportunities tailored to the needs of individuals.

• (1855)

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Madam Speaker, my colleague listed many of the items on which his government has spent money, and he is proud of the millions and billions of dollars in spending, but he did not mention the incredible debt the Liberals are amassing. Currently we are paying \$26 billion of interest per year on this debt, and it will be \$33 billion a couple of years from now, in 2021. That works out to over \$3,000 per year per family of four. We add to that the carbon tax, which could add an estimated \$1,100 to \$2,500 per year per family of four.

How can my colleague stand here and champion the fact that this is good for the middle class, when in fact, his children and grandchildren and my children and grandchildren are going to be forced to pay this debt on the credit card these guys are building up?

Mr. Darrell Samson: Madam Speaker, my first reaction would be to ask what the Conservative Party would be willing to cut. What cuts would the Conservatives have made in the last two years to try to balance the budget, and create a major recession, if not allow this country to go into a depression, which would be much more challenging? The old saying is that it takes money to make money. That is what investment is. Our government is investing in our country. Our government is investing in all kinds of national programs that will not only benefit Canadians today but in 10 years, 20 years, and 30 years. The Canada pension plan is one. There is the Canada child benefit. The national housing strategy is another important one. There is a seniors' housing strategy. We are talking about a pharmacare strategy. I could go on and on. That is what a vision for this great country is about.

FISHERIES ACT

The House resumed from March 29 consideration of the motion that Bill C-68, An Act to amend the Fisheries Act and other Acts in consequence, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): It being 6:58 p.m., pursuant to order made on Tuesday, March 20, 2018, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion. Call in the members.

• (1920)

Ms. Mary Ng: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I want to make sure that my vote is counted in favour.

[*Translation*]

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

(*Division No. 647*)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alleslev
Amos	Anandasangaree
Arseneault	Arya
Aubin	Ayoub
Badawey	Bagnell
Bains	Baylis
Beech	Bittle
Blair	Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Boissonnault	Bossio
Boulerice	Bratina
Breton	Brison
Brosseau	Caesar-Chavannes
Cannings	Caron
Carr	Casey (Charlottetown)
Chagger	Chen
Choquette	Cormier
Cullen	Cuzner
Dabrusin	Damoff
DeCoursey	Dhaliwai
Dhillon	Di Iorio
Donnelly	Drouin
Dubé	Dubourg
Duclos	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)	Dusseault
Dzerowicz	Easter
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith	Eyking
Eyolfson	Fergus
Fillmore	Finnigan
Fonseca	Fortier
Fragiskatos	Fraser (Central Nova)
Fuhr	Garneau
Garrison	Gerretsen
Goldsmith-Jones	Goodale
Graham	Grewal
Hajdu	Hardie
Harvey	Hébert
Hehr	Hogg
Holland	Housefather
Hughes	Hussen
Hutchings	Johns
Jones	Jordan
Jowhari	Julian
Kang	Khera
Lambropoulos	Lametti
Lapointe	Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
Laverdière	LeBlanc

Leslie
Lighthound
Longfield
MacGregor
Malcolmson
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)
Mathyszen
May (Cambridge)
McCrimmon
McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
Mendès
Mihychuk
(Soeurs)
Monsef
Morneau
Murray
Nassif
Ng
Oliphant
O'Regan
Paradis
Peterson
Picard
Quach
Ramsey
Ratansi
Robillard
Rogers
Rota
Rusnak
Saini
Samson
Sansoucy
Scarpaleggia
Serré
Shanahan
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
Sikand
Sorbara
Stetski
Tan
Vandal
Vaughan
Weir
Wilkinson
Wrzesniewskyj
Young— 185

Levitt
Lockhart
MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maloney

May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McDonald
McKay
McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendicino
Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-

Moore
Morrissey
Nantel
Nault
O'Connell
Oliver
Ouellette
Peschisolido
Petitpas Taylor
Poissant
Qualtrough
Rankin
Rioux
Rodriguez
Romanado
Ruimy
Sahota
Sajjan
Sangha
Sarai
Schulte
Sgro
Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sohi
Spengemann
Tabbara
Tassi
Vandenbeld
Virani
Whalen
Wilson-Raybould
Yip

Stubbs
Thériault
Van Kesteren
Vecchio
Wagantall
Warkentin
Webber
Yurdiga

Sweet
Trost
Van Loan
Viersen
Warawa
Waugh
Wong
Zimmer— 78

S. O. 52

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans. (Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

EMERGENCY DEBATE

• (1925)

[English]

TRANS MOUNTAIN EXPANSION PROJECT

The Speaker: The House will now proceed to the consideration of a motion to adjourn the House for the purpose of discussing a specific and important matter requiring urgent consideration, namely the Trans Mountain expansion project.

I would like to remind hon. members that they are not required to be at their assigned seats and that pursuant to the order adopted earlier today, the Chair will receive no dilatory motions, no quorum calls, and no requests for unanimous consent.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC) moved:

That this House do now adjourn.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Grande Prairie—Mackenzie.

I am speaking for the hard-working Canadians, investors, and industries who are waiting for the Trans Mountain expansion to be built. Canada's Conservatives requested this emergency debate, because on April 8, Kinder Morgan set May 31 as the deadline to stop the challenges, settle the obstacles, and provide certainty once and for all.

However, this was not the first warning that there were too many barriers and delays, that this vital infrastructure so clearly in the national interest is at serious risk. For a year and a half since the approval, the Prime Minister has failed.

Trans Mountain is crucial for Canada, a \$7.4 billion initiative that will create 15,000 jobs directly and sustain hundreds of thousands more in the energy sector across Canada, and in all the other sectors that depend on thriving Canadian oil.

The Conference Board of Canada said that the combined government revenue impact for construction and the first 20 years of expanded operations is \$46.7 billion, including federal and provincial taxes for public services such as health care and education. B.C. would receive \$5.7 billion, Alberta \$19.4 billion, and the rest of Canada would share \$21.6 billion. Municipal tax payments before adjusting for inflation total \$922 million to B.C. and \$124 million to Alberta over the first 20 years.

NAYS

Members

Aboultaif
Albrecht
Anderson
Benzen
Bernier
Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)
Boudrias
Brown
Chong
Clement
Deltell
Doherty
Eglinski
Fast
Gallant
Genuis
Gourde
Kelly
Kusie
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Lloyd
MacKenzie
McCauley (Edmonton West)
Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)
Nater
Nuttall
Paul-Hus
Poilievre
Saroya
Shields
Stanton

Albas
Allison
Barsalou-Duval
Bergen
Berthold
Boucher
Brassard
Carrie
Clarke
Cooper
Diotte
Dreeschen
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Fortin
Généreux
Gill
Jeneroux
Kent
Lake
Liepert
Lobb
Marcil
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
Motz
Nicholson
O'Toole
Plamondon
Reid
Schmale
Shipley
Strahl

S. O. 52

It will provide necessary access to export markets for landlocked environmentally and socially responsible Canadian oil, which is crucial now more than ever before, since the Liberals have killed the only two other new opportunities to tidewater, the Conservative-approved northern gateway pipeline and energy east. That leaves Canada almost entirely dependent on the U.S., which is now Canada's biggest energy competitor. Without Trans Mountain, Canada will remain wholly captive, which is an acute problem because the U.S. is aggressively pursuing its own domestic energy production and supply while exporting crude oil for the first time in 40 years and flooding world markets.

However, it has not been built yet, and construction season is soon. It faces highly organized, ongoing political, legal, and even foreign-funded opponents, who promise they will use every tool in the tool box to stop it. It is death by delay. The Prime Minister's failure has forced innocent Canadians, businesses and families, neighbours and friends, to be caught and at risk, in the crossfire of an escalating trade war and even threats to restrict energy supply between three neighbouring provincial governments.

Kinder Morgan's deadline is an alarming but predictable economic and constitutional emergency. It is a direct result of the Prime Minister's failure to act. Now it is about more than the pipeline itself; it is about investor confidence and certainty in Canada overall. Canada's international and economic reputation is at stake. That is because it is the latest in a pattern of multi-billion dollar energy investments and projects that have been cancelled under this Prime Minister.

The reality is that more Canadian energy investment has been lost under this Prime Minister in two years than under any other prime minister for the same time frame in 70 years. The total dollar value is like losing 75% of auto manufacturing and almost the entirety of the aerospace sector in Canada. The collateral damage is hundreds of thousands of people losing their jobs, families in turmoil and struggle, on this Prime Minister's watch. What is scary is that it is the tip of the iceberg if the Liberals ram through their new energy regulations, their tanker ban, their offshore drilling ban, the carbon tax, and more.

Provincial governments, energy investors, economists, and oil and gas proponents are all rightfully demanding certainty and clarity about Trans Mountain and the future of energy development and transportation in Canada. There is no firm commitment that barriers will cease. The Liberals will make it worse.

Oil and gas provides billions in tax and royalty revenues to all governments, hundreds of millions to charities and in partnership with academic and educational institutions across Canada. It directly and indirectly employs hundreds of thousands of Canadians in every part of the country, and hundreds of thousands more in spinoff jobs. It lifts the standard of living of every Canadian.

The escalating crisis over Trans Mountain is causing investors and proponents to speak out. That is rare, and elected representatives should take note. The CEO of one of the biggest midstream oil and gas operators in Canada, Keyera, said, "Canada is not looked upon as a good place to invest when it comes to oil and gas these days... partly because the U.S. environment is quite positive."

CEO David Smith outlined critical priorities for Canadian energy, "market access" and "competitiveness, as well as making sure that government is "not layering on additional costs that make it more difficult for us to compete."

The CEO of Suncor, the leading integrated oil and gas company in Canada, and a pioneer in the oil sands, said:

We're having to look at Canada quite hard. The cumulative impact of regulation and higher taxation than other jurisdictions is making Canada a more difficult jurisdiction to allocate capital in...

...other jurisdictions are doing much more to attract business, so Canada needs to do much more to up its game.

Absent some changes...you're going to see us not exercising the very big capital projects that we've just finished.

Upstream oil and gas developers are calling on the Prime Minister to ensure Trans Mountain can proceed. The CEO of Cenovus Energy said, "If the rule of law is not upheld and this project is allowed to fail, it will have a chilling effect on investment not just in British Columbia, but across the entire country."

● (1930)

Banks and investment firms are throwing up red flags. The Royal Bank said, "In real time, we're seeing capital flow out of the country. If we don't keep the capital here, we can't keep the people here." Scotiabank said, "We're going to lose our competitive advantage on a number of things. Canada has a productivity issue and it has a competitiveness issue. I'm concerned about the resource-based economy, and access to tidewater." CIBC said, "Slowdown or uncertainty regarding a pipeline is clearly a major factor impacting business investment in the energy space."

Among the most passionate are business owners in B.C. The CEO of the Business Council of B.C. said, "This is no longer about a pipeline but whether you can rely on government and the rule of law if you choose to invest. This can have lasting consequences." The Canadian Federation of Independent Business said, "If uncertainty is allowed to continue, it risks doing serious damage to this country's reputation."

The B.C. NDP-Green coalition has been challenging federal jurisdiction aggressively, asking for more studies about the product that has been in the pipeline for decades, putting up roadblocks through construction, and intending more if the expansion does get built.

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The Prime Minister obviously should have anticipated this attack, since it never supported it and openly campaigned on killing it, but he did not even bring up the pipeline in his first call with the premier. It has taken 10 months and a full-blown economic and constitutional crisis for him to meet about it, with the project on the line. It is a crisis of the Liberals' own making. Now governments are floating the concept of taxpayers financing or backstopping it.

The Prime Minister suggests the only way for Trans Mountain to be built is to nationalize or subsidize it. However, before him, major energy projects and pipelines could be built in Canada with no risk to taxpayers. The challenges will not stop. It is a death knell for private sector interests and investments in the future. It is an indictment of his own record.

Another aspect that makes Trans Mountain so necessary is the economic opportunities and social benefits for indigenous communities now and for future generations. Trans Mountain is partly owned through equity partnerships with 43 communities along the route, worth more than \$400 million. Every indigenous community directly impacted by the expansion and within a 10 kilometre buffer zone all along the route support it. As of August 2015, 120 indigenous entities were consulted. About 85% of the owners or occupants on the pipeline route raised no issues or concerns.

Chief Ernie Crey of the Cheam First Nation said, "If this project doesn't go through, it will hurt our people."

Arthur Bird of the Paul First Nation said, "We have to support the development of the country and its economics, because the economics of the country affects all of us in one way or another."

In 2016, when the project was waiting for approval, Mike Lebourdais, former chief of the Whispering Pines/Clinton Indian Band said, "I want the money from our resources...so that we can pay for our health, so that we can pay for our education, so that we can pay for our elders, so that we can pay to protect our environment, so we can build better pipes, we can build better bridges, we can build better railways."

The Peters First Nations said they are concerned that among all of the well-funded and highly publicized opposition to the project, the voice of indigenous nations that support TMX has been lost. Peters First Nation said it has lived with the original pipeline that was built over 50 years ago seated at the base of their mountain and above their homes with no worries or incidents. They said that the TMX pipeline is the safest way to transport needed natural resources out of the country for the benefit of all Canadians.

Of course, opinions of indigenous people are diverse, and everyone has a right to advocate their views and assemble peacefully. However, it is quite the spectacle to see NDP and Green activists outright oppose economic opportunity and security for 43 Indigenous communities while seven challenge the expansion in court. It is stunning hypocrisy to hear politicians speak of this "most important relationship" and worry publicly about the crippling poverty and particular socio-economic challenges and barriers facing indigenous Canadians, while deliberately using every possible means to block financial opportunities and undermine all their efforts and work to secure agreements to benefit their communities, youth, and future.

It was already an embarrassment that Kinder Morgan had to announce to the world in January that it was still committed to the project. In spite of all the delays, uncertainty, prospect of failure, enemies on all sides, it was still trying to get Trans Mountain built. The Prime Minister should be ashamed of his utter failure to champion it, but that is what energy investment in Canada looks like under the Liberal government and the Prime Minister's failure of leadership.

Energy is Canada's number one private sector in the economy. It is Canada's second biggest exporter. Canada's pipeline monitoring system has the strongest safety standards in the world, and risk mitigation, prevention, protection and response advance continuously. Canada is a global leader in energy innovation. Canadians must have industry to work, innovate, build, invest, and profit. Canadians must also steward and protect the environment, air quality, water, land, and habitat.

Canada is the most responsible developer of oil and gas in the world, and the world will continue to demand and need Canadian oil. The Liberals have to champion Canadian energy, Canadian innovation, and Canadian jobs.

● (1935)

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey—Newton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I come from British Columbia and over the last couple of days I have received more calls on one single issue than I have received before. It is a very positive response. The hon. member talked about \$46 billion in revenues and the \$7.4 billion project creating jobs for middle-class families. I would like to correct the member on one thing. I have heard from my constituents that our Prime Minister has shown extraordinary leadership on this issue and he is the one who has clearly said that we are going to build this pipeline.

The policies of the previous prime minister, Mr. Harper, pit one province against the other. Our Prime Minister is bringing provinces together and Canadians together, and putting the economy in place. I have received many calls from constituents on this issue. They are saying our Prime Minister, the member for Papineau, has shown solid leadership, and I am very proud of that.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. Members are unlikely to agree on some of these issues, and I expect members to show respect to the House, to listen, and not be interrupting, as members were a moment ago during an answer.

The hon. member for Lakeland.

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Mrs. Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Speaker, what the Prime Minister has done is repeated the same empty platitudes for a year and a half in the face of well-funded, orchestrated, organized, explicit, obvious, ongoing attacks. The challenges will not stop. In fact, the anti-energy activists who are doing everything they can to kill the Trans Mountain expansion have promised they will just keep going on and on.

We warned the Prime Minister of this when the NDP-Green coalition came to power in B.C. We said to contact the premier immediately. He did not. We said to lay out the plan and face specifically the undue and unnecessary delays that the natural resources minister said they would not accept. We said to define them. They did not. We tried to move for an emergency debate in February. We were not able to have it. We then, instead, moved a motion that the Prime Minister should make explicitly clear to Canadians how the Trans Mountain expansion would be built. The Liberals voted against it. Every single one of them defeated Canadians getting to know what exactly the government is going to do a year and a half after the approval, instead of just talking and talking.

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that in the last Parliament, the Harper government actually commissioned a report by an expert on the gateway pipeline. The expert report said there were serious problems moving forward with it until the outstanding first nations rights and title issues were resolved. We now have the same concerns being raised about Kinder Morgan. Does the member believe that whatever government is in power it should be upholding its obligations under section 35 of the Constitution and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and genuinely consult with first nations, and accommodate and consider indigenous rights and interests in any project?

● (1940)

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Speaker, I am glad the member raised the northern gateway pipeline, because it is part of why the Trans Mountain expansion is so crucial right now. The Conservatives approved the northern gateway pipeline, which was the only new opportunity to tidewater to export to the Asia-Pacific. After the Supreme Court ruling and the election the Liberals could have extended the number of months and scope for consultation, as they actually did with the Trans Mountain expansion. Instead, for the first time in Canadian history, the Prime Minister overruled an expert independent recommendation by the regulator. He stopped it in its tracks. He killed two billion dollars' worth of equity partnerships for 31 first nations and the hope for their communities' futures, the social benefits and opportunities that the pipeline would have provided to them and also to the energy sector overall by diversifying market access.

What is very concerning is what the chief of the Peters First Nation is saying, that pro-natural resources indigenous communities' voices are being lost. The Trans Mountain expansion is supported by the vast majority of indigenous communities, and we should listen to them. They have been consulted. They deserve to be consulted. The crown has a duty to consult. However, the attacks against indigenous people pursuing their own futures with resource development have to stop.

Mr. Chris Warkentin (Grande Prairie—Mackenzie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to address what is becoming a crisis of confidence. I spent the last two weeks in my riding and I had the privilege of travelling throughout Alberta visiting communities that I represent. Like many in the House, I heard from my constituents about this crisis.

I heard from a young father named Adam. He told me he had just purchased a home. He works for a pipeline company. He said that he believed there was long-term opportunity in the province when he purchased that house just two months ago. He told me that he has a personal crisis right now, that if the pipeline does not get built, he will not have a job. His kids will not have the opportunities that he had hoped he might be able to afford to provide for them, such as the opportunity to live in a vibrant community, to be involved in sports and all the rest of it, the opportunity for mom and dad to have a job.

There is a crisis of confidence and we are hearing those voices. Many politicians in this room will have heard the voice of Saskatchewan's Premier Scott Moe, the voice of the premier of Alberta, the voice of Jason Kenney, the official opposition leader in Alberta, the voices from western Canada that are desperately calling on the Prime Minister to intervene in what is becoming an unmitigated disaster. It is a crisis.

When I go home, I listen to the voices who are going to live out this crisis, the moms and dads who will not be able to provide the opportunities they had hoped to provide for their children, the young people who are looking for their first jobs in engineering, their first jobs in construction, jobs that would have been provided by either the pipeline construction or the facilities that those pipelines would tie into.

This crisis is not just about this one pipeline. This is such a crisis right now. The premiers of Saskatchewan and Alberta and the people in my constituency are so animated about this because this is the only hope left.

The crisis started when the Prime Minister cancelled a project that had already been duly approved. This all started when the Prime Minister unilaterally decided to overrule the national regulator and said he would cancel the northern gateway project. That happened after the election. He put forward the tanker ban on northern British Columbia. There was no consultation.

Now first nation communities are suing the Prime Minister for not consulting them on limiting their long-term opportunities and prosperity for their communities, their children and their children's children. This is how the Prime Minister's time in office started. Then he stalled all the regulatory processes and then Petronas withdrew its project which was the Pacific NorthWest LNG project that would have seen natural gas going from Dawson Creek all the way through to the coast.

Not only did we see delays and cancellation of approved projects, we also saw the changing of the rules. Midway in the approval process of the energy east project that was being undertaken, in the eleventh hour the Prime Minister announced there was going to be a whole set of new rules. The company that was building pipelines would now be responsible for the upstream and downstream emissions from that project. The company would have to assess and determine what those would be, increasing the cost to that company to the point in this case where it could no longer afford to continue to build that project.

Hon. Jim Carr: Unbelievable.

Mr. Chris Warkentin: The Minister of Natural Resources is heckling, Mr. Speaker.

• (1945)

It is unbelievable that the minister would heckle me during my speech when I am talking about the desperate position in which he has put people living in my constituency, people living throughout the province of Alberta, and people living throughout western Canada. It is a wonder that the minister still wonders where this crisis is coming from. He seems oblivious as to what is happening in the part of the country I represent.

I am hopeful that tonight the Minister of Natural Resources will spend some time in the House listening to my colleague from Lakeland, who is probably one of the most informed members of the House of Commons on the topic of energy. He might learn something. He will learn what leadership looks like. He will learn what it means to defend the hard-working people who built our country and continue to build it and who work week after week away from their families to ensure they have enough money to pay the bills. They do not just support their families; they support our communities. In fact, they support our country. We as Albertans are proud that the province has done well, and it is partly because of the energy sector. We are where we are because of the innovation, drive, and hard work of the men and women who work in the industry.

If the minister wants to heckle anyone today, let it be the Prime Minister for not allowing him to do his job to get these projects moving forward. Where I come from, that is who the people who I represent are heckling.

Canada is a producer of oil and gas. We should be proud of the products we pull out of the ground and ship. We are one of the most environmentally and socially responsible countries in the world when it comes to the development of our natural resource sector, and oil and gas. Opponents of pipelines often say we do not need oil and gas anymore and therefore we should no longer build these pipelines. In fact, one person has famously said, in response to a pipeline, that we do not need an alternate route for this pipeline; we need an alternate economy. Interestingly, the principal secretary to the Prime Minister said that.

I think Gerry Butts, the principal secretary, would say that we no longer need oil and gas, that the world no longer needs it. However, the world is buying oil and gas. We have a choice. We can be the country that will sell the resource to the countries that want it, and therefore we need a pipeline to tidewater. If the minister would do something for Canada, it would be to get that pipeline to tidewater.

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Why is it important for Canada? I know why it is important for the people who I represent. It means jobs and opportunity, and long-term prosperity for the communities I represent. However, why does Canada need pipelines? Because there is a race to get our commodities to the consumer, and the first country that does so will be the country that succeeds. How as a country will we succeed if in fact we get that product to market? It means jobs and opportunity, and long-term prosperity for the people who I represent. It also means more provincial and federal tax revenue. What does that mean? It means better health care, education, and infrastructure for every Canadian.

This is what the current government is sacrificing. The reason we are at this crisis is not because of one single pipeline. It is because of the attitude on the government benches, including from the Prime Minister, who of course famously promised that he would phase out the oil sands. It seems he is doing that by cancelling all of the infrastructure that would get our products to market.

• (1950)

Therefore, we know the Prime Minister has effectively cancelled the northern gateway. He has effectively cancelled energy east. He has effectively cancelled the Petronas LNG project. Now he is in the process of cancelling this. We are in a crisis. The government has to act.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I share similar passions as my friend when I talk about home, about families that we represent, and the hopes and ambitions we have for ourselves and our children. One of the hopes and ambitions people had when they looked at the Liberal offer in the last election was a very specific one when it came to this project.

The Prime Minister, when asked directly, and it is on tape and everyone can see it, if Kinder Morgan would have to go through a new and enhanced environmental assessment process because the general consideration under his government was that the environmental assessment regime in Canada had been so eroded that so many of the important and necessary tools to judge whether a project was safe or not had been taken out by the Stephen Harper government, the now Prime Minister, then candidate, said yes, that it would go through a new process.

One of the key elements for the people whom I represent was around the notion of cleaning up a potential spill, which we all have to contemplate. The product we are talking about today is diluted bitumen. My question is very simple. Is my friend aware of our capacity today, 2018, to clean up a diluted bitumen spill in a river or in an ocean environment? What percentage would be the expectation of a cleanup under such an event?

Mr. Chris Warkentin: Mr. Speaker, one of the things we all know and can be proud of is that we have one of the most environmentally sensitive industries in the world. When it comes to the production and the transport of oil and gas in Canada, there is no one who does it better. Canada can be very proud of that. What we also know is that the Kinder Morgan pipeline has been transporting bitumen safely for the last 50 years, or half a century. It has gone well. There have not been any major spills. What we do know—

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs: Dilbit.

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Mr. Chris Warkentin: Dilbit, pardon me. It is good to have the member for Lakeland right next to me because she can provide me with assistance when I get it wrong.

We will continue to see innovations in the industry. That is what we have seen over the last 50 years and that is what we have seen in remarkable ways over the last 10 years when we see the improvement in the environmental protections in the industry.

Hon. Kent Hehr (Calgary Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the hon. member's passion for the industry, for Albertans and for the people who need work. There is no doubt our province has had a difficult time since the price reversals in the industry.

I believe our Prime Minister has been fairly clear, and I would like to read this from *The Globe and Mail* today and see what his response would be. This is from Campbell Clark's column, "That's why, contrary to what so many believe, Mr. Trudeau has long been committed to this pipeline—

• (1955)

The Speaker: Order, please. I remind the hon. member for Calgary Centre that we do not mention the names of hon. members in the House, simply their titles.

Hon. Kent Hehr: Mr. Speaker, the column states:

That's why, contrary to what so many believe, [the Prime Minister] has long been committed to this pipeline. Many complained he wasn't doing enough to get it built, but TMX has been at the core of his priorities since 2016. That's when he first risked losing B.C. seats and environmentally conscious voters by approving the TMX expansion - and another pipeline, Line 3, to boot....Now he's going to lay out federal money, in partnership with the Alberta government, to backstop a Houston-based pipeline goliath, Kinder Morgan Inc. If that doesn't wave a flag in the face of pipeline opponents, including those who voted Liberal, what will?

What does the member say about that?

Mr. Chris Warkentin: I have a couple of things to say, Mr. Speaker. The first demonstration that the Prime Minister knows we are in a crisis position is that he is now putting taxpayer money into the project. He knows it is in a crisis position and therefore he is trying to buy time and push a bunch of taxpayer money. The taxpayer was not being asked to contribute before this crisis developed. We know the Prime Minister knows he has gotten us into a remarkably horrible position, a position of crisis.

The second point is that the hon. member for Calgary Centre made a solemn promise. He said that energy east would be built and he pounded his fists in the House of Commons. I know what a Liberal promise looks like and it looks a lot like that, and it looks a lot like what the minister and the Prime Minister are now saying with regard to this pipeline.

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for North Vancouver.

I welcome this opportunity to discuss an issue that is critical to all Canadians in all parts of the country, an issue that speaks to how we leverage the energy resources we have today to deliver the clean energy solutions for tomorrow.

We are talking about the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion, an issue we have been fully engaged with really since we were elected, and certainly since I have become Minister of Natural Resources, meeting with indigenous groups in their territories, holding regular

discussions with counterparts in British Columbia and Alberta, travelling across the country and beyond in the past 18 months to meet with the proponent and investors, and talking with Canadians across the country hearing their views.

Before outlining the importance of TMX, let me just quickly remind the House about the facts of the project.

Very early in our mandate, we established a set of interim principles to hold major resource projects to a higher standard, increasing consultation, creating certainty for investors, and avoiding the issues created by the Harper Conservatives that led to the dismissal of pipeline approvals by the Federal Court. Let me be clear. We did this to ensure that pipelines were not just approved; we did this to ensure they would be built.

A set of guiding principles included expanding public and indigenous consultations and putting TMX into the broader context of the pan-Canadian framework on clean growth and climate change. The National Energy Board considered all of these criteria and recommended that we approve the project, subject to 157 binding conditions. These are very stringent conditions that will, among countless other things, strengthen spill response and ensure critical habitat protection and restoration.

Then we went further. To enable even more voices to be heard, I appointed a special ministerial panel to hold additional hearings.

Why did we do all of this? Because the Federal Court of Appeal in the northern gateway case quashed the approvals. It was not that Enbridge, the proponent, had not consulted, not that the National Energy Board had not consulted, but that the Harper government had not sufficiently consulted indigenous people. Therefore, the panel held 44 public meetings, hearing more than 600 presentations, receiving some 20,000 submissions by email, and for the first time, we posted a record of those discussions online for all Canadians to see.

We also did something that no other Canadian government had ever done. We co-developed a historic indigenous advisory and monitoring committee to help oversee this project through its entire life cycle. As a result, indigenous voices will be heard, their counsel sought, and their knowledge valued in ways they never have before. As Chief Ernie Crey of the Cheam First Nation said, "Indigenous people won't be on the outside looking in. We'll be at the table and on site to protect our land and water."

Even with the 157 conditions imposed by the NEB, we understood that more could be done to protect our coast. Again we acted, making a generational investment in the health of our oceans and the safety of our coasts.

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I have been listening to the speeches from the members opposite in the Conservative Party, and I cannot recall references to the coasts and protecting marine safety. I hear only vague conversation about the environment. However, our government knows that without environmental stewardship, without economic growth and jobs, and without proper consultation with indigenous peoples, there will be no pipelines built in our country. As members opposite will know, during their 10 years in office not one kilometre of pipeline was built to tidewater, not one. If in subsequent interventions they want to correct the record, I invite them to do it.

The \$1.5 billion in an oceans protection plan is making navigation safer by strengthening the eyes and ears of the Coast Guard to ensure better communication with vessels, adding a new radar site in strategic locations, and putting more enforcement officers on the coast.

● (2000)

The plan strengthens our capacity to respond in the unlikely event of an accident by adding more primary environmental response teams to bolster Coast Guard capacity, by investing in new technologies, and by conducting scientific research to make cleanups more effective. As well, we reopened the Kitsilano Coast Guard station that was shuttered by the Harper Conservatives.

In approving TMX, our government also looked at the economic benefits it would bring to Canadians, and they are significant. This is a \$7.4-billion infrastructure project that will create thousands of good-paying middle-class jobs right across the country.

The Prime Minister and I were in Fort McMurray just a number of days ago. We met with workers onsite. We met with CEOs. We met people, Canadians, from coast to coast to coast who were in Alberta using their energy and using their capacity to help what we believe to be true. It is that the future of the energy sector in Canada is vital for our growth as a nation.

We also need to expand our world markets. Ninety-nine percent of all of our exports in oil and gas go to one country, the United States. The Trans Mountain expansion will enable us to open up new markets in the world at a better price, which will benefit not only the people of Alberta but also all those Canadians who understand that attracting public investment from other places is in the interests of our economy and of our future. The benefits to the GDP will be staggering.

Those are the reasons we approved TMX. Those are the facts that led us to decide that this project was good for Canada.

It will not be news to members of this House that pipelines, any pipelines, are controversial. These are not easy issues, and good people, in good faith, can disagree. The truth is that many Canadians understand that there must be a balance. They understand the economic benefits but want assurances that the environment will be protected. They see both sides.

I understand and appreciate the views put forward by the governments of both British Columbia and Alberta. They are elected to represent the interests of their constituents as best they see them. However, there is only one Government of Canada, and the Government of Canada has determined that this project is good for Canada and is in the national interest.

The stakes are high, and we are determined. We will not give up the wealth that TMX will create for Canadian families and communities. We will not leave Canadian resources without access to world markets. We will not continue to accept less than fair value for Canada's energy. We know that most Canadians will agree.

As well, we will not sow uncertainty among global investors contemplating resource projects in British Columbia or elsewhere in Canada. We must be steadfast in our commitment not only to protect the environment but to grow the economy, and we are clearly signalling that Canada is open for business.

Just as importantly, we will not forgo the vital role TMX can play in making Canada a leader in the clean growth century. Instead, we will use this time to Canada's advantage, building the infrastructure to get our resources to global markets and using the revenues they generate to invest in our energy future. The project is too important a part of that plan.

So too is ratifying the Paris Accord, putting a price on carbon, investing in clean technology and infrastructure, accelerating the phase-out of coal, creating a low carbon fuel standard, regulating methane emissions, and, together with our provincial and territorial colleagues, developing a national plan for combatting climate change.

We believe that this project is vital for the future of the Canadian economy to give confidence to investors that Canada is a place that understands the balance between environmental stewardship and economic growth, a country that understands that energy and the capacity to harness energy in all of its diversity that we are blessed as Canadians to have inherited will put us in a place to lead the world.

● (2005)

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the minister for his great speech. There is nothing in that speech that I can disagree with. It was basically a history of how we got here.

What we are looking for, though, are the concrete actions that the minister is going to take today to make sure that this project does not end. I know the minister likes to run away from questions like this, but we are six weeks away from the project being at an end. We are looking for some concrete actions. We want to hear a plan on how we are going to get at least one foot of this pipeline built.

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Hon. Jim Carr: Mr. Speaker, I am sure the hon. member has watched, or read reports with respect to, the Prime Minister's meeting yesterday with the premiers of Alberta and British Columbia. He might have even seen the press conference where the Prime Minister was unswerving in his commitment to have the pipeline built in terms that will reassure those who are concerned about the uncertainty that has been generated into this discussion by others. He also would have learned that the Prime Minister has tasked the Minister of Finance to enter into financial discussions with Kinder Morgan. We understand that time is of the essence, we understand that certainty is required, and we will take full advantage of the time that is available to us to ensure that this project is built.

Mr. Fin Donnelly (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am from Port Moody—Coquitlam, which is a riding right on the Fraser River, one of the greatest salmon rivers on the planet.

The planned Kinder Morgan pipeline will go right through my riding and right under this river, so I have a simple question for the minister: How is bailing out a Texas-based multinational oil company in the national interest, but protecting our environment for future generations is not?

Hon. Jim Carr: Mr. Speaker, I am confident in saying that this government and this party are the only ones in this House who understand exactly that we can develop good jobs in the energy sector while protecting the environment.

We hear from the New Democrats about the importance of the environment, yet we do not hear very often about the importance of creating good jobs. By the way, I am sure my hon. friend knows there are thousands of union members who stand to benefit from building the Trans Mountain expansion. I am sure he realizes that it was the energy of working men and women and their families that built pipelines before, and who maybe even built this very pipeline that has been carrying diluted bitumen for 30 years and has been operational since 1953.

We do understand the balance between environmental stewardship and economic growth—

● (2010)

The Speaker: Questions and comments, the hon. member for Bow River.

Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, during my colleague's speech, I had someone sitting beside me who said that he sounded like an Albertan. That could be all right. At least he is from the Prairies. We sort of consider Manitoba part of the Prairies.

When we talk about the pipeline, the governor of Washington State was very rich when he came out supporting the opposition to it at the same time that the United States and Washington State realized that the Alaskan fields are depleted and are now building pipelines and rails from the Bakken fields to Washington State to build more refinery capacity in Washington State.

The minister is talking about plans, but in six weeks, will we see one inch of pipe built?

Hon. Jim Carr: Mr. Speaker, the government has been clear that it will work with the proponent, and perhaps with others, to ensure that the uncertainty that has been created by the Government of

British Columbia is given enough certainty in order to justify a significant new investment into this pipeline.

The policy goals of the government could not be clearer, for reasons that I am sure we would agree on: we need the better price, we need the jobs, we need the expansion of export markets, we need the protection of the coast, and we need more co-developed programs with indigenous people.

All of the necessary work that should have been done to prepare this pipeline and to bring Canadians with us has been done. We are certain the pipeline will be built.

Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to participate in this emergency debate.

The Prime Minister has said repeatedly, and reaffirmed on Sunday, that the Trans Mountain pipeline will be constructed.

Interprovincial pipelines are the responsibility of the federal government, and when making decisions on interprovincial pipeline projects, it is the Government of Canada's duty to act in the national interest. That is exactly what happened when we approved the \$7.4 billion Trans Mountain expansion pipeline.

It is worth reviewing the process that was undertaken in order to remind Canadians that the decision to approve the project was taken only after careful review, extensive consultations, and thoughtful deliberation based on sound science and Canada's best interests. I would like to highlight some of that tonight.

When our government took office, we committed to reviewing and reforming the way the federal government makes decisions with respect to major projects. In February of this year, we introduced Bill C-69, the impact assessment act, which would accomplish exactly that through better rules to protect our environment, fish, and waterways; rebuild public trust and respect indigenous rights; strengthen our economy; and encourage investment.

We also committed not to send projects already under review back to the starting line.

That is why we implemented an interim approach to address projects that were then in the queue, such as Trans Mountain. That interim approach was based on five guiding principles, principles such as expanding public consultations, enhancing indigenous engagement, and assessing upstream greenhouse gas emissions associated with projects.

As part of this, our government appointed a special ministerial panel of distinguished Canadians, who travelled the length of the proposed pipeline route, ensuring indigenous peoples and local communities were thoroughly canvassed and heard.

On the TMX expansion, we also completed the most in-depth consultations with rights holders ever undertaken on a major project in Canada. To date, 43 first nations have negotiated impact benefit agreements with the project, 33 of those in British Columbia. In the end, the project was approved with 157 conditions that reflected these consultations, robust scientific evidence, and the national interest.

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The economic benefits of this project are clear. It would create thousands of construction jobs and countless more spinoff jobs in every part of the country. It would generate billions of dollars in new government revenues over 20 years of operation, new tax dollars to help pay for our hospitals and our schools, build new roads and safer bridges, and help fund Canada's transition to a low carbon future. The project would also open up new economic opportunities for the 43 indigenous communities that have signed more than \$300 million in impact benefit agreements along the pipeline's route.

However, we should not look at the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion in isolation. We also need to consider how the pipeline will fit in with our government's overall vision for Canada in this clean growth century and how this government has responded to legitimate concerns of Canadians, in particular those who live in the British Columbia Lower Mainland, those being issues relating to spill prevention and climate change.

We have signed the Paris Accord on climate change. We have worked hard with the provinces and territories to develop the pan-Canadian framework on clean growth and climate change, a plan that lays out Canada's clear path to achieving our targets under the Paris Accord.

At the same time, our government is putting a price on carbon, accelerating the phase-out of coal, promoting energy efficiency, regulating methane emissions, creating a low carbon fuel standard, and making generational investments in clean technology, renewable energy, and green infrastructure.

The pan-Canadian framework incorporates all of the upstream and direct emissions associated with the Trans Mountain pipeline. Its greenhouse gases are also well within the 100-megatonne cap on oil sands that was brought in by Alberta's NDP government. It is complemented by the most ambitious oceans protection plan in our country's history, a \$1.5 billion investment to protect our waters, coastline, and marine life.

The oceans protection plan builds on and maximizes every possible safeguard against an oil spill happening in the first place. Measures include air surveillance, double-hulled tankers, and double pilotage.

Kinder Morgan must provide enhanced tanker escorts using tethered and un-tethered tugboats beyond the Lions Gate Bridge into the Strait of Juan de Fuca to Canada's 12-mile nautical limit. New, larger vessels are being purchased for this purpose, as tugs of this size are not currently available on the west coast.

We have made the largest investment in the Canadian Coast Guard in years, strengthening its eyes and ears to ensure better communication with vessels and making navigation safer by putting more enforcement officers on the coast and adding new radar sites in strategic locations.

An important example of this was our decision to reopen the Kitsilano Coast Guard base with new rescue boats and specialized pollution response capabilities, and we are funding more scientific research and new technologies to make cleanups even more effective.

● (2015)

The House should note that it was the previous Harper Conservative government that announced the immediate closure of the only Coast Guard station located in Canada's busiest harbour in Vancouver. That is their record when it comes to protecting B.C.'s coasts.

Our approach is world class, an approach that meets or exceeds the gold star standards set by places such as Norway. Our government has been very clear about the path forward regarding this project. We can and must protect our environment and communities while growing our economy. Our approval of the Trans Mountain expansion project, along with measures that will enable our oceans and coastal communities to remain healthy and safe, achieves these goals.

As we have said before, federal jurisdiction with respect to the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion project is very clear, and we are actively pursuing options to provide the certainty required for this project to move ahead. As the Prime Minister said yesterday, we will have more to say in the coming weeks.

Some will take issue with our government's approach, and we respect that. We are lucky to live in an open society where people with different views can debate them respectfully and choose to protest peacefully and lawfully.

Our government will continue to listen and work hard on behalf of all Canadians to ensure that the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion is completed and that it moves forward safely and responsibly.

Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the speeches of the minister and the parliamentary secretary and heard the rhetoric around the Liberals saying they are supportive of the Kinder Morgan pipeline. They talked about successful pipelines that they have approved, but I want to list the ones that have not gone through under their watch. The northern gateway is one of them. Pacific NorthWest was a huge project along our B.C. coastline, which would have provided clean energy to Asia. That is another failed project. Energy east is another project where we would have supplied Canadian oil to Canadian consumers in Ontario and eastern Canada. That is another failure. Now Kinder Morgan is on the bubble.

We had a trade show this weekend in Fort St. John where I talked to two former teacher colleagues of mine. One son is a welder in the industry and he has a young child. That person is relying on jobs like this to make sure his children are fed and have a good future. He is 25 years old, and his name is Neacail. He is a real person.

We have heard a lot of rhetoric about this being done, but I lack the confidence, as do many other Canadians. We have seen three leaders who were previously opposed to oil and natural resource development in our country meet and supposedly solve the problem. We do not have a lot of confidence in the three anti-resource development people who have met and had a conversation. I want to see proof.

S. O. 52

For the minister and for the other side, what are you prepared to do to see that this project goes ahead?

● (2020)

The Speaker: I would remind the hon. member for Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies to address his comments to the Chair and not use “you” unless he is referring to the Speaker.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson: Mr. Speaker, as I said, we have been very clear that in the modern world the economy and the environment need to go together. We have worked very hard to ensure we have understood the concerns that have been expressed from an environmental perspective, and we have addressed those in thoughtful and substantive ways.

This project will create thousands of jobs. It will create billions of dollars in tax revenues and other associated economic spinoffs. It is in the national interest. The government has addressed those concerns. We have said that we are moving ahead. The Prime Minister has indicated that a range of options are presently under consideration to provide the certainty that is required, and we will ensure that this project is constructed.

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the parliamentary secretary for his speech. We have a good collegial relationship in the House, and he has helped me on various other matters.

However, he would agree that we are here tonight because there is a profound lack of confidence by Canadians in the energy regulation process, especially the process that deals with pipelines and other projects. Nanos Research has figures that show that only 2% of Canadians have strong confidence in that process. The minister said that the government has restored confidence, when in fact that confidence has been declining through the past two governments.

We have hundreds of thousands of British Columbians who are opposed to this project. There are tens of thousands of people who have indicated they are not only opposed to the project, but they are willing to commit civil disobedience, to go to jail to stop this project.

I am wondering if the member can tell us what his government will be doing to assure those people, to restore their confidence, so that this project goes ahead despite everything else they do. We have to get at that lack of confidence.

Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson: Mr. Speaker, the issue of confidence in the environmental assessment processes was something we talked a lot about during the last campaign. It was eroded under the previous government when it made a range of changes in 2012 that undermined the public confidence in the system.

We had committed to introduce new environmental assessment processes, which we did about a month ago in the House of Commons. They are the subject of conversation at the committees. We also said that we are not going to be in a position to simply park the economy for four years. That is not a responsible thing for any government to do. I would suggest that the NDP should consider the implications of that.

What we said was that we needed to ensure that, in the interim, projects were not being sent back to the beginning but that there was

additional work that needed to be done. We appointed a process to go through additional consultation with communities, with rights holders. We ensured that greenhouse gas emissions were calculated in the context of every project. We did that.

We have addressed the concerns, and we intend to ensure that this project goes ahead.

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, let me pick up on what the parliamentary secretary said. This is not the way that he said it during the campaign. This is not what he said on his campaign website during the electoral campaign. What he said on his website was, “A new, independent, evidence-based process must be established. The Kinder Morgan expansion project must satisfy this new rigorous review...”

There has been no new rigorous review. This is at the core of the problem we are facing now. We are currently undergoing an emergency debate, and the Liberals only have themselves to blame. They spent the whole electoral campaign in 2015 talking about the need to redo the environmental assessment process and that we needed to ensure there would be a more rigorous process in place which Kinder Morgan, the Trans Mountain project, would have to undergo.

The Liberals have failed to fulfill this promise. They have failed to meet the hope that people, especially in British Columbia, have in the government. This is the crux of the problem right now. We have hundreds of people who are protesting against the construction of this pipeline. We have a government that is musing sometimes about the possibility of sending the army to face them. This makes no sense.

Not only did the Liberals promise during the campaign that the Trans Mountain project would undergo a new environmental assessment process, it was said extensively. The Prime Minister has said since 2013, since he was the leader of the Liberal Party, that governments grant permits and communities grant permission.

This is what the party that is now in government has said for five years. Now what we have in this House is a competition between both the government and the official opposition to see who will be the biggest booster of this project, without taking into account what the people in British Columbia are thinking about and saying. They do not trust the government. They do not trust the process.

● (2025)

[*Translation*]

I understand the situation because we dealt with the same problem when we talked about the energy east pipeline for Quebec. I seriously doubt that this government would have had the guts to do to Quebec what it is currently doing to British Columbia. It is not a matter of war between the two provinces. Alberta Premier Rachel Notley is doing what she thinks she needs to do to protect her economy and the interests of her people. That is why she was elected. The premier of British Columbia is doing the same thing.

S. O. 52

[English]

Let me be clear. John Horgan was elected on the basis of the opposition he has of the process that is currently pushing this project down the throats of the provinces.

[Translation]

We have been talking a lot about how the economy and the environment go hand in hand. We, on this side of the House, have been saying that for years and possibly even decades. The government decided to adopt that approach. That is fine.

[English]

What has dawned on me in this debate is that the government says we cannot talk about the economy without talking about the environment. We agree in principle, but it is a very convenient excuse for the Liberals. Every time that we ask them a question about the environment and the environmental consequences, they reply that we do not know about the economy. Then, when other questions are about the economy and the jobs being created, they talk about the importance of the environment. Let us be consistent here.

We have a crisis of the government's own making because during 2015, the Liberals were basically hunting for votes. They promised that we would have a new electoral system in place and that 2015 would be the last time for a first-past-the-post election. That was false. They promised everything they could to be in the position they are in. They cannot blame the official opposition and the NDP for the mess they have themselves created by raising those expectations.

I see a lot of British Columbia MPs here. They will have a significant challenge, an uphill battle, in 2019. Their constituents, especially those around Burnaby and Vancouver, will ensure that the government will be reminded of the promises from 2015 that they broke.

I talked about the promises we heard from the parliamentary secretary during the 2015 election. Let us hear about the Liberal MP for Burnaby North—Seymour. He is now the parliamentary secretary for fisheries and oceans. He said during the election that they were going to redo the National Energy Board process and that Kinder Morgan would have to go through a new revised process. Consistently in British Columbia, Liberals were elected on this commitment. Why do they think people are at the gate now? Why are they surprised?

[Translation]

That does not make any sense. We are in this situation partly because of the changes that the Conservative government of the time made to the environmental assessment process in 2012. The process was not perfect, but at least the provinces were a lot more involved than they are now. I know that Quebec and British Columbia were far more involved than they are now in the process that the Conservatives put in place.

● (2030)

[English]

Mr. Speaker, I am also reminded that I will be splitting my time with the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley, which is something I

should not have forgotten. I am sure he will have interesting things to say as well after I am finished.

[Translation]

The process we had in 2012 was not ideal, but it got the job done. I was in Parliament back then. Then the Conservatives made changes that cut down the time available to conduct studies and hold consultations as well as the number of stakeholders allowed to express their views on projects. After all that, it was no wonder people objected to this project. I know because I represent a riding right next to Cacusna, where there was a proposal to build an oil terminal that would have endangered marine animals, especially belugas. The proposal was flawed, but there was an attempt to force it through, and the people reacted. The first thing people realized was that there were precious few opportunities for them to air their views on this issue. That is what the Liberals were supposed to change. It is also what we promised to change if we took office, but they refused to actually do it.

[English]

What we have right now is a crisis, because the Liberals failed to fulfill the election promises they made, and people have noticed.

This is not a simple matter. As the Prime Minister said, it may eventually become a constitutional matter, because in his mind it is clear that the federal government has the sole responsibility for this, and it can impose a decision on any province that does not agree. This reminds me a lot of what his father was saying at the time. However, if we pursue that logic to the extent of it, then what does it mean for first nations and indigenous people? If the government feels that it has the sole responsibility, the sole power in implementing and pushing a project like this, that means it will have the sole power in pushing it down the throat of indigenous people as well. This is a very dangerous path that the government is pushing forward.

We have proposed a sensible solution that will be more collaborative than what the government is promising right now. I encourage the government to go in that direction and seek an agreement with British Columbia, which is already on board, with first nations and indigenous people, and with Alberta, to seek clarity at the Supreme Court of Canada and ensure whether this is really the sole responsibility of the government, and whether the environmental laws of the provinces matter or do not matter. The previous decisions of the Supreme Court were not linked to a project so controversial and so misaligned with provincial desires. I think it would be wise for the government to listen to this advice.

Mr. Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my colleague across the way said that there has to be community consent and community buy-in, and I completely agree.

What about the 42 indigenous communities that have signed on? What about the company that has actually engaged with them? There are 30 indigenous communities in British Columbia that have signed beneficial agreements and are now counting on them. Does that not count as community consent?

S. O. 52

The companies that work with these communities are given instructions to work with them to get their involvement and buy-in. After doing all these steps, after getting through the NEB process, not once but twice, what is the answer to those 42 communities that have committed and signed beneficial agreements, including 30 in British Columbia?

Mr. Guy Caron: Mr. Speaker, what about the City of Burnaby? What about the cities that are in the path of this pipeline as well? If we are talking about consent, let us go to the fullest extent of what it means.

What we are seeing right now, with the message that the government is sending, is that for this project the government is reacting. The Liberals are very nervous that it might not pass, and they have been fighting with the Conservatives to see who the biggest booster of this project is and who can actually implement it as fast as possible.

Let us make no mistake. When the Prime Minister is telling us in the House, and all Canadians, that the government will have the power to enforce the implementation of this project and that it is the sole level of government that can do so, this means nothing for the consent that is being sought. It means nothing for the guarantees of reconciliation for first nations in the future, and it means nothing for the communities that have legitimate questions about the potential dangers and risks of those projects.

• (2035)

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member has been given a lot responsibility by his leader, Jagmeet Singh, who has expressed various views on this.

As a British Columbian, I have concerns, especially when I hear from my constituents who are also concerned, that members of this place are participating in contravening court orders. One of the member's caucus who has participated is facing sanctions in front of a court.

I would like to know if the member's leader, Jagmeet Singh, has instructed this gentleman to work with his caucus to make sure that, as members of Parliament, we can have debates about the laws of this country but we will not violate them. We cannot be in both streams. This is not a question of democracy. It is not a question of constitutionality. It is respect for the rule of law. Has Mr. Singh put an edict out for his caucus to support the rule of law and not participate in future protests that violate it?

Mr. Guy Caron: Mr. Speaker, we are all grown adults here. We all make our own decisions, and we all assume responsibility for those decisions. That is the case in this House, and that is the case outside of this House. What I can say about the protests that are taking place right now is that the people who are protesting what is going on are acting out of genuine concern. This concern has not been adequately responded to by the government, and I would submit that, at the time, this was the case for the previous government as well.

Instead of once again using the force of law and order to try to force a decision, why do we not try to get the input of those who are going to be at the receiving end of that decision? This is really at the core of the problem right now. These people do not feel that they

have been listened to, and honestly, with the process that we have, they have not. They have not been listened to. The new process that was put in place, and that is still in place right now for the Trans Mountain project, was a process that was hurried, and it rejected a large number of people who wanted to speak about it, to present, and to intervene. People do not feel that they have been listened to because the intent was to try to speed up this project as much as possible, and this is what we have right now. We have hundreds or thousands of people opposing it actively and this will not be going away, so we might as well try to find a way to get along with it. This is why I am suggesting that the government go to the Supreme Court of Canada with Alberta, B.C., and first nations.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I enter this debate, which is an emergency debate, as many have called this situation with the Kinder Morgan proposal a crisis. For many Canadians, it does represent a crisis. Actually, from both sides, if we want to take at least two sides of the issue, it is a crisis.

For those who are in Alberta and in the energy sector seeking to move product to market, particularly Asian markets, this represents a crisis of uncertainty and frustration with a process that was promised to be different. This actually unites them with the people on the other side of this issue, who were promised a better process and more clarity about rights and title for indigenous Canadians, about protection for our environment, and about some understanding of how the environment and the economy go together, which the Liberals constantly talk about.

I represent northwestern British Columbia, and for many of the people I represent this is a movie they have seen before. When northern gateway was first proposed, it met with stiff and consistent resistance, as the voices of those who had legitimate questions about the project and about the safety of our rivers and our ocean environment were rejected and refused. They were not allowed to testify. In fact, they were called, by their own government, enemies of the state and foreign-funded radicals. Do we hear some similar rhetoric brewing up again, that those who dare to ask questions or pose significant concerns over something that potentially threatens their lives and communities are somehow un-Canadian?

Now, the Liberals came in on a promise to do better than Stephen Harper. When it comes to the environment in particular, that does not seem like it would be all that hard to do. When Stephen Harper was in office, he gutted some of our most fundamental environmental protections, which had existed for decades. The bar was set very low. He put in place climate change targets that the Liberals called ridiculous and unsatisfactory, the same climate targets that the Liberals cannot even meet now, and the environmental process that these pipelines were going through rejected the claims of first nations and ignored significant and basic concerns.

S. O. 52

I say to my colleague and friend, the natural resources minister, that he and his government cannot answer a question such as whether bitumen sinks when it hits salt water or fresh water, and how, for God's sake, one cleans it up if it does. They cannot answer that question. They could not answer it when northern gateway was proposed in northern British Columbia. They still cannot answer it, years later, when they are pushing their Kinder Morgan project forward in the south of British Columbia.

How dare the premier of my province pose such questions? In the event of an oil spill like the Kalamazoo spill, or an accident on the sea like that of *Nathan E. Stewart*, or the one that happened in Vancouver harbour, where it took 14 hours to find booms, when my premier asks how exactly we clean up an oil spill when it hits our coastline, that is his jurisdictional responsibility as a premier. Does everyone believe in the rule of law? Yes, we do. Is it the premier's responsibility to protect that on behalf of British Columbians? Yes, it is. Would the Liberals like to go to the Supreme Court and clarify that? No, they would not. "Let us not clarify those questions," say the Liberals, because they believe in the Constitution and the rule of law, except for the parts they do not want to observe and acknowledge.

We find this frustrating, because this new bitumen proposal would move almost 900,000 barrels to our coast, with 12 new pump stations, 19 storage units, and a 700% increase in oil tanker traffic through a place we all recognize as a precious and important part of the world. It is as if, when British Columbians stand for place and pride of place and home, they are somehow less Canadian. To my Alberta friends and colleagues, to my family from Alberta, we understand pride of home, defence of family, and hope for the future. That is exactly the same conversation we are having in British Columbia.

The Prime Minister, who came in on the hope and aspiration to unite and not divide, says that of course the Liberals would rather do it with the provincial government, but they will do it whether the provincial government likes it or not. His minister says that they will not tolerate opposition in the House of Commons. They would rather work with the provinces, but if not, they are going to do it anyway.

● (2040)

The Liberals say that they believe in the rights and title of first nations individuals. However, when the Minister of Natural Resources himself gets a briefing in January from his own department that tells him that consultations with first nations in British Columbia have been "paternalistic", "inadequate", and "unrealistic", the Liberals are suddenly surprised that they are in court with first nations over this little tack-on consultation process. Some of the first nation communities were not notified until after the consultation had moved through their communities. This was the consultation process, and this is what is being challenged in court.

I have news for the Liberals. They are going to lose that challenge. The Delgamuukw, Haida, Sparrow, and Tsilqhot'in have tested this question time and time again. Governments in Canada insist on relearning the lesson over and over again and somehow blame first nations for standing up for their constitutional rights. It is the government and the Liberal Prime Minister who said that there is no more important relationship to Canada than that with Canada's first

nations people. I challenge that. I do not believe him anymore. I did believe him at one point.

When asked specifically on tape what he would do with the Kinder Morgan project, the Prime Minister said the review would be redone. Two and half years later, we have omnibus environmental legislation that has somehow unified environmentalists, oil activists, and first nations in their dislike of this bill. Congratulations, there is some unity bone within the Conservatives. I mean the Liberals. Excuse me. I am confused tonight as I watch them violently agree with one another as to who is the best promoter of a project that has significant and real consequences, significant and real risks that the people of British Columbia face on behalf of all Canadians. All Canadians like coming out to B.C. The Prime Minister loves to surf. My Alberta family loves to fish. We love welcoming Canada to British Columbia and our beautiful coast. We love talking about how much British Columbia has to offer.

This question of reconciliation, a word that falls so easily from the lips of the Prime Minister but is so rarely enacted with any kind of meaning or effectiveness, is frustrating to people in British Columbia, because we believed him when he said he would redo the process. We believed him when he said the government would set more ambitious climate targets. We believed him when he said he was going to work to unite the provinces, not seek to divide. He is actually making the claim that by posing significant questions about an oil pipeline, the Premier of British Columbia is somehow ruining the climate change program of the country. Only in Canada could an oil pipeline for almost 900,000 barrels a day be vital to a climate change program. Only in Canada could the Prime Minister stand up to a premier who was duly elected on the promise to raise these questions and to raise the voices of British Columbians. We have a country and a situation in which we are somehow less than.

This question goes to the heart of who we are as a nation. If we want to do better and achieve what we set out to do to bring the country together and finally and fully reconcile with first nations people, then we have to listen. They should not list off the number of meetings and then ignore what people said. They should not list off the word "consultation" over and over again, yet not abide by the serious concerns or address and answer legitimate and important questions put to the government.

It is our coast, and we will defend it. If the government has any doubt in its mind about the seriousness, diligence, and determination of the people of British Columbia, it is beginning to find out. I ask it to not find out any more and to listen and refer the question to the Supreme Court. Work with the Premier of British Columbia, stop bullying him, and understand that when we stand up for our coast and for future generations, we are standing up for all Canadians.

S. O. 52

• (2045)

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey—Newton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member from Skeena—Bulkley Valley mentioned indigenous communities and first nations. Ernie Crey, Chief of the Cheam First Nation, said, “If this project doesn't go through it will hurt our people. It appears that Premier Horgan is prepared to actively undermine the prosperity of First Nations in B.C.”

It is not only going to undermine the prosperity of B.C. first nations. In fact, when I look at my constituency of Surrey—Newton, 1,000 people are moving into Surrey every month. Surrey needs a hospital. Surrey needs bridges. Premier Horgan has promised a hospital for Surrey.

Would not the billions of dollars British Columbians would get in revenue help the people in Surrey with their prosperity and in building hospitals and bridges?

• (2050)

Mr. Nathan Cullen: Mr. Speaker, the federal Liberals stand up and say that we are standing in the way of first nations' prosperity, while they are ignoring the rights and title of first nations people to be self-determinists and to make decisions for themselves, with their inherent rights and title intact, as promised in section 35 of our own Constitution. It is a section the NDP fought for, against the wishes of Trudeau senior, who did not believe that there was any need to recognize individual, and particularly first nation, rights and title. When they say to first nation people, in what has been described by their own officials as a “paternalistic” way, that this is the way forward, that we do not have to acknowledge or take into full account the rights and title of first nation people, does he not understand that it continues the colonial spirit that has so often undermined the full value and potential of this country?

Of course, there are first nation people interested in this project, as there are first nation people opposed. However, one does not get to selectively quote and then say that the problem must be a wash. That is not how rights work. Rights work in our courts and in our fundamental belief in the inherent strength of our Constitution. We either believe in it or we do not. We do not get to selectively choose which part and who speaks for it. That is why the B.C. government has backed up that first nation claim. That is why the Prime Minister, who claims to believe in UNDRIP, should be doing the same thing, as opposed to what he is doing right now.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, through you, I address my question to the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley.

This is my first chance to take the floor in the debate tonight. With the indulgence of my friend from Skeena—Bulkley Valley, let me first say that the Minister of Natural Resources misspoke when he said that the Kinder Morgan pipeline has been delivering dilbit for 30 years. It has not. It used to be the Trans Mountain pipeline, which delivered a completely different product, one destined for four refineries in the Lower Mainland. There is only one refinery left. It cannot process dilbit. Dilbit has only been transferred since Kinder Morgan, a creation of Enron, Enron Liquid Pipelines Company renamed, bought Trans Mountain. Shipping dilbit is a relatively new phenomenon. It is true that they ship dilbit out right now. That

product is not landlocked. It can get to Asia, though Asia does not want to buy it very much.

Let me put to the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley this question. We know that there are 157 conditions right now from the National Energy Board, and Kinder Morgan has not completed more than about 100 of them. We know that there is a consolidated court case that challenges the legality of the permits. We know that there are approximately 1,100 provincial permits the B.C. government is processing, but 600 have not been requested yet. Can the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley imagine any way in which this project could go ahead by May 31, given the work Kinder Morgan is supposed to do?

Mr. Nathan Cullen: Mr. Speaker, I have heard the Minister of Natural Resources, and the Prime Minister before, laud the conditions that are attached to the approval of this project. Many of these conditions, like how they clean up a spill, are not actually followed through by the National Energy Board, as was reported in an audit by our environment commissioner. He studied many of these pipelines, asking how many of the conditions the government attaches and tells Canadians not to worry about are actually followed through on. A little less than half the conditions are actually ever followed. Anyone who is placing bets on the Liberals' assurance on these conditions should know that, given recent history, about half of them will never be implemented or used by the company.

Hon. Amarjeet Sohi (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Edmonton Centre.

Let me start by sharing an experience I had meeting with the oil workers in Fort McMurray. The Prime Minister, the Minister of Natural Resources, and I visited that community a couple of weeks ago. We ran into a number of workers who take pride in the work they do. They come from all over Canada. They are from the Atlantic provinces, from Ontario. I sat down with some of the workers who come from British Columbia who work in the energy sector. They take pride in the work they do. They take pride, because the work they do helps them feed their families and put their children through school to get a better education. They take pride that the work they do helps them save enough for retirement.

The workers also take pride because the work they do generates revenues for the government so that it can provide the services Canadians rely on, such as better hospitals, better schools, a public transportation system, clean water for communities to drink, affordable housing people need to succeed in their lives, and shelters for women who face domestic violence so they have a safe place to live. They help us build better infrastructure and welcoming and inclusive places for all of us to call home. I experienced that pride. I experience that pride each and every day when I interact with workers throughout this country on my visits from coast to coast to coast.

S. O. 52

I am a proud Albertan, and I am proud that after extensive consultations, our government approved the Trans Mountain expansion pipeline. I want to reaffirm and assure everyone watching today that we will get this pipeline built. We will get it built, because this pipeline is in the national interest and because this pipeline will create thousands and thousands of well-paying jobs for Albertans, for British Columbians, and for Canadians. This is a pipeline that will allow us to take our resources to non-U.S., international markets so we can get a proper price for our natural resources to help pay for the services and programs that those working for the companies, the workers I interacted with, are so proud to have.

I would like to remind the members opposite, the members of the previous Stephen Harper government, how they failed to advance the interests of Alberta's resource sector. For 10 years, the Harper Conservatives talked a good talk but failed to build a single pipeline to take our oil resources to non-U.S. markets. I would also like to remind them that the struggles Alberta families and workers have faced over the last number of years started when Harper was in power. More than 25,000 resource sector jobs were lost in the last year of the Harper government. What did the Conservatives do to help those workers? Absolutely nothing. They even held back the infrastructure investment of nearly \$1 billion that would have made a difference in people's lives at a time of need.

When we took office, we started changing that. Our government immediately started looking for solutions to support Alberta's workers and families and to help the provincial economy rebound.

● (2055)

In March of 2016, we provided \$252 million in fiscal stabilization funding to the Government of Alberta. At the same time, we significantly extended EI benefits for Alberta workers who needed them the most.

In February 2016, Export Development Canada provided \$750 million in financing, guarantees, bonding instruments, and insurance to oil and gas companies.

In July 2016, Business Development Bank of Canada and ATB Financial partnered to provide \$1 billion aimed at making more capital available for small and medium-sized businesses in Alberta.

In March 2017, our government announced \$30 million, which unlocked \$235 million to accelerate the cleanup of orphaned wells over the next three years.

My department, Infrastructure Canada, has provided support to more than 150 provincial, municipal, and indigenous infrastructure projects, which are leading to over \$4 billion in joint investments in infrastructure in the coming years for Alberta communities.

These measures have helped the Alberta economy rebound. In the last 12 months, Alberta has gained 50,000 full-time jobs and the unemployment rate is at the lowest point in almost three years.

We know that more work needs to be done and we know that the oil and gas sector has an important role to play in keeping this momentum going. That is why our government approved two oil and two gas pipelines, including the Trans Mountain expansion, which will help get more of our resources to the markets we already have

and open up new markets so we are not so reliant on our neighbours to the south to buy our oil.

Our government supports the Trans Mountain expansion, as well as the Keystone XL pipeline because we know they mean a better price for oil and more well-paying jobs for Canadians. However, we also know that TMX is not just important to Alberta. We approved this pipeline because it was in the national interest of Canada. It is in the national interest of Canada to create thousands of well-paying jobs, not only for Albertans but across the country.

It is in the best interest of Canada to find more efficient and safer ways to transport natural resources to the markets. It is in the interest of Canada to receive a fairer price for those resources than is possible when we essentially have only one customer. It is in the interest of Canada to partner with indigenous communities with respect and recognition of their rights, and ensure traditional knowledge is integrated into our decisions. It is in the interest of Canada to develop our natural resources in a way that does not compromise the environment.

In fact, in the 21st century, the only way to have a dynamic economy is to ensure a sustainable environment. That is why our government introduced the \$1.5 billion oceans protection plan. This plan to safeguard the health and safety of our coastal communities and sensitive marine areas is the most significant investment Canada has ever made in protecting our oceans. It is also why Canadians feel confident that the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion would not jeopardize B.C.'s beautiful coastlines.

There are first nations that are going to benefit from this, but most important, this project is necessary because it is in Canada's national interest.

Let me remind Canadians that the leader of the official opposition today mentioned to the media that he did not believe that taxpayer money should be used to fund infrastructure projects. We cannot agree with that statement. As the Minister of Infrastructure, I can assure people that there are a number of projects in the official opposition leader's riding that are being funded by public sector investments, that public dollars are being used to build transportation systems in our cities, and public dollars are being used to build waste water and clean water systems and other infrastructure that our communities need.

● (2100)

Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague and I share some common background and past experiences.

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The minister talks a lot about investment in infrastructure by the federal government to the province. I know that he directed funding to the province, and municipalities were promised hundreds of millions of dollars. Then, all of a sudden, hundreds and hundreds of millions directed to municipalities went into general revenue for the provincial government, and it was done by his friend.

When you talk about infrastructure going to the provinces to build things, and the provinces take money, directed to them by you, and turn it into general revenue, how do we get things built in the municipalities?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I am sure the hon. member for Bow River did not mean I was giving the money, but he meant the government and the minister.

The hon. minister.

• (2105)

Hon. Amarjeet Sohi: Mr. Speaker, I have a tremendous amount of respect for my colleague. We worked together on the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association.

I can assure the hon. member and every person in Alberta that the federal dollars allocated for infrastructure projects only go to infrastructure projects and nothing else.

I am proud to say that we were able to sign a bilateral agreement with the Province of Alberta a couple of weeks ago, investing \$3.2 billion of federal funding to help grow our economy, create jobs for the middle class, and also provide opportunities for those Canadians who work hard each and every day to be part of the middle class, provide more affordable housing for families that are struggling to pay high rents, or to build more early learning and child care facilities so our young people have opportunities to learn and succeed.

Those are the investments we are making in Alberta, British Columbia, and throughout the country to ensure that people are able to succeed.

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the minister talked a lot about the oceans protection plan.

When it comes to ocean plastics and marine debris, a regulatory void, it is not even mentioned in the oceans protection plan. When it comes to oil response, we can see what happened with the bunker fuel spill in English Bay. It took 14 hours for the government to get there. The Heiltsuk can tell the story about what it looked like for a diesel spill in the Heiltsuk territory and how long it took for an oil response to come. In fact, right now they are stopping the building of more oil response facilities because they are saying it is tied to Kinder Morgan.

It is like the coastal communities have a gun to their heads. The government is saying that it will not protect our coast unless we have a pipeline. That is completely ludicrous and irresponsible. What British Columbians and coastal people want is an oceans protection plan that is there no matter what.

The government keeps talking about evidence-based decision-making. Where is the evidence-based decision-making when it comes to cleaning up raw bitumen? The government has not figured that out.

Maybe the minister could speak to it. He says that he has un-muted his scientists and that they can speak freely. Could they show us the science? Could the government bring forward the scientists who can prove that diluted bitumen can be cleaned up in our oceans?

Hon. Amarjeet Sohi: Mr. Speaker, I can understand the anxiety and concerns of British Columbians around oceans protection and marine safety. For the last decade, the government run by Mr. Harper did nothing to protect the environment or provide protection to coastal communities.

We are working with the municipalities. I can share one example, which is somewhat related to cleaning up the oceans. We are working with the city of Victoria, where raw sewage was being dumped into the oceans, to provide the necessary support to clean up the water so it is not dumped into the ocean. There are \$1.5 billion in the oceans protection plan. It is an historic investment. The previous government neglected that for almost a decade.

We are there for British Columbia. We will ensure that we provide the necessary support. We will not punish British Columbians for the actions of their government. We need to make that distinction. If Mr. Horgan is creating this uncertainty, he is eroding confidence in our economy and investor confidence.

We are here to serve Canadians, including British Columbians.

Mr. Randy Boissonnault (Edmonton Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is such an honour to stand in the House to speak to this pressing and vital issue and to share time with my hon. colleague the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, who cares as much about this issue as I and our colleagues from coast to coast to coast do.

In Canada, in 2018 energy, the environment, and the economy are all essential tools for the success of Canadians. As such, tonight's debate touches on an issue that affects every Canadian in every part of the country.

At its heart lies two very clear facts. First, the Trans Mountain expansion pipeline is a crucial project in the national interest and will create thousands of good paying jobs for Canadians. Second, if we want to sell our resources to the world and get better prices for our products, we have to provide access to those markets.

Our government has never wavered in standing behind its decision to approve this project. We tell the same story in Victoria, Edmonton, Calgary, Regina, Winnipeg, Montreal, Toronto, and St. John's.

The Prime Minister has made the case for the TMX in every part of the country on many occasions, and he made it again on Sunday. The Minister of Natural Resources has taken that same message across Canada and around the world. There is simply no doubt that this pipeline is a priority for our government. Our position is clear. The TMX pipeline has been important to Canada since it was originally constructed in 1953 and it will be important to our future. It will be built.

This government has now announced that we will be entering into discussions and exploring legislative options to provide certainty for Trans Mountain. In short, the Canadian people are calling for action to get this essential project built and our government is delivering. The TMX pipeline is a priority for this government and it will be built.

• (2110)

[Translation]

This pipeline expansion will help diversify our markets and create thousands of good middle-class jobs, including jobs in indigenous communities. The project also includes improved environmental safety standards.

As the Minister of Natural Resources pointed out, using this transition period to our advantage, Canada will build the infrastructure needed to get our resources to global markets and use the revenues they generate to invest in clean energy.

[English]

As the Minister of Natural Resources has said, we must leverage the fossil fuel resources we have today to deliver clean energy solutions for tomorrow.

That is why my colleagues, the Parliamentary Secretary for the Minister of Natural Resources and the Parliamentary Secretary for the Environment and Climate Change, and I created the energy and environment caucus early in 2016 to explore these critical issues and to call for an end to the \$40 million a day that our economy was losing and \$13 billion a year because we only had one customer. We need to diversify markets and we need to put Canadians back to work.

That is the same message we heard from Canadians through Generation Energy, an historic national discussion to imagine Canada's energy future for our children's children and their children. I was honoured to represent Edmonton and the citizens of Edmonton Centre at that very conference held in Winnipeg.

Canadians by the hundreds of thousands told us that they wanted a thriving economy. They wanted us to be a leader in clean technology. They wanted an energy system that would provide equal opportunities to Canadians. They also understand that we are in a transition, which means continuing to support our oil and gas industry even as we develop alternative sources of energy.

This is the same approach we are taking as we work with the provinces and territories to develop a Canadian energy strategy, one that seeks common ground and shared purpose, leveraging our traditional resources while promoting renewable new sources of energy, enhancing energy efficiency, and investing in clean technology.

We were under no illusions that everyone would agree with our approval of this project. I have said this before in the House. If a 1,500 square foot apartment complex in my downtown riding cannot get complete agreement, why would we expect that for a 1,500 kilometre pipeline?

While we are determined to get this pipeline built, we are also determined to answer reasonable questions about safety.

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Our government understands and shares British Columbia's sense of responsibility for Canada's spectacular west coast, which is why we took the time to get this decision right, based on the best science and the widest possible consultation.

The Government of British Columbia speaks about wanting to consult. I would point out the broad consultation that has already taken place. The review of the Trans Mountain expansion project was the most exhaustive in the history of energy projects in Canada.

[Translation]

The National Energy Board carefully reviewed the Trans Mountain project and recommended that we approve it on the condition that 157 tough restrictions be met. Moreover, in order to hear from as many voices as possible, the Minister of Natural Resources set up a ministerial panel tasked with organizing additional consultation sessions. The panel held 44 public meetings, heard 600 presentations, and received about 20,000 submissions by email.

[English]

At the same time, we made the single largest investment ever to protect Canada's oceans and coastlines: a \$1.5 billion oceans protection plan that was needed whether the TMX was expanded or not. It is an oceans protection plan that will improve regional plans with key partners, particularly coastal and indigenous communities that have irreplaceable on-the-ground traditional knowledge.

This generational investment in ocean safety addresses concerns about spill prevention and response and provides significant additional protections for Burrard Inlet and the Salish Sea.

In approving TMX, we have also done something unprecedented in Canada: we have co-developed a historic indigenous advisory monitoring committee to help oversee the safety of a major energy project through its entire life cycle.

It is worth making the point that Canada will continue to produce oil and ship it across the country whether new pipelines are built or not; what is indisputable is that pipelines are by far the safest means.

This matters to me. I have rail that runs just to the north of my riding, and one million barrels are shipped a day on that rail. I would prefer to see that in a safe pipe. The Pipeline Safety Act strengthens this by enshrining the principle of polluter pays. It makes companies liable regardless of fault—one billion dollars in the case of major pipelines—and requires them to have the financial resources to respond to potential incidents.

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Once the TMX expansion is up and running, it will give our energy a route to world markets. As the Minister of Natural Resources has said, "...when 99% of your oil goes to one customer, you don't effectively set the price. They do. You're completely reliant on them continuing to buy your product."

However, there is another element at play here—the shale revolution in the U.S. It has fundamentally changed the North American supply-demand equation. The result is that new markets are not just important; they are imperative. Muddling along and hoping the Americans will keep buying our oil is not a strategy but a failure of leadership and a willful blindness to market realities.

Those who believe that stopping TMX is a win overlook what would be lost: jobs, income, investment in renewable energy, and opportunity. It would mean \$40 million a day and \$13 billion a year lost to the Canadian economy.

As the world continues to make the transition to a lower carbon future, we need a sensible, sustainable approach, one that understands that while the path to that future may be long, its trajectory is clear.

Our responsibility is to use this time wisely by improving the environmental performance of traditional energy sources while developing new ones, by investing in both pipelines and clean technologies and by engaging indigenous peoples as never before. That is exactly what we have been doing, and it is exactly what we will continue to do.

Let me share a personal note that my family works in the oil patch. My family is relying on our government, this Parliament, to make sure that the conditions exist not just for TMX but also for other projects. They also would like to know that we send a clear signal to international markets that when the Government of Canada commits to building an interprovincial project of this significance to energy infrastructure, we have the wherewithal and the gumption to get it done.

We are demonstrating that we can grow the economy while protecting the environment. We know how to do things together. I invite all members to get behind the TMX expansion, to work with us and build a brighter future for Albertans, British Columbians, and all Canadians.

• (2115)

[*Translation*]

This is the right thing to do. We will build this pipeline.

[*English*]

This pipeline will get built.

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Mr. Speaker, with all this poetic talking about the importance of pipelines and oil and so on, since the member is on the government side, will he be able to advise us on the timelines of building the project, since time is of the essence in this case?

Mr. Randy Boissonnault: Mr. Speaker, I respect the hon. member's interest in this file and his comments on my oratorical skills. I can tell him that poetry and great language is also backed up by action and results on this side of the House.

I am not going to take any timeline requirements from a government that spent 10 years and got no projects to pipeline. The other side knew exactly what it was doing, and it made sure it pitted people against each other. Our government knows how to create consensus. We will get this project built in the right time.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Order. Before the member for Port Moody—Coquitlam asks his question, I just want to remind hon. members this is an emergency debate. It does not mean that parliamentary rules go out the window.

The hon. member for Port Moody—Coquitlam.

• (2120)

Mr. Fin Donnelly (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the member for Edmonton Centre spoke about the importance of the Salish Sea, among many other things. The Kinder Morgan project would cause a sevenfold increase in oil tanker traffic through the southern resident killer whale's critical habitat in the Salish Sea. Regardless of oil spill risks, noise alone from the rise in tanker traffic almost guarantees the extinction of this already endangered population.

Would the member agree that although the federal Liberals claim to be committed to protecting the environment, slowing climate change, and making evidence-based decisions, approving the pipeline and tanker project is a direct contradiction of those promises?

Mr. Randy Boissonnault: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his passion on this issue. It is important to note that we are not claiming to make sure that endangered species are protected and we are not claiming to propose in the future some hypothetical oceans protection plan. We put \$1.5 billion on the table. We have put the best scientific research at hand. We have done more consultations than any other government in the history of Canada on this energy issue. Precisely the reason we want to engage with the British Columbia government as it is extending and expanding its own tankers for LNG is to make sure all species are protected and to make sure jobs are created for Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

Hon. Kent Hehr (Calgary Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, before my question I would just like to say that I stand with the people of Humboldt, the players and the coaches and the trainers.

Some of the comments I've heard tonight appear to be similar to many speeches I heard from my New Democrat friends when I was in Alberta. Those speeches are different now that they are in government. Some of the realities were posed by my good friend from Edmonton Centre, who made the speech about being reasonable. I believe he referred in his speech to running a country that sees energy and the environment as two sides of the same coin.

As well, on the opposite side, my Conservative friends did not seem to understand the Prime Minister when he said, “The Trans Mountain expansion is of vital strategic interest to Canada—it will be built” and put the full faith and credit of our government behind it.

Could he comment on seeing those two sides and how this appears to be a reasonable way forward, as he said in his speech?

Mr. Randy Boissonnault: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague from Calgary Centre. We did not quite hear the remarks on the microphone, but I thank him for his comments and heartfelt thoughts to the families and friends of the fallen in Humboldt. I want to say to my colleague that we will be holding a memorial tomorrow in Edmonton Centre for the families and friends of the lost Broncos.

On the issue at hand, we know that in a modern economy, the environment and energy have to go together. We are leading the way and we are demonstrating that. When we listen to people, bring indigenous communities together, make sure proponents are actually providing contribution agreements that are going to have long-paying, long-time jobs where communities all along the line have a stake, when we invest \$1.5 billion in leading science not only to boost the Coast Guard but to make sure we have rapid response for anything that should take place, and when we are dealing with one of the safest modes of transportation for a key fuel not only for our economy but for economies around the world, that is good science, that is good governance, and that is exactly what Canadians expect of us.

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to note that I will be sharing my time with the member for Cariboo—Prince George.

I am glad to have the opportunity to stand up on this emergency debate. I am not glad that we have to have it, but I am glad to have the opportunity to speak on such an important issue, an issue that is critically important to people in my riding.

It was shortly after I was elected in 2008 that I first remember being briefed on the plans of Kinder Morgan in terms of its expansion. I have been elected now for almost 10 years. Over those 10 years, and not just since the Liberal government came into place but eight years previously, I have watched the extraordinary efforts of the National Energy Board, the federal government, and the company itself as it went up and down the pipeline to every single community in its consultation process. It has been tireless in working with these communities.

Tonight we are hearing a lot in terms of indigenous rights and titles, and I would like to focus a lot of my comments in that particular area.

It was about two years ago that I went on one of our national TV shows. The person ahead of me, who was a band member, said that this pipeline would never be built and that his band was against it absolutely. He left, and there was a little bit of time before I was to talk. I asked the person hosting the show why they were only bringing on the few communities that were dead set against the project and telling the national audience what a difficult project it was going to be and that it would not be supported. Why were they not talking to the people in my riding?

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I never did get a good answer. I was willing to put forward names of communities that were working towards resolution, but never, certainly two years ago, did I see any effort put into educating Canadians about the communities that were very interested. However, we certainly had significant coverage of the communities that were opposed.

I can understand why many Canadians would think that there has not been consultation and that rights and titles are not being respected, because that is what they see in the media and in the paper, so what I am hoping to do tonight is give voice to those communities who are the title and rights holders.

This is not the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs. These are not people far afield who have decided that they do not want this project to go through. These are the people who are the title and rights holders of the territory that this pipeline is going to pass through.

I have a relationship with many of these people and I reached out to them tonight through social media, which is a great resource in terms of private messaging. I asked if they would mind if I shared some of their thoughts and some of the public and private posts. Each one said, “Please do.”

I will start with a first nation councillor, Don Matthew, who retweeted an article the other day saying that communities deserve consultation. He agreed absolutely, and that they have been given that.

One-third of the pipeline will go through his community's traditional territory. They have had meeting after meeting, and this community took it to a vote. He said that there was not 100% consensus, but 85% of the community that will have one-third of the pipeline go through it voted to accept and endorse the pipeline as well as the agreement that came with it. He said that his community was a member of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs, but that it is not the decision-maker on this particular issue. This is their community, and they are the title and rights holders.

The next community I will talk about is Whispering Pines. Again, it is a significant area that the pipeline goes through, and this is what Chief LeBourdais had to say. Again, I do not presume to say things; what I am going to say in the House is on behalf of the people, in their quotes.

This is from an interview he had today with the media. He said, “We put a lot time and energy into negotiating this agreement. You know, we wanted Kinder Morgan to respect our jurisdiction. We wanted the federal government to respect our jurisdiction, and they did.”

• (2125)

He went on to say, “When the feds came and said ‘we are here to help’, we said ‘no, thank you.’ We asked them to leave, and invited Kinder Morgan in. It wasn't just us; there were 11 communities along the pipe. For the first five years, we met with Kinder Morgan trying to figure out the rights entitled to the pipeline. When our lawyers couldn't agree on who owns the right of way, we decided to negotiate some mutually beneficial agreements.”

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He talked about the environment. He said that these were difficult conversations. He said, "At one meeting, Ian said, 'What do you want?' We were frustrated. We kicked our lawyers out of the room, and he said, 'What do you want?' I said, 'I want you to respect my jurisdiction. I want you to invest in my community, but most above all, I want you to keep the oil in the damn pipe.' The answer from Kinder Morgan was, 'That is what I want: to respect your jurisdiction, help invest in the community, and keep the oil in the pipe.'"

From that place, they went on to negotiate an agreement. They met a number of times. Again the communities said yes, they supported this particular agreement.

He said, "It's fascinating for us to watch these people who weren't there in the beginning talk about our agreement and our jurisdiction. It kind of annoys us." For people who sit here and presume to talk to the title and rights holders about what has been negotiated and the fact that they have not been consulted, he said that is incredibly disrespectful and annoying.

If they did not have the pipeline go through, he said, "It will be the same old, same old: same pipe, same jurisdiction; no jurisdiction, no benefits, no economic benefits, no fiscal benefits, and no increase in tax benefits. What we looked for personally on my side and what I wanted in the agreement was the economic benefits, jobs. I wanted to put my youth and my middle class, my working class guys on the pipe, and get them out of Alberta and North Dakota where they are working."

He went on to have some significant conversation around the additional environmental protections that they thought were very important and that Kinder Morgan agreed to, again working directly with the title and rights holders. He said, "When people ask how we can support the pipeline, I ask, 'Did you get gas today?' When they say yes, I say, 'Then you have to support it also.'"

That particular interview went on for about 10 minutes, but it was significant. For anyone who is wondering what has been happening on the ground for the last number of years, it was not the government not doing its job, not the company not doing its job, not the communities not doing their job. There was hard work put into coming up with agreements that were going to benefit everyone.

The Peters First Nation said that it has lived with the pipeline for over 40 years seated at the base of their mountain above their homes, and went on to talk about the pipeline and its being the safest way to transport. We all know right now there is only so much capacity on our rail lines. The more we transport oil by rail, the less we have in terms of capacity for getting our lumber and wheat products to market. Not only is a pipeline safer, but it is freeing up capacity to keep our supply chain going that is going to keep our country solid and moving forward.

People have talked about Chief Ernie Crey, and he is saying that the cancellation costs hundreds of millions of dollars in benefits, training, employment, and business opportunities. We have here the communities along the pipeline most impacted saying that these are good things. They worked hard to get to a place where they believe this can be done in a way that will benefit their people, in a way that is going to be environmentally productive.

The final thing I would say is that one chief was asked about the meeting that happened, and he said, "Well, we looked upon it a little bit disappointed because we expected some kind of resolution. That is what leaders are supposed to do, right?" On that note, we should all look at ourselves as leaders and create some sort of resolution because that is what we are here for and it is what we are supposed to do.

• (2130)

Mr. Fin Donnelly (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague from Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo is the Conservative indigenous affairs critic, and she—

• (2135)

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Shadow minister.

Mr. Fin Donnelly: Mr. Speaker, she is the shadow minister, not the critic. There we go.

The member used many quotes from indigenous people in her speech. I wanted to bring in another quote, one by Chief Bob Chamberlin, vice-president of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, who said in a tweet that the government's oceans protection plan cannot make bitumen float, that a bitumen spill on coastal waters will sink. He said that the oceans protection plan cannot retrieve what is on the ocean bottom. He said that out of sight out of mind is not good enough for fish habitat protection.

What does the member say to Chief Bob Chamberlin?

Mrs. Cathy McLeod: Mr. Speaker, the NDP members are absolutely incredible. When it is energy east, they say that a pipeline cannot be built because it is going to be terrible for our environment, but they ignore those ships going down the St. Lawrence from Saudi Arabia and Venezuela. Now they are not complaining about the pipeline, but all of a sudden there is an issue with the oceans protection plan. They simply do not want oil extracted, period. That is their problem. They say no to everything. They are giving up opportunities for these communities to be self-sufficient. There have been negotiations that they have approved and they want to move forward.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I am reminded of something I was asked to say by one of my constituents, the Honourable Pat Carney. She used to be the federal minister of energy. She asked me to please mention that there is no oceans protection plan, that there seems to be an oceans protection wish list. She would like to see a plan.

I hope my hon. colleague from Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo will not mind if I correct something that came up in an earlier part of the debate, which is the idea that bitumen moving by train represents a threat. Solid bitumen moving by rail can neither spill nor catch fire. It does not represent a threat.

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I respect the work of my friend from Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo. However, I wanted to put on the record as well that there is a very strongly worded letter that was sent to the Prime Minister and Premier Horgan from Tsartlip First Nation, which is within the boundaries of my riding. I respect Tsartlip First Nation enormously on a nation-to-nation basis. They have a specific set of treaties members may have heard of from southern Vancouver Island called the Douglas treaties. They have not been consulted at all, and the shipping lanes for the tankers loaded with dilbit go right through their treaty-protected territory.

I wonder if my hon. colleague has any comments.

Mrs. Cathy McLeod: Mr. Speaker, I would like to note that if there is transport by train, if they are concerned about bitumen in the ocean they need to also be concerned about bitumen in the rivers, which is much more likely when there is transport by train than transport by pipeline. We actually want to prevent these. However, here we are fighting the NDP and the Green, both in the province of British Columbia and throughout Canada. They fight against the pipeline when it is going to go to refineries, but they do not worry about all those tankers going down the St. Lawrence. We have not heard a peep about those. Now there is not a peep about the pipeline; it is all about the ocean.

I do not think it really matters what it is, they are simply going to argue against it because they do not want oil extracted from the oil sands for the benefit of all Canadians.

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are here today for one reason and one reason only, and that is we are in a crisis, a crisis of confidence. We have investors who, whether they are foreign or domestic, lack the confidence in Canada as a place to invest, as their confidence in the government to create an environment for them to invest in and protect their investment has gone sideways.

It has gone that way because if the Prime Minister's contradictory messages or comments, policies, and inaction on core projects. This has absolutely rocked the investor community. As a matter of fact, at the COFI conference which I was at just last week, as was the Minister of Transport, we heard very soundly from economists who stood on the stage and said that investor confidence in Canada is at an all-time low.

Investment is flowing out of Canada at record levels, levels that have not been seen in over 70 years. Why is that? As mentioned, it is due to legislation such as Bill C-69, Bill C-49, a tanker moratorium, and the Prime Minister killing energy east at the eleventh hour by introducing new rules. Let us not forget northern gateway, a project that was approved. It was a project that underwent rigorous environmental standards and testing, a project that had indigenous equity partners. As the Prime Minister and the government came to power, the rug was pulled out from underneath the project.

I remind this House that it was just over a year ago when the Prime Minister said that he was phasing out the oil sands. I will also remind my colleagues that one of the very first statements the Prime Minister made on the world stage after gaining power was that Canada will become known more for its resourcefulness than its resources. That is shocking.

On Trans Mountain, the reason we are here tonight, the Prime Minister has failed to deliver a clear action plan from the very beginning. Truthfully, I do not believe for a moment he ever wanted this project to go forward. He will stall while saying those words with his hand on his heart, that he and his cabinet are seized with this project and that it is their intention to have it go through. We have seen a few ministers today and over the last couple of weeks state that this project will go through, yet it has taken over a year for them to even come to the province of British Columbia, my beautiful province, to actually say those same strong words. Where have the 18 MPs from B.C. been? They have been silent on this issue.

I will go as far as saying that I put the blame squarely on the shoulders of the Prime Minister and his 18 Liberal MPs from the province of British Columbia for the situation we are currently in provincially. They failed to stand up for the Trans Mountain pipeline. That was a major issue in the provincial election last summer when the NDP and the Green Party campaigned that this project will never go through under their watch. The B.C. Liberals were fighting it out and doing their very best to try to win back our province. What we saw was essentially a deadlock. Then there was a coalition with the NDP and the Green Party. Premier Horgan might be in a little trouble because if he supports the pipeline, what will happen to his majority? He is going to have a bit of an issue in terms of how he can hang on to power.

Domestic and foreign investors looking at Canada and British Columbia as places to invest are comparing the ease of doing business and returns on capital that can be achieved here with those in other jurisdictions around the world.

● (2140)

We have to remember that investors have choices. What we do as a government or as a parliament, or what the Liberals do as government, can have a significant impact on investor confidence. That is what we are seeing currently. Under the current government, investors in Canada have been besieged by significant federal and provincial tax increases, which taken with the recent substantial tax reductions in the United States and the ever-increasing protectionist government, as well as the opportunities they are seeing south of the border, underscores that Canada's small, open trade-exposed economy is no longer competitive.

Economists are speaking out. Dave McKay, president and CEO of RBC, raised a concern about investment capital leaving Canada in real time, noting that a significant exodus of capital from Canada to the United States is well under way and that we should be worried.

These comments have been echoed by John Manley, president and CEO of the Business Council of Canada, who stated recently that real issues of competitiveness are absent from the federal government's thinking, noting that Canada is, "always in this difficult competition to attract investment and to retain investment — and it's not be taken lightly because investment can move quickly."

We even have the Suncor president and CEO Steve Williams saying that his company, Canada's largest integrated oil firm, will not embark on new major projects in our country because of the burdensome regulations and uncompetitive tax rates.

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Finally, late last year, the TransCanada Corporation, after spending over a billion dollars, cancelled its proposed \$17-billion energy east pipeline project out of frustration with the government and the project approval process.

These and other examples across the country demonstrate that policy-makers have a definite impact on our economy. That is what we are seeing with Justin Trudeau's failure to get this job done and creating burdensome regulations on investors. We must always remember that investors have choices.

I want to touch on the indigenous partners aspect, because this has been brought up time and time again. I will relate it to a story in my own riding, the Mount Polley disaster, which I have brought up before. There are no two ways about it, it was a disaster. However, the proponent, the company, and our indigenous first nations partners within our riding, as well as our communities, banded together and got the job done with respect to mitigating the disaster.

We had protesters out there day in and day out. When a card check was done on those people, it was shocking to find that most of the protesters were not from our region, and some of them were not even from Canada. However, they were there making sure that Canadian businesses had every roadblock put in front of them. There is a lot to be said in the media about how our indigenous partners and indigenous communities are tired of being pawns for environmental groups, of being trucked out in the media and being used as pawns in this. Our indigenous communities only want an opportunity to be self-sufficient and to be partners in these programs. In the Trans Mountain pipeline, over 43 indigenous communities are equity partners in this project.

In the seconds that I have left, I want to read this. It states, "A Conference Board of Canada report has determined the combined government revenue impact for construction in the first 20 years of expanded operations is \$46.7 billion, including federal and provincial taxes...for public services such as health care and education."

It also notes that B.C. alone would receive \$5.7 billion, Alberta would receive \$19.4 billion, and the rest of Canada would share \$21.6 billion because of this project.

If there is a project that has national interest, this is the one. Unfortunately, through delay tactics and confusing comments, the Prime Minister has shaken investor confidence, and that is unacceptable.

• (2145)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Before I go to questions and comments, I realize it is late and we are all tired, but I want to remind the hon. members to refer to each other by their riding or their title and not their names.

Mr. Randy Boissonnault (Edmonton Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his comments, and I am thrilled that he is here in such robust health, even if his comments may not make me very happy. On the full emphasis of his words, I have to disagree in terms of the Prime Minister's and our government's leadership on this file.

Beyond the bluff and bluster, I have one question for the hon. member. How many pipelines to tidewater did his government get

built, not approved? How many pipelines to tidewater did the last Conservative government get built?

An hon. member: The same number as the Liberals.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I want to remind the hon. members that they do not have to coach each other from across the floor. They can go over and talk quietly, whisper.

Mr. Todd Doherty: Mr. Speaker, he is a typical Liberal—just deflect, point fingers, and blame others.

The truth is that we approved four pipelines, and as soon as this group came in, they vetoed one that would have gotten the pipeline to tidewater. It was probably one of the most vital projects that Canada has seen to this date. Now we have Trans Mountain.

I guess the same could be asked of the Liberals. How many pipelines have they gotten to tidewater? Right now, it is zero.

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I respect the member's work, especially the work in his riding. I know he had a great private member's bill on people with PTSD that I was proud to support.

I have a big riding like his in the interior of British Columbia. Yesterday I was driving back from the other side, and it is about a six-hour drive. Of course, I had to stop for gas. I do not have to stop for gas very often, because I drive a hybrid. I am waiting for the day when the government puts in enough charging stations so I can buy an electric car.

I stopped for gas, and I went in to pay. The woman there said she recognized me as the MP. She said that she wanted to ask the government, the House of Commons, why the government is saying it is going to bail out Kinder Morgan when it should be investing that money in Canada building refineries, so that we could have jobs in Canada on an ongoing basis. It would free up the space in a lot of the pipelines.

Would the member comment on that? If we had the same amount of investment in refineries and other projects, it would create more jobs and have much more benefit for Canadians than this pipeline.

• (2150)

Mr. Todd Doherty: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my hon. colleague's question. It was very respectful.

I take a little exception to our NDP colleagues. It always seems that it is the Conservatives who are standing up for jobs. We know that the NDP enjoy a very strong labour support, but sadly that labour support has been very quiet on this project and this issue.

To answer my hon. colleague's question, I believe, and our Conservative colleagues believe, that the Prime Minister bailing out Kinder Morgan on this sets a dangerous precedent. There could be other projects that will come along, and we have a Prime Minister who is very clearly used to paying his way out of trouble. We have seen it time and again, and we are seeing it right now. It sets a dangerous precedent.

We need to get that project done. I think that if the Prime Minister had shown some leadership right from the start on this issue, some strong words backed up by strong action, the bank of Canadians would not have to be bailing out this project.

Mr. Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member of Parliament for South Surrey—White Rock.

Anyone who has ever spent time at a busy port like the Port of Vancouver knows how vital marine shipping is to our country's economy. The marine sector is critical to the national economy. The marine shipping industry contributes about \$3 billion annually to Canada's gross domestic product.

The economic impact of commercial shipping, however, is much higher. It is estimated at around \$30 billion, according to a recent study by the Council of Canadian Academies. This is because marine shipping plays a key role in facilitating international trade. Canada's domestic fleet and foreign vessels transport roughly \$200 billion in international trade in goods each year, and marine trade provides some 250,000 direct and indirect jobs to Canadians all across the country.

There is no question that many of the goods and services that underpin the high quality of life of Canadians have either arrived or departed on ship. They may be consumer goods manufactured overseas that are off-loaded at container terminals, or domestic agricultural products harvested from the Prairies that are exported through Canada's extensive network of ports.

This government clearly understands and appreciates the importance of marine shipping.

As British Columbians will also tell us, what they truly love about living on Canada's Pacific coast is its extraordinary beauty and breathtaking landscapes. The abundance of nature's bounty is a cornerstone of their quality of life. Preserving and protecting this natural heritage is important, not only to local residents but to all Canadians.

Our oceans and coasts are vital to the Canadian experience and our well-being. In addition to enabling the export and import of goods to and from foreign markets, our coasts support traditional indigenous and coastal communities' livelihoods. They are the habitat for abundant Canadian fisheries and a wide variety of sea life. They are a magnet that attracts tourists from every corner of the globe, which is another important part of our economy.

That is why the Government of Canada recognizes that we need a safe and secure transportation system for a healthy and competitive economy. As a trading nation, marine transportation is fundamental to Canada's economic well-being. This is why the government has taken a fact and evidence-based approach in the decision to approve the Trans Mountain expansion, and to work with indigenous peoples and coastal communities to implement the \$1.5 billion oceans protection plan.

We have put in place a world-leading marine safety and shipping regime for the transportation of petroleum and other products in order to protect our oceans. These include federal regimes with robust compensation and liability systems that continue to be advanced and improved to minimize impacts on Canadians, ensure

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they are protected from costs and damages, and that the environment is protected. National Energy Board requirements for TMX are adding even more protections beyond those already in place.

Developing and exporting our resources to benefit all Canadians can be done, will be done, and must be done, using the toughest laws and most stringent safety requirements.

We are further enhancing safety through the oceans protection plan, and doing so in consultation with indigenous communities. The federal government has made unprecedented investments in response capability, the Coast Guard, and protection of whales and other marine life. The OPP is a robust national plan designed to implement a world-leading marine safety system and protect our oceans and coastlines from the potential impacts of marine shipping to ensure the health of our oceans for generations to come.

The Government of Canada believes that Canadians want and deserve a strong economy and a clean environment. It is taking direct and results-driven action to make this vision a reality. Through the oceans protection plan, we are focusing on action, collaboration, and science.

OPP projects are on track to deliver real results to Canadians. In addition to improving marine safety and protecting marine ecosystems through the oceans protection plan, the government is building meaningful partnerships with indigenous people and working with coastal communities, municipalities, provinces, territories, and stakeholders to better co-manage Canada's three oceans.

We are providing additional funding in science and research to improve knowledge and technologies that will prevent and mitigate marine incidents such as oil spills.

● (2155)

We are deploying two large, heavy-tow tugs in British Columbia, improving incident management toward seamless response by implementing the incident command system and driving inclusive and innovative regional and area spill response planning in the Salish Sea and in northern British Columbia.

We are implementing the incident command system and enhancing emergency coordination centres across the government in order to bolster our response capabilities.

These measures will improve the coordination of response actions of departments and agencies when dealing with an incident by using a common response system.

We have identified coastal restoration as a key priority to addressing marine biodiversity loss and threats to aquatic ecosystems and are supporting projects that address restoration priorities and contribute to restoration plans.

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We are providing funding that will help reduce barriers to marine training for under-represented groups such as women, northerners, Inuit, and indigenous peoples. Greater access to training will support them in joining the marine labour force.

Once again, I would like to remind members that the oceans protection plan will help create economic opportunities for Canadians today, including jobs for middle-class Canadians, while protecting our waters and our ecosystems for generations to come.

We know that British Columbia is consulting with its citizens on enhancements to the spill management system, and while our government has already consulted extensively, we look forward to working with the province to close gaps in the provincial prevention and response systems and explore how, within its own jurisdiction, the province can enhance efforts to protect our waters and coastal communities.

As we continue to implement the great work that is being done under the oceans protection plan, we look forward to working with every province and territory, including British Columbia and Alberta, to build a stronger future for Canadians. We are protecting Canadians and our coasts. Our requirements on Kinder Morgan tankers are more stringent than for tankers entering Washington State because we have a made in Canada regime in place.

• (2200)

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister definitely has a credibility issue when he talks about pipelines. He said in the past that he wanted to phase out the oil sands. Then he says this pipeline will definitely get built. When put together, the Prime Minister has no credibility. We know he has no credibility on a number of other issues as well.

When it came to the recent Jaspal Atwal case, four different stories were going around. Would the member please clear this up. Did he invite Jaspal Atwal to the party?

Mr. Randeep Sarai: Mr. Speaker, the member's question has no relevance, so I will answer on the credibility of the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister committed to making a science-based assessment to every decision the government made. We have reinstated that. We have a National Energy Board that has twice approved this project. Our Prime Minister stands by that decision. Our Prime Minister has invested heavily in our coastal waters, protected marine coastal environments in the north, put a moratorium on oil and crude tanker traffic there, and decided which pipeline, based on science and evidence, was the safest to do. He has stood by that to the very end and to this day.

There are no constitutional roadblocks along this way. This is a war between two NDP governments that are fighting between two provinces. As far as the approval process is concerned, our government has stood fast in support of Kinder Morgan, along with managing the environment and ensuring that it is safe and secure.

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the member and I both come from British Columbia. We both remember what happened in 1993 when over 1,000 people were arrested in Clayoquot Sound for civil disobedience, standing up for the environment, standing up when companies wanted to do industrial development and they did not have social licence from the

communities. He knows very well what that looks like. British Columbians will stand up for what is important to them.

In October 2017, with respect to energy east, the Prime Minister said, “We don’t get far – we never have gotten far – by pitting one region against another, or one group against another. We succeed when we work together, as Canadians.”

However, today we hear the ministers' attacks on the B.C. premier, acting like he is alone against this pipeline. We know that is not true. My colleague knows that is not true, that hundreds of thousands of British Columbians are standing strong with the Premier of British Columbia. He is doing his job in defending British Columbia.

Will the member stand by and watch British Columbians get arrested for standing up for the coast of British Columbia? Does the member support that?

Mr. Randeep Sarai: Mr. Speaker, when it comes to social licence, this government has sought and received the approval from the province. That was the previous government. Now there is a new government. However, the province even imposed its own restrictions and conditions on it, which were accepted by Kinder Morgan. We have also accepted them.

Thirty-plus indigenous communities along the route have signed beneficial agreements with Kinder Morgan, and 40-plus, including with Alberta. Labour groups across the province have endorsed this project. The B.C. Supreme Court has stated that the actions of many of those protesters are illegal and that they must stop.

Formal and safe protesting is always welcome. People have every right to express their opinion. However, when companies or individuals go through all the legal challenges, we must abide by those decisions as we are a law-abiding nation.

The Premier of British Columbia should reconsider his actions and comments so he does not escalate this situation. He should take these actions and suggestions to a normal process, which means dealing with either the government or a court of law. Neither of those actions is by enticing protesters. The mayor of Burnaby has said that he would not support police costs for enforcing the order. Those are not the actions of a government at any level.

• (2205)

Mr. Gordie Hogg (South Surrey—White Rock, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to this emergency debate this evening. I welcome the Speaker's decision to allow it to occur as this is a very important moment for our country, indeed a pivotal moment.

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I was pleased to hear my colleague from Cariboo—Prince George speak. He reminded me that it was perhaps about a year ago that I was sitting in the legislature in Victoria. We were having similar discussions with respect to moving forward with this pipeline. I am pleased we made the decision to support it, and I am pleased to continue to support it today.

As someone who has lived on the ocean all of my life, I will focus my brief remarks on the role the Canadian Coast Guard plays in protecting our environment, while highlighting the number of important investments our government has made, and will continue to make, to protect our oceans.

These investments to our coastal communities are important, not just in British Columbia but on our other two coasts as well, regardless of whether the construction of a pipeline was in motion. This is still ever important.

I cannot, however, avoid the context of tonight's debate. We have an important decision to make as to whether we will do something in the national interest or avoid this decision because there are at least two competing views on what we should do.

We can construct the pipelines safely while protecting our environment, including our marine environment.

Again, flashing back to my time in Victoria, I remember when I was the minister of children and families. As well, I was the minister for health promotion. My wife and I were foster parents. I chaired a committee working with seniors. I was always fighting for more dollars for the provision of those social programs that were so crucial to the operation and sense of community and livelihood within our communities.

Moreover, constructing this pipeline and the revenue generated from that will help in so many ways in our province and indeed right across Canada. We can do so knowing that protecting our environment, creating jobs, and diversifying our energy sources are not incompatible.

Those who oppose the pipelines, as is their right, should not deny the fact that the government has invested significantly in meaningful action to protect oceans and respond to any improbable oil spills.

Let me give just one example, and there are many.

The President of the Treasury Board, on behalf of the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, the member for Beauséjour, invested \$80 million in new science funding. These investments will support new partnerships with universities and industry to improve our knowledge and to develop new technologies that will help mitigate and prevent marine incidents, such as oil spills.

Specifically, \$46 million were announced for research programs to leverage collaboration among the world's very best researchers, \$10 million to go toward research that will bring together the brightest minds from around the globe to collaborate with world-class Canadian researchers. Together, they will enhance our collective understanding of how oil spills behave, how best to clean and contain them, and how best to minimize their environmental impacts.

Further, the government is investing \$16.8 million to support oil spill research to specifically focus on how oil breaks down, how oil behaves in various ocean conditions, including cold water.

The government will also invest \$17.7 million toward enhancing ocean models of winds, waves, and currents, so emergency responders can accurately track spills and predict their path. The goal in enhancing ocean modelling is to support safe marine navigation and help prevent spills from happening in the first place.

These investments total \$80 million and are part of a much larger, comprehensive strategy under the umbrella of Canada's oceans protection plan. The oceans protection plan is a \$1.5 billion plan that will ensure our coasts are protected in a way that ensures environmental sustainability, safe and responsible commercial use, and includes significant collaboration with indigenous communities.

Under the oceans protection plan, the government has opened new Coast Guard search and rescue stations to increase our capacity to respond to on-water emergencies. We are committed to working in partnership with indigenous communities to further expand our search and rescue capacity.

Further, we are protecting and restoring important marine ecosystems now, through the \$75 million coastal restoration fund, and we are strengthening partnerships and launching co-management practices with indigenous communities.

• (2210)

This leads me to highlight facts related to the Trans Mountain project.

The protection of our environment and the preservation of fish and fish habitat are top priorities, led by Fisheries and Oceans Canada. These principles guide our decision-making process when authorizing major projects.

Members will recall that within weeks of taking office, the government approved the Trans Mountain project, subject to legally binding conditions. For its part, as part of the legally binding conditions for the pipeline approval, Fisheries and Oceans was one of many departments engaged in the approval process. Fisheries and Oceans was duty-bound to assess potential risks and harm associated with this project, and to do so before issuing a Fisheries Act authorization.

On September 8, 2017, the minister issued a Fisheries Act authorization for expansion of the Westridge Marine Terminal, which is a component of the larger TMX project. This followed a very rigorous and thorough review of the proponent's application and consultation with 33 potentially affected indigenous groups.

As part of the authorization, the proponent will be required, on an ongoing basis during construction, to adhere to conditions to reduce and mitigate harm to fish and fish habitat. The conditions of the authorization include measures to avoid or reduce serious harm to fish, to offset potential losses in fisheries productivity, and to monitor the effectiveness of mitigation actions.

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Others will speak on other measures our government has taken to ensure that the TMX project is done right. To do nothing seems to me not to be an option. The government has made it clear that the development of the pipeline is very important to this country and to our provinces. We believe we have the duty to ensure that it is completed. We also have a constitutional duty to ensure that the national interest is met. Most of all, we have a duty to ensure that this project is done in a way that protects our environments, including our marine environments. I believe that we have met those obligations.

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, first I want to pay my respects to the new member for South Surrey—White Rock. He was elected a few months ago, even though we worked so hard not to see him here in the House of Commons.

[*Translation*]

On a more serious note, we have known for 10 months that there is a major problem with this project. A new government came into power in British Columbia and it vehemently opposes the project. For 10 months, his Prime Minister, our Prime Minister, did nothing. We have known for 10 months that there is a major problem with this project. How is it, then, that we find ourselves facing this national crisis, which is completely unacceptable for Canada?

[*English*]

Mr. Gordie Hogg: Mr. Speaker, first, I will point out the obvious. There was a change of government in British Columbia that occurred last May. With that change in government, there was a change in the direction that was taken. I think this adequately explains what has occurred with respect to British Columbia.

I was in Victoria about three weeks ago, where I met with a number of members and had discussions with them. Certainly, on both sides of the House there are some who are frustrated with the lack of movement, and some on the other side of the House are frustrated with the actions that are being taken and the potential they have, and are therefore requesting a review from the court system.

In terms of the actions that have occurred in the House, I know that there has been an attempt to come to some type of consensus. I respect the fact that it has taken a period of time to work toward that, and we are now at a time when we have to take decisive action and move forward. I do not have all the answers as to why it has taken so long, but I do know that this is a pivotal time in the operation of this country, a pivotal time for British Columbia and Alberta, and we have a responsibility to take action to support them.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my friend from Victoria's former provincial government, under the northern gateway pipeline project, that tried to abdicate the province's responsibility to do an environmental assessment. The reason I know this is because the Christy Clark government got sued all the way to Supreme Court and lost. The court said that it had obligations and responsibilities to the people of British Columbia to fulfill its constitutional obligations.

My friend has now moved his way up to the federal scene. It used to be that B.C. Liberals were considered to be Conservatives, but now B.C. Liberals are maybe federal Liberals. We can understand why people in British Columbia are sometimes confused as to what a Liberal is actually is. Maybe the two have merged. There is a

pipeline going back and forth between the two in British Columbia at least.

My friend was in the cabinet of the government that tried to move away from its responsibility to consult with first nations, to do an environmental assessment, and were sued all the way to our highest court in the land and forced into action, at which time the Christy Clark government said that it approved it too. That was her environmental assessment of northern gateway. It did not pass muster then and that project failed.

We have such a similar circumstance here now. The only difference is we have a B.C. government that is interested in performing its constitutional responsibility and is asking the federal government to work with it to clarify each of our roles and responsibilities when it comes to energy transportation.

From his experience, would he encourage his new Liberal leader to learn from the mistakes of the past and refer to the court properly so we can have the clarity that so many people from both side of the House talk about, yet so many are unwilling to do what it takes to make that clarity come to reality?

● (2215)

Mr. Gordie Hogg: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for reminding me of my history, going through good and bad parts of that history.

Certainly, the actions being taken by the government and the Prime Minister now are the type of actions you are referencing. The actions taken with respect to bringing together the Premiers of Alberta and British Columbia yesterday are an effort to bring together a type of coalition with an understanding and action to allow them to maximize their positions with respect to those.

We do not want somebody to be a giant loser in this, but we want everybody to have actions that give them a responsible way of dealing with something and getting this pipeline passed. I am hopeful that was exactly what took place yesterday. Hopefully we will see it operationalized over the next few days.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I want to remind hon. members to put their questions and comments through the Speaker and not directly. I am sure when the hon. member mentioned “you” he was not referencing the Speaker. He was referencing the hon. member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Durham.

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to divide my time tonight with my good friend and colleague, the hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent. Tonight we appear to be the central Canadian connection here in a debate that many Canadians believe is exclusive to Alberta and British Columbia, but I am here tonight, as a proud Ontario MP who has had the honour of serving and working across the country, to say that debates like this are critical to the future of our country. Pipelines are as much in the national interest of my constituents in Ontario as they are in Lakeland and Peace River, or in British Columbia, or in Louis-Saint-Laurent.

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I would remind people in my riding all the time, when we are looking at regulatory reviews like the line 9 reversal and other things accomplished under the government of Stephen Harper, that the present government has to bend over backwards to hide the fact that many pipeline projects were approved under the previous government. All were reviewed appropriately, but the last government recognized and was proud to stand in the House and proud to stand on any street corner in the country and say that resource development is in Canada's national interest. The Liberal government will not do that.

Here we have a Conservative caucus from across the country. I, with my time representing Durham, and my friend from Louis-Saint-Laurent will remind people that the jobs in Ontario are due to the success and wealth of Canada as a resource country, and getting our products to market through pipelines allows us the best world price, the best royalties, and the best economic activity possible. We need to remind Ontarians of that.

I am proud that my dad worked for General Motors when I was a kid. Ontario is still known for vehicle manufacturing and auto parts. In the last decade, there have been more jobs created in Ontario as a result of the resource economy in Alberta than through automobile assembly. When I tell that to auto workers in my area or retired GM workers, they are astounded, because they do not hear that enough. As parliamentarians, it is our duty to remind Canadians that when we say something is in the national interest, it is in their interest, at their kitchen table in southern Ontario, just as much as it is around a very concerned kitchen table in Edmonton or Calgary.

These debates are important. What troubles me to no end about the Liberal government is a Minister of Natural Resources heckling my colleague from Peace Country when he was talking about personal stories. The minister from Edmonton is laughing now. We are here to tell those stories, to talk about the concerns. I have spoken to the Edmonton chamber, and it is worried.

Canada is not open for business under the present Prime Minister. We are closed for business. Capital is fleeing Canada, not because we are the safest, most prosperous, and most well-educated and well-trained country in the world, but because of the uncertainty caused by the Prime Minister from day one.

On his first trip abroad to sell Canada at Davos, the Prime Minister said that we are not just resources now; we are resourceful. He mocked the entire resource industry by suggesting that. Maybe the Prime Minister should learn a bit about steam-assisted gravity drainage, or slant drilling, or shale deposit exploration and extraction, or minimizing water usage in the resource industry in Alberta. The innovation in our resource economy has been astounding, yet on his first trip to Davos, the Prime Minister just wiped it away: "We are resourceful now. We do not need resources." Certainly, the government's plan for pipelines means we are not going to sell our resources.

Let me tell the House how much the Liberal Party has changed. My friend from Skeena—Bulkley Valley raised the issue that the Prime Minister got elected by pretending to be a New Democrat when he was in British Columbia, and then pretending to be a Liberal when he was in Ontario or Quebec. Now it is coming home to roost. He has to pick a side. He has to defend Trans Mountain as

being in our national interest, which it is. The B.C. premier has no mandate. He lost the last election in popular vote and seat count.

• (2220)

He is being held hostage by a couple of radical Green MLAs to cause a constitutional crisis. That is what he is allowing to happen. It is terrible, and we have heard virtual silence from the Prime Minister of Canada.

Let us see how much the Liberal Party has changed. One of the most raucous debates in this chamber took place in May 1956, when the Right Hon. C.D. Howe stood up and said this about pipelines, "The building of the trans-Canada pipe line is a great national project, comparable in importance and magnitude to the building of the St. Lawrence seaway." He went on to say, "The action proposed today is another declaration of independence by Canada..." That was when they were rushing through a pipeline debate.

This Prime Minister has been avoiding selling pipelines and resources to Canadians and around the world. This Prime Minister waited for a constitutional crisis before he had meetings and started speaking about it being in the national interest. Why is it a crisis? Because he has already dropped the ball.

A few years ago, former Liberal premier Frank McKenna said this about energy east: "The Energy East project represents one of those rare opportunities to bring all provinces and regions of this country together to support a project that will benefit us all, and that is truly in the national interest."

Well, certainly that aspirational national interest language by a prominent former Liberal politician was quashed when the actions of the current government led TransCanada to cancel the energy east pipeline. Previous to that, this Prime Minister had already cancelled the northern gateway pipeline that had been reviewed. What did some Canadians say about that? Chief Elmer Derrick, Dale Swampy, and Elmer Ghostkeeper, three first nation leaders, said that they were very disappointed from the unilateral cancellation of northern gateway. That was a \$2-billion opportunity for first nations in British Columbia that was cancelled because of a unilateral anti-resource decision by this Prime Minister.

We now have Bill C-69. We have a track record in two and a half years of saying not just to the global capital markets that Canada is closed, but we have had the Prime Minister and members of his own caucus say that we need to prepare for closing down our resources. We need to move beyond it. Tonight, they heckled when they heard about the concern that causes at a lot of kitchen tables around our country.

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Why I am so passionate as an Ontario MP is that my first job before going to college was inspecting TransCanada pipelines, the pipeline inspection crew between Belleville and Ottawa. I have seen the economic activity first-hand. I have also seen the manufacturing industry during the global recession when oil prices were still high. Contracts for the oil sands and exploration in Saskatchewan and Manitoba was the lifeline for manufacturing. It kept us afloat. That is the national interest.

The fact that we have to bring an emergency debate and the Prime Minister had to have a stopover meeting between his global jet-setting to bring a few premiers together means he has let this crisis happen. He has cancelled northern gateway, and through his actions he has cancelled energy east. The one pipeline he thought he could let go is sliding off the table, with Kinder Morgan now suggesting all this uncertainty is leading them to question their investment. They are in Hail Mary pass mode when they suggest that they will buy the line or pay for part of it. That desperation is not needed.

For a change, I would like the Prime Minister to go to Davos and talk about the importance of our resource industry. I would like him to showcase the innovation brought by these men and women who work in our oil patch, the pipeline industry, and the jobs that supply it. It is sad that we have to bring an emergency debate to remind the Liberals that jobs in the resource industry from coast to coast are in all Canadians' national interest.

● (2225)

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey—Newton, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I was carefully listening to the speech by the hon. member from Durham as he was questioning the Prime Minister's leadership. From listening to my constituents, the Prime Minister stands tall in defence of Canada's national interests from coast to coast to coast, and also by creating jobs and investing \$1.5 billion in an oceans protection plan.

As far as I understand, during the 10 years of the hon. member's government, the Conservatives did not build a single centimetre of pipeline to coastal waters to take our resources to Asia. They also did nothing to protect our coastal communities and the oceans. I would like to hear his comments, and I am certain that he will agree on that.

Hon. Erin O'Toole: Madam Speaker, I am certain I will not agree. I have yet to hear the Prime Minister of Canada defend or stand up for the jobs in our resource sector. In fact, we have all heard quotes from the Prime Minister over the course of his time in that leadership position, or as an MP, mocking it or suggesting we need to move past it. My friend from Skeena—Bulkley Valley and some of the NDP members have reminded members of the House that during the election the Prime Minister said different things on Vancouver Island than what he might say in Calgary. It is not in the national interest when the Prime Minister changes his promises and tone.

Let us go even further. I have talked about the failure of the Liberal government with respect to energy east and northern gateway, and the risk to Trans Mountain. Let us not forget Keystone. Remember that when President Obama was in office, we heard a lot about the bromance between our Prime Minister and Mr. Obama, the "dudeplomacy", which is the Prime Minister's term, I am sad to say. President Obama cancelled Keystone, which was not based on any science, and the Prime Minister basically nodded along with it. Then

the Prime Minister of Canada introduced a carbon tax, making our entire economy uncompetitive, versus Michigan, which is a few hours away from the plants in Ontario that compete against Michigan's plants. Obama praised Trudeau's carbon tax, but certainly did not follow him.

The Prime Minister of Canada has been played by the Americans. Thank goodness a change in office led to the resurgence of Keystone, because this Prime Minister was certainly allowing that to die too. That is three pipelines down and one on the edge. It is time for that member to start standing up.

● (2230)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, this debate takes place in a kind of history-free zone. Hearing from the Conservatives, one would swear that getting bitumen to tidewater had been the campaign of generations. One member may have forgotten the timing. Kinder Morgan was not proposed until 2013.

I want to ask my hon. colleague from Durham about when he campaigned in 2011 as a Conservative, on the promise of Stephen Harper that there would be no pipeline to the B.C. coast, because the Conservatives opposed sending bitumen to any country where the refineries operate at environmental standards that are lower than Canada's. We have a lot of revisionist history going on. That was the promise of the Conservatives in 2011. When did it become a massive imperative that we send a product of low value, which is very expensive to produce, to refineries in other countries instead of refining it here?

Hon. Erin O'Toole: Madam Speaker, the only revisionist history is coming from my friend from the Green Party, who is usually much more up to date on things. I was not elected in 2011. I know she knows that. I was elected in a by-election in 2012. Nevertheless, I quoted Keystone XL, which I am sure the member opposed because it is in some way tangentially connected with the resource economy.

We have supported all lines that will allow for Canadian resources. This is just as much a resource of someone in Saanich—Gulf Islands as it is of someone who lives where it is extracted. It is the largest single contributor to our public health system. All I am asking is for the government to stand up for it a bit. I quoted in my speech the debates from 1956. I would refer the member to those comments. This is an important debate in the national interest. The Conservatives have brought it here, and we will continue to fight for these jobs.

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[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise as a Quebecker and a Canadian to take part in this emergency debate, which the member for Lakeland got off to a good start.

We are debating an urgent matter of national interest. We are facing an economic, financial, energy, and constitutional crisis because of the current government's poor decisions. Yes, I have previously risen in the House to endorse Canadian oil, and I will continue to do so because I am proud of Canadian oil. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for everyone in the House, and especially not for our Prime Minister. I said "our Prime Minister" because in the event of a national crisis such as the one facing our country, the Prime Minister must act on behalf of all Canadians. It is his duty to tackle this issue head-on and to firmly defend the pipeline. Unfortunately, he does not believe in Canadian oil and does not like it, any more than he likes this industry's workers.

Not so long ago, on January 12, 2017, at a town hall meeting in Calgary, the Prime Minister had this to say about Alberta oil:

[English]

"We need to phase them out."

• (2235)

[Translation]

The person who thinks we should be phasing out Canadian oil is the one who is supposed to be promoting the project. That is our current Prime Minister. When he goes to British Columbia, Alberta, and all around the world to talk about Canadian oil, does he have any credibility? No. That is what got us into this mess. The running back is carrying a basketball down the field instead of a football. He is not a fan of Canadian oil. Well, that is too bad, because he is the Prime Minister.

The Trans Mountain project is a good project. It balances the environment and the economy and ensures Canada's prosperity. Let us not forget that it is the safest, cheapest, and greenest way to transport oil from one place to another. We are talking about Albertan oil from the oil sands, one of our country's greatest resources. However, if this great resource is trapped in our country, then it cannot be used for the benefit of all Canadians. That is why we have to sell it overseas.

We are very pleased that Keystone XL can move forward. We would have liked energy east to move forward. The Trans Mountain project could give us access to the Pacific coast. This project has been in the works for a while; it would bring \$7.4 billion in economic spinoffs and put 15,000 Canadians to work for many years. It is profitable for us, but, most importantly, it has the support and backing of the first nations. The pipeline passes through 43 indigenous nations, and they are all in agreement. Not only do they agree, but they are also partners in the project. They are partners in prosperity. We must commend this initiative. We must support the first nations. However, what is the government doing? It says that Alberta oil must be phased out. This is why the project is not moving forward.

It started off well. On January 11, 2017, the premier of British Columbia at the time, Christy Clark, expressed her support for this project. Unfortunately, another government was elected, and this minority government joined forces with radical Green Party members. They are currently holding a project hostage that represents billions of dollars for Canadians and could be very profitable for 43 indigenous nations in Alberta and British Columbia.

We have known for 10 months that there was sand in the gears—no pun intended. We knew that there was water in the gas, an expression that suits this debate quite well. The new government, which was taken hostage by Green Party extremists, is sidelining the project. What did the Prime Minister, who does not believe in Canadian oil, do in the meantime? He said that the project had to move forward, that everything would be fine, and that the Liberals believed in it. We asked for emergency debates, among other things. We were told that everything would be fine and that the project would get done. However, here we are today, in the face of a major constitutional and economic crisis that is the direct result of the Prime Minister's inaction over the past 10 months. This is unacceptable.

Unfortunately, this is consistent with the Prime Minister's sorry track record. What did the Prime Minister do? First, he said no to the northern gateway project. He adopted policies that killed energy east and now he is jeopardizing the Trans Mountain pipeline. There is no guarantee it will go forward. As they say in baseball, "three strikes and you're out". The problem is that he will not be out but will remain in office for another 18 months. Until then Canada will suffer as a result of his bad economic and business decisions.

This problem speaks to other realities, such as the constitutional battle that is being waged. Of course, we recognize that the provinces have a say. In fact, British Columbia said yes in January 2017 and things got under way. However, now another government has decided to do things differently. We also realize that, ultimately, it is up to the federal government to decide whether the project will go forward. We respect the provincial authorities, but the provincial authorities must also respect the fact that the federal government is the one that decides whether this type of project will be carried out.

Must I remind my fellow Quebeckers and all Canadians that harnessing the full potential of our natural resources allows our country to use an equalization regime? That means that the provinces that develop the full potential of their natural resources help the other provinces that are not doing so, that do not have the means to do so, that do not want to do so, or that do not have the natural resources to do so. As a result, provinces like mine receive a lot of equalization payments, too many equalization payments. Perhaps one day, we will be proud enough to do away with that, but for now, we are receiving such payments. If we want to continue to receive equalization payments, we must continue to develop our natural resources to their full potential. The Trans Mountain project will allow Alberta to develop its full potential and bring billions of dollars in foreign money to Canada, money that can be redistributed to other provinces.

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In Quebec, there are people who believe in oil, who believe in pipelines, who know that pipelines are the best way to transport oil. They are the cleanest, most cost-effective, most environmentally responsible, and above all safest way to transport oil. As proof, there are 2,000 kilometres of pipelines criss-crossing Quebec. There are nine pipelines running under the St. Lawrence. Just over seven years ago, Quebec built a pipeline from Lévis to Montreal, a distance of exactly 243 kilometres. Exactly 689 property owners gave their consent, support, and collaboration for the project to proceed. The pipeline was built and has been working fine since 2012. It has been operating for nearly six years now, and things are going smoothly. We have never had reports of a catastrophe of any kind. Have we had complaints from the nearly 700 owners of the properties on which the pipeline runs? Have we heard any whining from them? Have we seen them mount illegal protests? No, because everything is going swimmingly. This goes to show that Canada has what it takes to do big things. Quebec has what it takes to do big things. Sadly, due to the overly strict new regulations adopted by this government, the energy east project was called off, because the proponent was fed up with this government piling rule upon rule. That project would have created a lot of wealth in Quebec, a lot of wealth in Canada, and a lot of wealth in New Brunswick.

Now more than ever, the government needs to start acting in the national interest of all Canadians. The problem is that the guy carrying the ball is not a believer. A Prime Minister who says “we need to phase it out” about Alberta oil may not be the best person to sell Canadians on it, never mind convince British Columbians and their government that it is in all Canadians’ best interest. The Trans Mountain project must go ahead.

• (2240)

[*English*]

Hon. Amarjeet Sohi (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Madam Speaker, our government cares deeply for Alberta, Alberta families, and Alberta workers. We are working hard to build the Trans Mountain extension. Could the member tell the House how many pipelines the Harper government built to take our resources to international markets?

I hope the hon. member from Alberta will show some respect and listen to the question. When she is not listening, she is showing disrespect to Alberta workers and Alberta’s industry.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs: It’s happening. He’s mansplaining.

Hon. Amarjeet Sohi: I hope she will stop heckling, Madam Speaker. I would respect that.

My question for the hon. member is this. How many pipelines did the Harper government build to tidewaters?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I would remind members that when somebody has the floor, they are to be respectful to that person and allow the person to speak. Then, if those people have questions and comments, when there is time for questions and comments, they can feel free to stand and attempt to be recognized.

The hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

• (2245)

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to answer the question from my colleague, the hon. minister.

First, we approved four projects. Having said that, we have to emphasize the fact that we did respect the rules and the law. This is why we took every step necessary to accept those projects. If we had said yes and started the construction, you, all Canadians, and the world would have said that we did not respect the rules, we did not respect the law, and we did not listen to the people. We did it correctly.

The current government was the lucky one to put in all those projects. What are the results today? Nothing. Nothing has been built. When Keystone was rejected by Obama, with a big smile, the Prime Minister said that the Liberals were sad but they understood. We heard the Prime Minister say no to northern gateway. We saw the Liberal Prime Minister impose new rules and energy east was killed. Now we have a tragic situation with Trans Mountain. What is the government doing? Nothing.

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I would remind the member for Louis-Saint-Laurent to address the Chair, not the other members.

[*English*]

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, I always enjoy hearing from my colleague and friend from Louis—Saint—Laurent, whether we agree or not.

He talked about getting the full potential of jobs. Like him, I care a lot about jobs, not just in my riding but in Alberta and across the country.

I went to the oil sands with a CEO from one of the large oil companies. We talked about building more refineries in Alberta and processing more of our oil in Alberta. I asked him how much of that oil could make us more energy sufficient and create more energy security in Canada. We live in a global economy, in a global situation where there is a lot of insecurity. He said 50%, if there was a refinery of the oil that it produced the raw bitumen that could be processed and turned into gasoline and other products and sold within Canada and domestic markets.

Now the government is now talking about investing in the Trans Mountain pipeline, a pipeline that is shipping jobs to China, with low environmental standards and low labour costs to process that material. Does the member support investing in keeping processing jobs in Canada instead of shipping jobs out of the country?

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[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Madam Speaker, my province, Quebec, has two refineries. If energy east had worked, those two refineries could have taken Canadian oil and helped keep our economy moving, instead of us having to buy foreign oil for \$10 billion. Better still, there is a business in my riding called CO2 Solutions that has been working with Natural Resources Canada for the past 15 years or so to improve the energy costs, the environmental costs, of producing oil in the oil sands. I remember because, when I was a journalist, I covered the story with Stéphane Dion, who was the environment minister at the time, so, yes, I believe in the Canadian jobs that could have been created at the two refineries and with CO2 Solutions, which is in my riding.

[English]

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to participate in this emergency debate. I will be splitting my time this evening with my friend and colleague, the member for Surrey—Newton.

The Trans Mountain expansion pipeline represents a crucial test of this country's ability to get infrastructure built that is in Canada's national interest. Watching the Prime Minister's leadership on this file over the past number of months has no doubt reassured Canadians from coast to coast to coast that their country is in good hands. The Prime Minister has said repeatedly, with quiet but firm determination, that the TMX pipeline will be built, and it will. Why? It is because our government has appropriately determined that this \$7.4 billion project is in Canada's national interest. It will create thousands of construction jobs and countless more spinoff jobs in every part of the country. It will ensure Canadian access to global oil markets and world prices. It will open new economic opportunities for the 43 indigenous communities that have signed on to more than \$300 million in benefit agreements along the pipeline's route. It will generate as much as \$3.3 billion in new government revenue over 20 years of operation. That would be new tax dollars to help pay for our hospitals and schools, to build new roads and safer bridges, and to help fund Canada's transition to a low-carbon economy. Those are just some of the reasons the Prime Minister has promised that this pipeline is going to be built, and in a responsible way.

Interprovincial pipelines are the responsibility of the federal government, and when making decisions on interprovincial pipeline projects, it is the Government of Canada's duty to act in the national interest. That is exactly what happened with the Trans Mountain expansion pipeline.

As a member from the province of Ontario, tonight's debate is not some esoteric disconnect that I am involved with or wanted to discuss. It is something that is very near and dear to me. I grew up in the riding of Skeena—Bulkley Valley, in Prince Rupert, British Columbia, a riding situated on the northwest coast underneath the Alaska panhandle, a riding that is beautiful, with mountain scenery, which sometimes I miss.

I am very proud that our government has put in place a \$1.5 billion oceans protection plan so that up and down the B.C. coast, whether it is on the Sunshine Coast, in the Lower Mainland, or up in Prince Rupert, our oceans will be protected.

My parents and my family have resettled in the riding, in North Burnaby, where the current TMX pipeline runs and where the Chevron refinery sits, approximately two kilometres away from where my parents enjoy their retirement, just down from Burnaby Mountain. It is something that is very important to me. It is very important that we get this right, and we are getting this right.

I sat on Scotiabank's bond desk for 10 years, and I covered the oil and gas sector, the midstream sector. For 10 years, I saw the large differential in prices for our Canadian product, our Alberta oil. It was at a much larger discount than what one could get for what was called WTI or Brent. This discount is costing our economy billions of dollars. There are schools that could be built and hospitals that could be funded. We are working to close this gap, and one way we are doing it is by building a pipeline to tidewater to diversify our markets. We need to. It is the right thing to do for our economy. It is the right thing to do for the literally hundreds of thousands of middle-class families and middle-class workers that will benefit from this project.

During the Conservatives' time in government, for 10 years, they did not build a pipeline to tidewater. That is a fact. I am sorry to have to tell them that, but it is a truth about their government. They failed. Let us put it straight. That differential has cost the economy billions of dollars, whether it was provincial revenues, municipal revenues, or federal revenues.

I was proud of the Prime Minister, on April 15, when he commented on why this pipeline is in our national interest. He mentioned the aluminum workers in Alma, Quebec. He mentioned the aerospace workers in Montreal. He mentioned the auto factory workers down in Windsor. He mentioned the forestry workers up in my old hometown of Prince Rupert, British Columbia.

We will stand as a government, today and tomorrow and for years to come, for middle-class Canadians who want to work hard, save, and build a better future for their families. That is what this debate is about this evening. We stand and say that we will build this pipeline. We will get it done.

● (2250)

Let us not forget the people who will actually be building the pipe: the pipefitters, the tinsmiths, the millwrights. Those are the folks we work hard for here every day, day in and day out. Those are folks whom we have come to Ottawa to represent.

I worked on Bay Street and Wall Street, but my roots are on Main Street. They are on those streets in Prince Rupert, British Columbia, where half the population was indigenous and the rest of us were new Canadians. Whether we were born there or not, we all came from somewhere else, except for our indigenous brothers and sisters. We have many indigenous groups that have joined us to build this pipeline. We will work with them and we will continue to consult, unlike the other side, who failed to consult. It was proven in the courts.

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I think it is worth reviewing that process in order to remind Canadians that the decision to approve this project was taken very seriously. It was only green-lighted after careful review, extensive consultations, and thoughtful deliberation based on sound science and Canada's best interests. I would like to highlight some of that this evening.

First, Canadians know that as our government was developing a permanent fix to the way major resource projects are reviewed, we implemented an interim approach to address projects that were then in the queue, such as TMX. That interim approach was based on five guiding principles, such as expanding public consultations, enhancing indigenous engagement, and assessing upstream greenhouse gas emissions associated with the projects.

As part of this, our government appointed a special ministerial panel of distinguished Canadians who travelled the length of the proposed pipeline route, ensuring indigenous peoples and local communities were thoroughly canvassed and heard. Our government made those discussions public on the Internet for all Canadians to see.

In the end, we accepted the National Energy Board's recommendations, including 157 conditions as part of our wider approval of the project and our larger plan for clean growth. We are also investing approximately \$65 million over five years to co-develop an indigenous advisory and environmental monitoring committee for the life cycle of this pipeline, as well as the Line 3 pipeline. This is a Canadian first for any energy infrastructure project in our country. We are doing it right and we are going to get it right.

We have also developed a targeted action plan to promote recovery of the southern resident killer whale population. These are the kinds of specific measures we should expect for a project of this magnitude, but we should not look at TMX in isolation. We also need to consider how the pipeline fits within our government's overall vision for Canada in this clean-growth century.

For example, we have signed the Paris Agreement on climate change. We have worked with the provinces and territories and consulted with indigenous peoples to develop the pan-Canadian framework on clean growth and climate change, a plan that lays out Canada's clear path to a clean low-carbon economy.

At the same time, our government is putting a price on carbon; accelerating the phase-out of coal, which will benefit our environment, lower asthma incidents, and save lives; promoting energy efficiency; regulating methane emissions; creating a low-carbon fuel standard; and making generational investments in clean technology, renewable energy, and green infrastructure.

The TMX pipeline fits within all of this and will support our government's efforts to make Canada a leader in the transition to a low-carbon economy. For example, the TMX pipeline is consistent with Canada's climate plan to 2030. Its GHG emissions are well within Alberta's 100 megatonne cap on the oil sands. It is complemented by the most ambitious oceans protection plan in our country's history, a \$1.5-billion investment to protect our waters, coastline, and marine life for literally generations and generations to come.

The oceans protection plan builds on and maximizes every possible safeguard against an oil spill happening in the first place with measures that include air surveillance, double-hulled tankers, and double pilotage. Transport Canada has been leading the way on this with its creation of an expert panel a few years ago to guide government actions on spill responses.

The new oceans protection plan reflects this and includes the largest investment in the Canadian Coast Guard in years, strengthening its eyes and ears to ensure better communication with vessels and making navigation safer by putting more enforcement officers on the coast and adding new radar sites in strategic locations.

Should something happen, there will be more primary environmental response teams to bolster the Coast Guard's capacity, including several Coast Guard vessels equipped with specialized tow kits that will improve its ability to respond quickly.

● (2255)

Amid all of this, we are enforcing the polluter pays principle. This is a world-class approach that meets or exceeds the gold standard set by places such as Alaska and Norway.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I am sure the member will have a chance to finish up anything he wanted to add during questions and comments.

Questions and comments, the member for Edmonton—Wetaskiwin.

Hon. Mike Lake (Edmonton—Wetaskiwin, CPC): Madam Speaker, I listened with interest to my hon. colleague's speech. As with almost all of the Liberal speakers today, he seemed to mix up consultation with action. They seem to use those phrases interchangeably. The reality is that there is no action whatsoever.

Perhaps he misspoke, but based on the government's record, I do not think so. He said they will stand by as a government. That is exactly what the Liberals are doing. They are standing by as a government.

The Liberals inherited a situation in which northern gateway had been approved before they came to power and energy east was well on its way. What did they do? They cancelled northern gateway and they changed the rules to make it impossible for energy east to move forward.

My question for the hon. member is this: Why should anyone believe they will actually take action this time?

● (2300)

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague from Alberta. He and I have worked considerably on the cause of autism in raising awareness of it in my riding.

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To directly answer his comments, the first thing we had to do was rebuild confidence in the institutions, something the Conservatives eroded under 10 years of their rule. They eroded the confidence in approvals for getting pipelines done, so we had to balance the economy and the environment to work hand in hand. That was one of the first things we did. We put in an interim set of guiding principles.

Yes, we approved TMX, and yes, it will be built, and yes, we will bring bitumen to tidewater. We will export it. We will reduce that differential, ensuring we get the world price, not the discount, which is costing us literally a billion or a billion and a half dollars a month in forgone revenues and taxes, depending on who we look at in terms of research.

We will get that done as a government because we have listened, we have consulted, and we have put in place a set of measures that bring confidence to the process, something the other side failed to do in 10 years.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the Orwellian logic from the Liberals when they say we have to fight climate change by building pipelines and expanding oil production. However, I want to drill down on the economics, because that was what the member was really talking about.

Last month it was reported in the *National Observer* that the Louisiana offshore oil port was completed and the very first very large crude carrier, carrying two million tonnes of crude oil, was bound for China. The only vessel that can make it into Vancouver Harbour is an Aframax, which can only carry a maximum of 550,000 barrels of oil. Given the new dynamics that are happening and the fact that 99% of Kinder Morgan's crude exports go to the United States, I was wondering if the member could comment on where these markets are in Asia if the Americans have already beaten us to it.

Furthermore, why are we investing money in a diluted bitumen exporting pipeline when all of the economics make sense for us be to investing in value added? We are shipping jobs. We see it in British Columbia with the export of raw logs. We export the raw product and we inherit all of the finished goods.

The same is happening with this same kind of mentality, and shame on the Liberals for following this same disastrous economic course. I would like to hear the member's comments on that.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Madam Speaker, what we need to do is first remove the bottlenecks in the system, which is impacting the price. That is causing the discount.

Second, any person concerned for the environment would know we want to take oil from rail to pipe because pipe is safer than rail for the environment, for everything. It is a proven fact. The NDP should be supporting that, and it should be supporting the literally tens and hundreds of thousands of workers who will be building this and saving this.

With regard to prices for products, when we remove the bottleneck, we will see the price go up. That is what we are doing. In terms of who is using oil, there are four sectors in North America called PADD 1, 2, 3, and 4. We need to displace foreign imports of

oil into Canada with our own refined product, and we are on the way to doing that as well.

In Alberta, there is the North West Sturgeon Refinery, which the Alberta government has invested in, along with private partnerships. I was there in January, at the Alberta's Industrial Heartland conference. It is an amazing thing to do, an amazing thing to see, and an amazing thing to tour. Members should see it, because that value added is actually happening.

Along with that, the capacity to do that is constrained. It takes many years to bring on a refinery. It is not just a couple of years, but a long time. In the interim we must develop the resources we are blessed with, whether forestry jobs—and I do not see anyone against forestry—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Unfortunately, the time is up, and I need to go to another speaker.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Surrey—Newton.

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey—Newton, Lib.): Madam Speaker, Surrey is the fastest growing municipality in Canada. Almost 1,000 people move to Surrey every month. We have to create jobs for them. We have to provide infrastructure, hospitals, schools, bridges, and roads, and we need resources and money to build them.

Many good things happen in Surrey—Newton. This weekend, Sikhs are celebrating Khalsa Day. Last year we had over 400,000 Canadians come to Surrey—Newton to celebrate the birth of Khalsa. We will be having a Sikh nagar kirtan and a Sikh parade this weekend, on Saturday. I invite all members to join us in the celebration. I wish everyone celebrating a very happy Khalsa Day and a very happy Vaisakhi.

Tonight's debate is not just about whether we support this pipeline. This government has clearly said that, yes, this pipeline will be built. Tonight's debate is about much more than that. It is about whether we support Canadian workers, whether we support getting our resources to market, and whether we support the rule of law in this country.

On this side of the House, we know how important it is to get our natural resources to market and to diversify beyond the United States so that we get the best value for our products and for Canadian workers.

Canada has benefited from diverse export markets. Thousands of jobs, families, and communities benefit from the trade we do every day. The Port of Metro Vancouver currently supports more than \$200 billion in trade with over 120 countries around the world. We need to open more doors, not close them. They will also benefit when we build this pipeline and get our resources to market.

We also understand that as we grow our economy, we need to take action to protect our environment. Our track record and the decisions we have made are proof of that. When our government approved the Trans Mountain pipeline, we did it as part of our larger plan for Canada's economy, environment, and future. Our decision was based on the best science, wide consultations, and Canada's national interest.

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The review was comprehensive and detailed in the history of building pipelines in Canada. It was based on our five guiding principles, which focused on greater indigenous consultations, wide public participation, putting a priority on science and traditional knowledge, consideration of climate impacts, and assurance that no resource project would go back to the beginning so that the investment community would have the fullest confidence.

Scientists from across the country covered every aspect of this pipeline, from pipeline safety to the effect on wildlife, air quality, and environmental emergencies. While we conducted a scientific review to the highest possible standard, we also made the single largest investment to protect Canada's oceans with the \$1.5-billion oceans protection plan.

This plan strengthens our response to a possible spill with a better equipped Canadian Coast Guard, improved navigational safety, and continuing scientific research. It adopts new technologies to make sure that, in the unlikely scenario that there is a spill, we will have the best technologies available to us to respond.

● (2305)

We understand that to get a pipeline built in the 21st century, we need balance. We need to understand that the environment and the economy go hand in hand. The members on the opposite side do not understand this because they have never had a major pipeline built. The fact is that Canada is rich in resources, and we have a long history of getting those goods to market to create jobs, sustain families, and grow this economy. Just as our history is linked to natural resources, so too is our future. Oil and gas is a key part of that. This is the success that we enjoy when we open markets for our resources. When we close them, we do not just put the economy at risk, we put the livelihood of Canadian workers, their families, and their communities at risk too.

Without this pipeline, 99% of our oil will continue to be exported to the United States, and we will have no choice but to continue to receive less money for our oil. This directly takes billions of dollars out of our economy, money that could go to support the construction of schools, hospitals, and roads across this country. It has been estimated that only having the U.S. as a market for our oil has cost our economy \$117 billion over the last seven years. There are so many challenges we could tackle and opportunities we could seize if we had this money.

The recently elected provincial government in British Columbia ran a campaign last year where it talked about much-needed investment in building schools and a hospital in Surrey, but the question is on where the money for that comes from. The money comes from our natural resources, whether forestry, mining, or oil. This is the foundation of our economy and we must support it, not only for economic reasons, but because if the choice is not to support these industries then we risk the future growth of our communities. In British Columbia, over 33 first nations have signed benefit agreements with Kinder Morgan because it will bring new opportunities, more jobs, and better supports for their neighbouring communities. We cannot choose here to deny them of those benefits.

In closing, I want to proudly say that we approve this pipeline and we will get this pipeline built. We have approved this pipeline with the best possible science, which has accounted for every scenario,

from construction to transport. We brought together and informed Canadians through wide consultations, and we made historic investments so that we have the best tools. We did this because this pipeline is in the national interest, because of Canadians who depend on these jobs and our economy that must grow.

Over the past couple of days, when our Prime Minister took the leadership to bring the premiers from Alberta and British Columbia into one room, I have received many calls appreciating the role and the strong leadership that this Prime Minister and member for Papineau has played compared to the previous Conservative government.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

● (2310)

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Madam Speaker, members on the other side are laughing. They should be laughing, because they are in support of building this pipeline. In fact, their leader was not able to build a single millimetre of pipeline to the coastal waters, and that is a laughingstock in my riding. They themselves are a laughingstock in this House of Commons of the people.

I appreciate being given an opportunity to share these words on behalf of my constituents.

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Madam Speaker, I welcome the speech from my colleague from Surrey, even if I almost totally disagree with it.

How can we pay any respect and take the Prime Minister seriously? Would the member explain to us how we can take the Prime Minister seriously when 14 months ago when talking about the Canadian oil sands, the Prime Minister said, "We need to phase them out"? How can we take him seriously when today he fights for the Trans Mountain pipeline?

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Madam Speaker, the hon. member's question gives me the opportunity to make it clear how we can take the Prime Minister seriously. I take him seriously. I ran on his platform. I had the opportunity to sit with him and share a seat in the House of Commons in my previous term in Parliament. I have seen him up close. I have seen how he brings communities together. I have seen how he wants to bring Canada together to form a stronger Canada.

Building this pipeline proves that the Prime Minister stands tall and strong with respect Canadian unity and in bringing communities together, bringing provinces together, and working for Canadian workers and for the Canadian environment.

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• (2315)

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Madam Speaker, I personally think the member opposite's trust is misplaced. The commitments that were made by the Prime Minister in the election campaign were extremely clear: no mega projects without a social licence; first nations consent; and a new review for the Kinder Morgan pipeline, which was not done. Those are all broken promises.

I want to talk specifically about the Salish Sea located in my riding between Vancouver and Vancouver Island. It was identified by the tanker safety expert panel in 2003, which was a Transport Canada study. It said that the waters around the southern tip of Vancouver Island were one of four areas in Canada with the highest probability of a large oil spill. The south coast of BC, including Vancouver Island, was one of two areas in Canada with the highest potential impact from a spill.

A report done by the Royal Society of Canada identified that there was insufficient research on how to respond to bitumen if spilled into the marine environment. The report said the “potential long-term damage to the environment, waterfowl and furbearing animals is greater. Cleanup of heavy oils and bitumens is extremely difficult for both marine and inland spills because of their specific gravity, viscosity, flash point properties and high asphaltene content.”

In 2013, the Harper government said that it was going to conduct scientific research on bitumen in the marine environment. Then there was the much lauded oceans protection plan in November 2016. The Liberal government announced it would conduct research to better understand how different petroleum products behaved in Canada's marine environment. None of this work has been done. The response times remain unchanged. The research is still not done.

How can that British Columbia member continue to support this pipeline knowing the threat that it poses to our shared waters?

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal: Madam Speaker, as I mentioned earlier, our Prime Minister put \$1.5 billion into the oceans protection plan, which is a landmark in Canadian history. I agree with the hon. member that the previous government did not spend a single cent on an oceans protection plan. The oceans protection plan is all about protecting our coastal waters.

When I was in the previous Parliament, experts explained to us that the new double-hull tankers were safe and able to transport our resources.

I am certain the NDP members would be able to support this pipeline but they are stuck in-between. In one province, they want their associate NDP government to proceed but on the other hand, the other government is trying to stall. Those members are stuck in a very difficult situation, but the oceans protection plan is the best plan ever.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to be able to participate in this important debate about pipelines. I will be sharing my time with the excellent member for Calgary Midnapore, who I know will have a lot to say with respect to her riding as well.

This is a subject on which Conservatives have been relentless in this Parliament. I want to salute the work of my colleague and

neighbour from Lakeland, our shadow minister for natural resources, who is leading the charge tonight and always, as well as the members for Chilliwack—Hope and for Portage—Lisgar who served in the role of shadow minister for natural resources earlier in this Parliament.

In addition to this emergency debate, we have moved and forced votes on two opposition motions which specifically dealt with the subject of pipelines. The first one dealt with energy east and said the following:

That, given this time of economic uncertainty, the House: (a) recognize the importance of the energy sector to the Canadian economy and support its development in an environmentally sustainable way; (b) agree that pipelines are the safest way to transport oil; (c) acknowledge the desire for the Energy East pipeline expressed by the provincial governments of Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, and New Brunswick; and (d) express its support for the Energy East pipeline currently under consideration.

That was an opposition motion put forward by the Conservatives, and I was pleased to join every single one of my Conservative colleagues in supporting that motion. However, 100% of members of other parties, including every single member of the government, opposed that motion, including Liberal members from Alberta who had just claimed that they would fight for pipelines, but when it counted, they stood up and voted against energy east.

More recently, we put forward another motion. We thought we would give them another chance. Here is what we said:

That, given the Trans Mountain expansion project is in the national interest, will create jobs and provide provinces with access to global markets, the House call on the Prime Minister to prioritize the construction of the federally-approved Trans Mountain Expansion Project by taking immediate action, using all tools available; to establish certainty for the project, and to mitigate damage from the current interprovincial trade dispute, tabling his plan in the House no later than noon on Thursday, February 15, 2018.

What a statement of confidence in the pipeline process that would have been from this House of Commons. Again, every single Conservative voted in favour of this motion, but every Liberal and every New Democrat opposed that proposal. They had a chance to vote for action on Trans Mountain. Every single one of them voted against.

We have not only had pro-pipeline proposals debated in this House, but Bill C-48 was the government bill to make the export of our energy resources from northern B.C. impossible. That is further blocking the northern gateway pipeline. Every single Conservative voted against Bill C-48, but every single Liberal and New Democrat voted in favour. As much as a few members tonight want to wrap themselves in bitumen, something as simple and fundamental as their voting record paints a different picture.

All of the Liberals voted against energy east, in favour of blocking the northern gateway, and against a motion to force action on Trans Mountain. All the MPs across the way should not tell us what they believe. They should cast their votes and then we will know what they believe.

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The member for Edmonton Centre recently said in this place, “Never let the truth get in the way of a good story.” Clearly, he never does.

If the government is sincere about pipelines, then it should start voting for them. Our commitment to pipelines did not just start in this Parliament. The Stephen Harper government oversaw the building of Trans Mountain's Keystone pipeline, of Enbridge's Alberta Clipper, of Kinder Morgan's Anchor Loop pipeline, and of Enbridge's Line 9 reversal. We also approved the construction of the northern gateway pipeline.

Now let us be clear. Up until now at least, it has not been the government building pipelines. It has been up to the government, partially through the NEB, to review applications approving or rejecting them, and to establish the conditions that allow them and other commercial activity to succeed. When they were in government, the Conservatives approved every single pipeline that came forward. We established the conditions in which the private sector put forward proposals and we approved those proposals after appropriate review, but we also made sure that this review was appropriate and it was not just a review process that simply bogged these things down in sort of eternal consultations.

Some critics wish that more pipelines had been built, but they have a hard time demonstrating how we could have built pipelines that were never proposed. If the infrastructure minister and others who are making this point are available to pose the question, I ask them to say how they propose we would build pipelines that had not been proposed.

● (2320)

Again, Conservatives approved every single pipeline proposal that came forward. We built four. We approved a fifth. We ensured that every project that was proposed succeeded. I am very proud of that record.

Conservatives have voted for pipelines. We have approved pipelines. We established the conditions under which pipelines were built. We got it done.

What about the Liberal government? It killed one pipeline, the northern gateway pipeline, directly. It killed the energy east pipeline indirectly by piling conditions on it that were designed to make it fail. Let us be very clear. These were conditions that were built to fail. They were put in place and left in place and were clearly designed to make future pipeline construction impossible.

At the same time, for political reasons, the government wants to try to have its cake and eat it, too. It wants to oppose pipelines but to be seen as supporting them at the same time, at least in some political markets.

The government approved the expansion of the existing Trans Mountain pipeline on the basis of interim principles. However, it is clear that the government has a dangerous agenda when it comes to pipelines, and that is to stop as many as possible. If this pipeline is built, it wants to make sure that it is the last one. If the government refuses to take the steps necessary to allow the pipeline to proceed on its own and resorts to either letting it die or nationalizing it, the government will have created conditions in which it will be very

hard to imagine this type of critical, nation-building infrastructure being built in the future. That is the Liberal government policy.

Whoever would invest in an industry where projects were blocked by lawless protestors, in some cases lawless protestors who are members of Parliament, and some national governments block them outside of their jurisdiction and then projects are ultimately nationalized? Do these sound like the kinds of conditions that you, Madam Speaker, as a private sector investor, would find attractive?

We need to establish attractive conditions for those investments, which the government is not doing. The government must establish conditions in which vital projects, and not just this one, can be built with private dollars. It should defend all pipelines. It should vote for them. It should make the clear and obvious case for them, which is that pipelines transport vital energy resources efficiently and with a lower energy impact than the alternatives.

The government should stop talking out of both sides of its mouth. It should stop voting against pipelines, and it should start proceeding.

I would like to make a separate point, as well, about energy policy. That is that the crisis we face at this point is the result of a failed strategy by the government and by some other governments. Again, perhaps it is a strategy that is failing by design. The strategy invites us to look at energy policy as if it were some sort of hostage situation. If energy-producing jurisdictions make concessions, the argument goes, they will be able to move forward with energy development. Just pay the carbon tax, and that will buy the necessary goodwill to get progress on pipelines. Just a little more carbon tax, a little more sacrifice, and then John Horgan and Denis Coderre will release the hostages and support pipeline construction.

One does not need a Nobel Prize, even a fake one, to know that this strategy has failed. We do not want to negotiate with hostage takers anymore. The carbon tax is unaffordable to many Albertans and to people across this country. The federal government is trying to impose it even beyond its jurisdiction. Subnational governments are showing a lack of respect for the constitutional division of powers by trying to stop pipelines, and our national government is showing a lack of respect for the constitutional division of powers by trying to impose the carbon tax.

Objectively, it has not worked. It has not delivered social licence, that nebulous and immeasurable thing. The carbon tax has delivered poverty and misery. It has not delivered social licence, and it has not delivered a pipeline.

The bizarre thing about the government is that its rhetoric actually plays the hostage scenario both ways. It tells those on the right and in the centre that they have to accept the carbon tax to get a pipeline, then it tells those on the left that they have to accept the pipeline to get a carbon tax. If it is going to play this out, then it at least has to decide which is the hostage and which is the ransom.

This is all obviously ridiculous. We should build pipelines because they are in the national interest. We should oppose the carbon tax because it is not. The two are not linked in anyone's mind but the government's, as the current crisis demonstrates.

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Our history shows us, right back to John A. Macdonald, that nation-building infrastructure is vital for our success, that every country needs the ability to access and engage in commerce with others. The government does not understand the importance of vital nation-building infrastructure. It is building walls instead of pipelines between provinces. That has to stop.

Under Sir John A. Macdonald, it took a Conservative to build nation-building infrastructure. It may well take a Conservative government again before we can finally build the nation-building infrastructure that will allow our energy sector to succeed.

● (2325)

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey—Newton, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I noticed that the member was talking about Liberals not voting for this or that. I brought up the recent memory of the 22 hours of voting that the Conservatives forced on us. What they did was to oppose every single one of them, whether it was investing money in infrastructure in Alberta or British Columbia, supporting seniors across this nation, supporting veterans, health care, education, or economic prosperity. They voted against every part of the legislation. Today, they are trying to teach us a lesson.

On the other hand, being a land surveyor and professional engineer, I understand that building pipelines will create opportunities. I am thankful that the member is going to support building this pipeline, but his government should not mislead anyone. That government did not build a single millimetre of pipeline.

● (2330)

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, the hon. member said that we did not build any pipelines. We built four pipelines and approved a fifth. More to the point, we approved every pipeline application that came forward. I would like to ask the member if he can name a project that we rejected or a pipeline we did not build, because the reality is that we built every one that came forward.

The member says that he recognizes that pipelines create opportunities. He should have voted for them. He asked about the budget vote. We opposed the budget. We opposed a budget that imposed new taxes on Canadians and has no plan to balance the budget. This is the only finance minister in the country who does not have a date in mind for when he could balance the balance.

If the member wants to know why we were up late voting, maybe he should ask his House leader or the Prime Minister. They refused to agree to our legitimate expectation that the national security adviser come to Parliament and give members of Parliament the same briefing he gave to the media. What happened after putting the House through this extended process of the vote was that during the break week, they backed down and we were given the briefing. Conservatives were able to succeed nonetheless. If the member wants to know why they voted for so long to block this from happening when it happened anyways, well, he can discuss that with his House leader.

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for talking about jobs in Alberta and jobs in general. We hear a lot about the need to ship resources to market. What it looks like where I live is that raw log exports have gone up tenfold in 10 years. In British Columbia, we have the highest crime and poverty rates now. That is what it looks like.

The Liberal government removed the tariff so we could build infrastructure to build ferries in Canada that brought in \$118 million a year. They removed that, and now we are building ferries in Poland.

When we look at oil and gas, Norway has a trillion dollars in their prosperity fund. Alberta has \$11 billion. We have been irresponsible. We have been buying into this idea that we need to cream our resources and ship them out of our country in the name of jobs. It is not working. It is time for it to change.

This proposal, this pipeline, is built on the premise that we are going to create jobs. Instead, it is shipping jobs out of here. There is nothing tied to putting money aside for future generations. There is nothing tied to creating value added and refineries here in Canada. There is nothing tied to protecting the environment. This whole pipeline idea is a failure, and it is not in the name of jobs.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, I have two quick points in response. First of all, I support the member's idea that we should put resource revenue aside for the future. That was Peter Lougheed's vision. Very clearly, it is not one shared by Rachel Notley, if we look at the deficit figures at present in Alberta.

Now, the member spoke about raw materials, and this is a very important though maybe technical point. However, the reality is that pipelines can transport a range of different kinds of materials. That is why I say build the pipeline. I think there is a case to be made for letting the market decide what products are shipped.

The fact is that with a pipeline that is constructed, there is as much opportunity to transport raw materials as there is to transport refined and upgraded materials. However, we need to be able to transport them one way or the other. Alberta is not itself able to consume all the energy it produces, either as raw or final product, which is why we need the capacity to transport it. That is a fairly fundamental point.

Again, we can debate whether we should be exporting raw material, but that is secondary to the question of whether we should be constructing pipelines. We have to move—

● (2335)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I'm sorry but the time is up.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Calgary Midnapore.

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Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Madam Speaker, there is a former president of the United States of America whose very telling quote is appropriate for this evening and for this debate. That president was Franklin D. Roosevelt, who said that in politics, nothing happens by accident, and if it happens, one can bet it was planned that way. I think we can see that there were no accidents here, that this terrible incident was the result of the Prime Minister playing politics and refusing to show leadership which resulted in devastating effects.

I am going to talk about these different devastating effects. Those would include missed opportunities, fleeing investments, as well as personal tragedy which I have seen close and up front in my riding of Calgary Midnapore with the people there.

We certainly heard a lot about missed opportunities today. They are too numerous to count, but we will review some of them again.

Petronas LNG, the Malaysian corporation, a \$36-billion project evaporated into thin air as a result of not going forward with this project.

Keystone XL is especially dear to my heart. As the former deputy consul general for Dallas, Texas, I spent a lot of my time on the Keystone XL pipeline file. This was in 2010-13, when Obama was in office. It was a pipe dream at that time where it was complete futility that this would possibly happen. However, a new administration has brought forward the possibility of Keystone XL again. It has recently been resurrected and it has the possibility to carry 830,000 barrels of oil a day. It is an \$8-billion project, on which again we have seen no action as a result of playing political games and poor leadership by the Prime Minister and the Liberal government.

We have heard about energy east ad nauseam, a \$15.7-billion project that many say rests squarely on the National Energy Board's decision to consider direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions. Again, this is another situation of the Liberal government playing political games and the Prime Minister showing a complete lack of leadership.

Finally, the northern gateway was a project that would have provided close to 4,000 jobs and will never come to pass. It is absolutely tragic. I am certainly not exaggerating when I talk about missed opportunities in terms of the delay, the indecision, and the lack of leadership with the Prime Minister and the Liberal government.

I will talk now about fleeing investment because we certainly have seen investments from Canada absolutely exit in droves. For example, we have seen in Calgary a complete decline in investor confidence in a way we have not seen before. I cannot remember the last time we saw this lack of investor confidence in Canada and specifically in Alberta in the natural resources sector.

Companies come to mind such as Royal Dutch Shell. Shell was one of the backbones of the natural resources sector in Calgary. I remember very fondly in 1988, people sporting Shell's Olympic jackets at that time. There was Norway Statoil as well and the list goes on: Marathon Oil, ConocoPhillips, Apache, Harvest. The list is endless. These are all investors that have left Canada and their return

will not happen overnight. This is something that will take years to build for their return. This is an absolute tragedy.

I would like to share a story about an event I was at on Wednesday night in Calgary. It was put on by the U.S. consulate. We were very fortunate that Ambassador Craft from our good friend to the south, our closest friend and ally, was there. It was a very lovely event.

● (2340)

The subject of the event was very disturbing to me as an elected official for Alberta and Canada. This event was specifically in regard to Canadian investors looking for the opportunity to invest in the United States of America. This is just another example of the opportunity that exists externally for corporations should they not wish to invest their dollars here, which is a result of this poor environment, the political game playing, and lack of leadership from the Prime Minister and the Liberal government.

The fleeing investment is very tragic indeed. However, the most tragic thing of all is the personal tragedy, the personal situations that have arisen as a result of the political game playing and the lack of leadership from the Prime Minister and the government. We have seen incredible unemployment levels in Alberta and Calgary. There are 40,000 fewer jobs now than at pre-recession levels, with 29,800 of those jobs being directly attributed to the oil and gas sector. That is an absolutely astounding number. I met many of these people face to face when I went door knocking last year in the by-election in Calgary Midnapore. There are so many tragic stories out there.

In fact, I would like to share one that was in the *National Post* on April 12 of this past week about Erik Nyman, who could very possibly be one of my constituents. It says:

Erik Nyman, an out-of-work journeyman electrician, was a general foreman in his mid-20s at a thermal oilsands project when he was laid off in December 2015.

Since then, he's gone back to school at Mount Royal University in Calgary to upgrade his skills—obtaining a project management certification and doing courses toward a Blue Seal apprenticeship certification—worked with career coaches and placement agencies, and lost count of how many custom-tailored résumés he's sent out.

"I've been hitting everything that I think I'm qualified for," he said, but fears that he's up against candidates with far more experience for the same entry-level positions.

Nyman said he is willing to work for free in exchange for experience, but it's a difficult subject to broach with an employer, especially when he's still hoping—above all else—to get a full-time job and a paycheck.

"Depression has hit really hard," he said, adding he's now taking anti-depressants. He said he is trying to stay positive for himself and for his 13-month-old son, and his friends have been a source of support.

Erik really could be one of my many constituents in Calgary Midnapore facing this very sad situation.

In addition, we are seeing a decline in the younger workforce as well. U of C engineering school, one of the top engineering schools in the country with a proud history of post-graduation employment, has seen its post-graduation employment rate decrease to 43% in 2016 from 87% in 2014. That is a rate drop of more than 50%. It very sad at a time when we need to be giving our youth hope for the future.

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Calgary's vacancy rates have also been affected dramatically like this. There are secondary and tertiary effects in regard to this. It is the worst of any major Canadian city, having hit 27.4%, which is the highest level in over 30 years, as a result of the lack of leadership from the Liberal government and the Prime Minister. That means 1.1 million square metres of empty downtown space, which is almost 700 hockey rinks, accounting for 40% of the empty downtown office spaces across Canada's 10 largest cities.

I could go on about business owners trying to find efficiencies and hang onto employees as they struggle with these new realities as a result of this lack of leadership.

Make no mistake, none of this happened by accident. It was the political game playing and lack of leadership by the Liberal government and the Prime Minister.

• (2345)

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague and friend from the status of women committee.

In budget 2012, in an omnibus budget bill, the Conservatives deeply undermined and weakened the role of the National Energy Board, which was done with the hope that it might facilitate pipeline approvals. In fact, I was able to participate from my home on Gabriola Island, where we were concerned about pipeline impacts.

In the northern gateway review, people came to a hearing. They could give their testimony. They could hear each other. However, when it came to the Kinder Morgan review process, which was after the National Energy Board review had been significantly altered by the Harper amendments, there was no cross-examination of evidence. Anybody who had advice for the National Energy Board could only file it in written form. It was called a public hearing, but there was actually no hearing. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency tried to intervene but was barred as an intervenor. The National Energy Board ruled that the late-breaking evidence that bitumen sinks in a marine environment be barred from the hearing, from the process, based on its being prejudicial to Kinder Morgan. Of course, now we have all these court cases charging that the process was inadequate.

I would like to know my colleague's view, looking back on it, about whether the Conservative amendments to the National Energy Board process, effectively gutting it, might have contributed to these delays.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: Madam Speaker, I would argue that it is the current Liberal government that has taken away the power of the National Energy Board and rendered it almost impotent, by changing the board's composition but, more important, by creating barriers for project approval with everything from gender considerations to unreasonable considerations that cannot be met. It is the Liberal government that has done the damage to the National Energy Board, and not our previous Conservative government. In fact, in addition to the ministerial veto, the Liberals have rendered it to the point that perhaps no project may ever be built again, and that is significant.

It was not our actions as the former Conservative government. It is the actions of the Liberal government that have weakened and decreased the power of the National Energy Board.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Madam Speaker, the Liberals imposed a carbon tax on every Canadian in every community across the country. They said it would buy a social licence to get pipelines built. I wonder what the member hears from her constituents in Calgary and from Albertans across the province about that concept and what they think about the carbon tax.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: Madam Speaker, certainly the constituents of Calgary Midnapore have been clear. They do not want a carbon tax.

As well, I was very proud to sit on the environment committee last week, when we had testimony from both CAPP and CEPA. During that testimony, I asked specifically whether the implementation of a carbon tax would reduce emissions. I wanted a straight answer, yes or no. The witnesses were not able to indicate that implementing a carbon tax would provide any reduction in emissions.

Constituents of Calgary Midnapore do not want this carbon tax, and the testimony, as I learned in the environment committee last week, shows that the very objective of the carbon tax does not serve the purpose for which it was intended.

• (2350)

Mr. Vance Badawey (Niagara Centre, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to be in the House today to speak to this very important issue.

I have to say I have been here all night, and the parliamentary theatrics that have been going on are quite impressive from the opposite side of the floor.

However, I do want to be very clear. This is an issue that is about our country, about our nation, that is looking at taking the next step, enhancing and elevating doing business to the next level and sending a strong message internationally that Canada is in fact open for business.

The TMX project is of vital strategic interest to Canada, and it will be built. Our government has initiated formal financial discussions with Kinder Morgan, the result of which will be to remove uncertainty overhanging this particular project. We are also actively pursuing legislation, the actions that will assert and reinforce the federal jurisdiction in this matter, which we know we clearly have. Hundreds of thousands of hard-working Canadians depend on this project being built. Protecting our environment and growing our economy are not opposing values. On the contrary, each makes the other possible.

I want to give those members on the opposite side of the floor a bit of a history lesson in comparison to what I have heard today. The member for Durham mentioned that the government was in comparison to a Hail Mary pass. Let me just say this: I think on the opposite side of the floor it is the opposition that is throwing the Hail Mary.

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Some will recall that the Harper government refused to officially endorse the northern gateway pipeline project until the National Energy Board's joint review panel had a chance to finish its review. The Hail Mary came when the party, attempting to shore up its western vote, asked this government to endorse the project before the experts had a chance to review it. This government was very clear in the process, being both accountable as well as responsible and, most importantly, respectful.

We consulted, for example, with the indigenous community. Our government was and continues to be committed to renewing the relationship with indigenous peoples based on the recognition of rights, respect, co-operation, and, equally as important, partnership. We are committed to reconciliation and will work in partnership to address the issues of importance to indigenous communities.

On the TMX expansion, Canada has in fact completed the deepest consultations with rights holders ever on a major project in this country. To date, 43 first nations have negotiated benefit agreements with this project, and 33 of those are in British Columbia. We have listened, and we will continue to listen.

Once again, in contrast, the Conservative Party had 10 years to build a pipeline to ship Canada's resources to new global markets. It built zero. The Conservatives had 10 years to consult indigenous and local communities. They ignored them. The Conservatives had 10 years to rally the country around the need for new pipeline capacity to end the discount on landlocked Canadian crude. They did not. The Conservatives had 10 years to address environmental concerns. They failed. We will take no lessons from the Conservatives.

The economic benefits to this nation will be compounded on the strengths that we have already established throughout many years: thousands of new jobs during construction, hundreds of permanent jobs per year during operation, \$4.5 billion in government revenues to reinvest in priorities such as hospitals and roads, clean-energy initiatives, and innovation technology, which I will get back to in a second.

● (2355)

Strategic access to new global markets unlocks the value of Canada's natural resources. This \$7.4-billion project has significant economic benefits, including providing an expected \$4.5 billion in government revenues. It will create thousands of new jobs in Alberta and B.C. during construction, not to mention the supply chain that exists from coast to coast to coast. Indigenous peoples will also benefit from jobs and business opportunities as a result of over \$300 million in mutual benefit agreements signed with the proponent.

The project will expand access to Canada's export market access for oil markets in Washington State, northeast Asia, Japan, China, South Korea, and Taiwan, and secondary markets in the United

States, such as California, Hawaii, and Alaska. It will also help address an emergency bottleneck in Canada's pipeline network, which might otherwise drive producers to greater reliance on transportation by rail.

As I mentioned earlier, community consultations consisted of 44 public meetings in 11 communities on pipeline routing, more than 35,000 questionnaire submissions, more than 20,000 email submissions, and 1,600 participants in the review process.

In May 2016, the Minister of Natural Resources named a three-member ministerial panel for the proposed project. The ministerial panel heard the views of Canadians, local communities, and indigenous groups along the proposed pipeline and shipping route, who may not have been considered as part of the review in the past.

Some people would ask, as the member for Niagara Centre, what interest I would have in this. The interest is from coast to coast to coast, with respect to Niagara being an international trade corridor; the Great Lakes; the ability to contribute as a region and as a riding to the integration of distributional logistics; ensuring we become an enabler for the nation to perform a greater and higher degree of transportation, thus placing our great nation on a higher level globally when it comes to the economy. There is our supply chain, Oskam Steel, Thurston Machine, Barber Hymac, JTL Machine, ITT, all contributing to the sector, from Ontario, from Niagara.

This government has been deliberate in putting forward an overall strategy for jobs and the economy. The oceans protection plan, the trade corridor strategy, the ports modernization plan, the infrastructure plan, science and innovation, international relations, all of which this government has been participating in over the course of the past two years. They are all in step with Canada's new economy and ensuring that this project aligns with the other efforts this government has been working on for the past two years to create jobs, to create the economy, to create health, to create wealth, and to ensure that our product, our GDP, as well as the relationships we are accruing over time throughout our global economy are healthy. This project, supported by this government moving forward sooner rather than later, is one that we as a nation will be truly proud of well down the road for the future generations, to once again ensure that the economy of Canada extends to the economy of the global markets that we are inevitably going to partner with.

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): It being midnight, I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until later this day at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 12 a.m.)

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