



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

House of Commons Debates

VOLUME 148 • NUMBER 346 • 1st SESSION • 42nd PARLIAMENT

OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Wednesday, October 31, 2018

—

Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, October 31, 2018

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayer

• (1400)

[*English*]

The Speaker: It being Wednesday, we will now have the singing of O Canada, led by the hon. member for Kitchener—Conestoga.

[*Members sang the national anthem*]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*Translation*]

COMMISSIONER OF DEBATES

Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, anyone in search of bad ideas need look no further than the Liberals and especially the Prime Minister. Topping the list of bad ideas are the Trans Mountain buy-out and premature pot legalization. This week's featured bad idea is a leaders debate commissioner, which is like a matryoshka doll of bad ideas. Open it up and voilà! There is another bad idea inside it, another one inside that, and so on.

The government is going to pay a former governor general—and we all know how much people care about governors general—\$5.5 million to do two TV shows. The parties will not be required to participate, broadcasters that want to organize their own debates can do so, the government is unilaterally choosing the commissioner, and so on. This is ridiculous.

Instead of wasting people's money, the government should start making itself useful by compensating farmers, reimbursing Quebec for costs related to asylum seekers and transferring a decent amount of money for health care. It should make itself useful.

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[*English*]

1984 ANTI-SIKH RIOTS

Mr. Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today we remember the day, in 1984, when riots took place on the streets of Delhi and numerous other cities across India. Organized mobs in the city killed thousands of innocent Sikhs only because of the choice of their faith. Sikh homes were identified, tagged and systemically targeted. Mobs came out, women were raped, men were

burned by having tires placed on them and lighted, and children were killed for simply having unshorn hair. It is a memory that haunts Sikhs every day. Thirty-four years later, we still await justice for those women, widows and orphans.

Canadians stand with the Sikhs of India and demand justice for the victims. Our prayers are forever with them, and we will never forget.

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VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on October 13, I attended the Jessica Martel Memorial Foundation gala in Morinville, held in remembrance of Jessica Martel, who was brutally murdered in an act of domestic violence.

Across Canada, families live in fear, and many victims have nowhere to turn. Jessica was one of those victims. She chose to leave an abusive relationship, and her decision cost her her life.

In memory of her daughter, Lynne Rosychuk, an extraordinary woman, together with the family and friends of Jessica, took action. In September, the foundation broke ground on Jessie's House, a home to support survivors of domestic abuse in my riding and surrounding areas.

In November, Alberta recognizes Family Violence Prevention Month. I call on the government to support initiatives like Jessie's House that help break the cycle of violence and support survivors of domestic abuse in our communities.

* * *

• (1405)

[*Translation*]

BROME—MISSISQUOI

Hon. Denis Paradis (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on October 10, 2018, I announced that Canadian Heritage is investing \$210,000 to renovate the round barn in Mansonville, a village at the eastern edge of Brome—Missisquoi. This barn, one of only six or seven of its kind left in the Eastern Townships, was built in 1912 and truly is one of our heritage jewels. The funding will help renovate the structure and make it safer, so it is better suited to welcoming visitors who wish to reconnect with their history.

Statements by Members

While I was in Mansonville, I also visited the Missisquoi North Volunteer Centre. At the centre, which offers support and coordination services to over 191 registered volunteers, I met a team of very passionate people who help bring this wonderful community to life. I would especially like to thank Mable Hastings, the executive director, for her warm welcome.

[English]

She is also inviting the Prime Minister to visit the centre in Potton.

Great job, Mable.

* * *

[Translation]

RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, NDP): Mr. Speaker, every day, cars travelling on the Trans-Canada Highway have to stop to let CN freight trains go by.

Every year, Transport Canada keeps a sad list of railway crossings across the country with the highest risk of accidents, and unfortunately my riding is on that list.

This is also an economic development issue. The transportation of freight on that stretch of track is expected to skyrocket in the coming years. The solution to these two problems is to build a multi-level rail bridge.

Saint-Hyacinthe is the only place in Canada, and perhaps even in North America, where a rail line crosses a highway.

I have given my colleagues, the infrastructure and transport ministers, all of the information on this file, and I hope to have their full co-operation and assistance.

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[English]

SAULT STE. MARIE SOUP KITCHEN COMMUNITY CENTRE

Mr. Terry Sheehan (Sault Ste. Marie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to stand in the House today to commend the management, staff, volunteers and all participants at the Sault Ste. Marie Soup Kitchen Community Centre, which is celebrating its 35th anniversary. Specifically, I would like to thank and congratulate Mr. Tony Martin, founder of the Soup Kitchen Community Centre. Recently, at a special ceremony in front of family and friends, the Tony Martin Community Hall was dedicated to him.

Many people in the House would know Tony, as he served as the MPP for the Sault from 1990 to 2003 and as an MP from 2004 to 2011.

Tony was a champion of this initiative, and he brought a valuable resource to our community. The Sault Ste. Marie Soup Kitchen is a special place that operates several programs to assist people in a respectful and collaborative manner. It offers nutritious free meals at noon every day and the good food box program. It sponsors a family program, two after-school initiatives and much more.

Congratulations and best wishes to Tony for the generosity he has created within our community. I thank his family and everyone at the soup kitchen.

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PRIVACY

Mr. Ron Liepert (Calgary Signal Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this past weekend, I was watching Global News and saw the report that Statistics Canada, without consent, was preparing to gather personal financial information from some 500,000 Canadians. When I saw that, I thought that it could not be true. Well, it is true, because over the past two days, the Prime Minister has not only confirmed it but has also doubled down. He says that Canadians' private information will be protected, but this is also the guy who said he would balance the budget and that budgets balance themselves. It sounds to me like this is another case of "I'm here from the government, and I want to help".

Not even my wife knows about my own personal financial transactions. Why does the Prime Minister think he has the right to snoop into my transactions and those of half a million Canadians? The Prime Minister is finally demonstrating what we have all known: the long-held belief that he has deep admiration for China's basic dictatorship.

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● (1410)

[Translation]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Yasmin Ratansi (Don Valley East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on October 27, I organized a town hall with my colleague from Don Valley West addressing the government's track record over the past three years.

[English]

We asked constituents to choose their top three issues from the economy, climate change, poverty alleviation, a youth strategy, a national housing strategy, immigration and the legalization of cannabis. To our surprise, climate change was their top priority. They all support a price on pollution, and they want us to do more. They feel that climate change is an urgent issue, and they would like to leave their children and grandchildren with a positive legacy. Unlike the Conservatives, they want action now.

[Translation]

Our constituents believe that the provinces that are reluctant to impose the carbon tax are being unwise and that the opinions of those who deny the scientific evidence on climate change are not relevant to the discussion.

Statements by Members

[English]

BEACONSFIELD

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the City of Beaconsfield, in my riding of Lac-Saint-Louis, recently received the Municipalité Écon'eau attestation from Réseau Environnement for its ambitious efforts in the area of water conservation. This attestation recognizes the city's infrastructure-leak-detection program, its efforts to raise awareness about drinking water conservation and the quality of the information on the water section of the city's website.

[Translation]

Beaconsfield's drinking water consumption continues to drop year after year. The replacement of underground infrastructure, financed in part by the new building Canada fund, has made the city's water supply system more efficient.

[English]

Congratulations to Mayor Georges Bourelle; Councillor Karen Messier, the environmental conscience of the city; and all council members for their leadership in helping to protect Canada's most vital resource: water.

[Translation]

Congratulations, Beaconsfield.

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[English]

FORMER MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR WILD ROSE

Mr. Blake Richards (Banff—Airdrie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to pay tribute to Myron and Dorothy Thompson, from Sundre, Alberta. This couple came to Ottawa in 1993 with the high ideals of taking on the political elite and returning power to the grassroots. These were Myron's non-negotiable core values as he served as the member of Parliament for Wild Rose for 15 years, winning five consecutive elections.

There was not one person in the parliamentary precinct who did not know Myron, with his white stetson and boots. He was friends with everyone. In the House, he was legendary for his straight-talking, fire and brimstone speeches, with his steadfast belief in God guiding his way. People would literally line up to chat with Myron, while journalists used to refer to him as the John Wayne of Parliament Hill. He was authentic and he cared; he mentored and made a difference. I can personally attest to that, because a phone call from Myron in 1992 changed my life. He took a chance on this young whippersnapper, as he would say, and gave me a start in politics, one that ultimately led to me being able to succeed him here in Parliament.

Everyone in this House, at home and all across Canada, is with Myron and Dot in this fight.

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FILIPINO CANADIANS

Mr. Ali Ehsassi (Willowdale, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise in the House today in support of Motion M-155, a private

member's motion recognizing Filipino heritage month brought forward by my good friend the member for Scarborough Centre.

As the member of Parliament for one of Canada's most diverse ridings, which includes a sizeable and vibrant Filipino Canadian community, it would bring me great joy to see the invaluable contributions of the Filipino Canadian community to our country, our economy and our society formally recognized in the chamber.

The richness of the Filipino Canadian community is on full display every day in Willowdale. Other communities across Canada are similarly blessed. According to the 2016 census, there are over 800,000 people of Filipino descent living in Canada. The Filipino community is the fastest growing community in Canada. Their population has grown by 27% since 2011. In short, we are truly blessed as a country.

The community is without a doubt an essential part of our uniquely Canadian mosaic and I am honoured to join my colleagues—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Humber River—Black Creek.

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INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM DAY

Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the house today to recognize International Religious Freedom Day on October 27.

In light of the recent horrific events in Pittsburgh, it is important to recognize that the protection of religious freedoms is a fundamental right of all Canadians.

Unfortunately, in many parts of the world people of all faiths face persecution. This is why it is enormously important to make sure that religious freedom is respected and protected by all. Where religious freedoms flourish, there is greater stability and more economic opportunity.

Today, and all days, we should always underscore our commitment to peace and inclusion at home and abroad for all religious and faith communities.

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● (1415)

CANADIAN NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring three dates to the attention of the House.

The first, September 17, was when the hon. member for Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill told the House that she had lost confidence in the Prime Minister and the Liberal government, and crossed the floor. She relied on her oath as a former officer to do that. The Prime Minister at that time said that was fine and wished her well.

Statements by Members

The next date was last night, October 30, devil's night, when the true plot of our feminist Prime Minister came to pass. He marched in his zombies on devil's night to vote against a female member of Parliament who has served in the Canadian Armed Forces. Even the cabinet was there for that shameful episode.

The member for Etobicoke Centre, who has spent millions of dollars fighting for integrity in elections, stormed the stage to run a sham meeting that has no application.

The final date will be October 21, 2019, when more Canadians will be able to follow her lead and support the Conservatives.

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BELLEVILLE

Mr. Neil Ellis (Bay of Quinte, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to congratulate the City of Belleville on winning the grand prize for the Kraft Heinz Project Play.

Belleville will receive \$250,000 towards its Field of Ability, which will modify Parkdale Veterans Park diamond into a fully accessible ballpark.

The Field of Ability will sport a rubberized surface and accessible dugouts, as well as improved fencing, parking and paved pathways to provide barrier-free sporting grounds. It will be home to our Challenger Baseball League, open to persons of all ages with cognitive or physical disorders. The Field of Ability will also be the first of its kind in the Bay of Quinte riding and in all of the surrounding regions between Ottawa and Toronto.

Earlier this year, when I attended a local fundraising event for the Field of Ability, the goal of raising \$700,000 for this project seemed further afield than most of us would have liked. But through Project Play, we are now halfway to our goal of building it, so that more people will be able to play.

I give a big thanks to all the community volunteers behind this project.

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[*Translation*]

PAY EQUITY

Ms. Karine Trudel (Jonquière, NDP): Mr. Speaker, women and women's advocacy organizations fought for over 42 years to get the Liberals to finally keep their promises on pay equity.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the women for their hard work and determination. Congratulations, ladies.

Thanks to their hard work, the government has listened to reason and is finally taking a step in the right direction.

However, we hope with all our hearts that the government will agree to work with the opposition parties, the unions, women's groups and any other qualified parties. We especially hope that the government will heed their advice on ways to improve the bill, which is far from perfect. Many questions remain, and the fact that women might not achieve pay equity for another four years is very troubling.

Quebec passed pay equity legislation nearly 22 years ago. Women have waited long enough. Let us roll up our sleeves and get to work on improving and passing the bill.

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[*English*]

CANADIAN NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

Ms. Rachael Harder (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our self-declared feminist Prime Minister has yet again sought political revenge against a woman who does not agree with him. Last night, Liberal members of the NATO parliamentary association attempted to overthrow my colleague, the member for Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, from her position as the chair.

Members might ask why? It was for no other reason than to take revenge on the member for standing up for Canadians rather than blindly following the Prime Minister. A feminist government would champion all women, rather than pervert democracy for selfish gain through retaliatory action.

The member who currently serves as the NATO association's chair is extremely qualified. As a respected veteran, she served as a captain in the Royal Canadian Air Force and worked as a senior manager in the Department of National Defence and in the aerospace and defence industries for more than 30 years.

Despite the Liberal's unfounded, undemocratic and altogether hostile protest, the member remains the qualified and distinguished chair. The Conservatives support democracy and we support her.

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● (1420)

ASSOCIATION OF PROGRESSIVE MUSLIMS

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for years I have had the privilege of sponsoring the Association of Progressive Muslims' annual Eid dinner on the Hill. The president, Mobeen Khaja, has worked tirelessly among all faith groups to make this dinner a celebration of peace and respect for people of all backgrounds. In addition to earning him the Order of Ontario, Mobeen's decades' long efforts were recognized and acknowledged last week when he and his colleagues met with Pope Francis in Rome.

At a time when we see conflict, violence and disrespect toward people of faith, and most recently the horrific attack on the Jewish community in Pittsburgh, Mobeen and the Pope have shown everyone that there is another way. The world could use a lot more of the quiet wisdom of Mobeen and the Pope and a lot less of the bombastic rhetoric that showers us daily.

I would like to offer my congratulations to Mobeen and the Association of Progressive Muslims for the work they do to build bridges among people of all faith.

*Oral Questions***ORAL QUESTIONS***[Translation]***PRIVACY**

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we now know that this government has already accessed the financial records of thousands, if not millions, of Canadians without their consent. On at least two occasions, the data were collected from a credit bureau. These data include names, addresses, social insurance numbers and more. This is a huge invasion of privacy.

Will the Prime Minister step up and immediately demand that the government stop collecting this data?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we will always make sure that Canadians' privacy is protected.

Statistics Canada will use anonymized data for statistical purposes only. No personal information will be made public. Statistics Canada is engaged with the Privacy Commissioner's office on this project and is working with them to ensure Canadians' banking information remains protected and private. The chief statistician has asked the Privacy Commissioner to take a deeper look at this project so as to ensure that the privacy of Canadians is always protected.

[English]

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is not about the process that the government is following. It is about the fundamental right of Canadians to have their personal financial information protected. It is not about what is being made public. It is about whether or not the government thinks it has a right to peer into individuals' bank accounts and access line-by-line transactions.

Will he do the right thing and tell his government department to stop accessing Canadians' private information?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this government will always make sure that Canadians' privacy is protected. Statistics Canada will use anonymized data for statistical purposes only. No personal information will be made public. Statistics Canada is engaged with the Privacy Commissioner's office on this project and is working with them to ensure that Canadians' banking information remains protected and private. The chief statistician has asked the Privacy Commissioner to take a deeper look at this project to ensure that the privacy of Canadians is always protected.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is not about what the Prime Minister wants to do with this information. It is about the fact he does not have a right to take it in the first place. This is not anonymized data. These are line-by-line financial transactions linked to individual social insurance numbers. He is not protecting Canadians' privacy; he is violating Canadians' right to privacy.

He has a choice right now. He can stop this. He can stand up for Canadians' right to have their personal information protected. Will he do so?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this government will always ensure that Canadians' privacy is protected. That is why we are making sure that the Privacy Commissioner is working with the head of Statistics Canada to ensure that all privacy norms are protected.

Once again, we see that for 10 years under the Conservatives, they chose to govern by ideology, not science. When facts got in the way, they simply stopped collecting them. They fired the chief science adviser, they eliminated the long-form census, they chose to get rid of facts when facts got in the way. We are going to make sure we are making sound decisions based on facts while protecting privacy.

● (1425)

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister can try to deflect responsibility all he wants. The fact of the matter is that he has the ability, he has the power, right now to stand up for Canadians' right to privacy. He seems to be confused. He seems to think that if the government has access to our data, that is somehow protecting our privacy. Does he not understand that protecting privacy does not just mean not making it public? It also means ensuring that government does not have the right to intrude into the private lives of Canadians and individuals.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House not only do we believe in facts and evidence, but we fundamentally believe in the strong work done by the Privacy Commissioner to protect Canadians' privacy. This is something that we believe in and cherish on this side of the House, and we will always protect Canadians' privacy, which is why we are ensuring that Statistics Canada works with the Privacy Commissioner to ensure that they are always protecting Canadians' privacy.

The Conservatives are yet again trying to stir up fear and division and attack facts. We will protect Canadians' privacy and rely on data.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, once again, the Prime Minister seems to think that he, as Prime Minister, and his government have the right to go into the line-by-line detail of Canadians' bank accounts and credit cards. Conservatives will always stand up against that kind of intrusion in the lives of Canadians.

He talks about protecting privacy. Just last year, the Liberal government was forced to pay \$17.5 million in a class action lawsuit over a major privacy breach involving student loan recipients. The government's track record in protecting Canadians' right to privacy is a disaster.

Will he do the right thing, stand up for Canadians' right to privacy and end this practice?

The Speaker: I would invite the hon. member for Cape Breton—Canso and others, of course, to remember that the time to speak is when they have the floor. I am sure he knows that.

Oral Questions

The right hon. Prime Minister

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, not only do we respect and protect Canadians' privacy, we also respect the Privacy Commissioner whose job it is to ensure that Canadians' data and Canadians' privacy is properly protected.

The members opposite have not once mentioned the excellent work that the Privacy Commissioner does and will continue to do. We will choose to work with the Privacy Commissioner to ensure we continue to protect Canadians' data. That is something the members opposite will not do because they prefer to play politics with this.

We will continue to use the right tools to protect Canadians' privacy.

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[Translation]

TAXATION

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, while the Liberals twiddle their thumbs about taxing web giants, other countries are taking action.

The United Kingdom announced yesterday that it is introducing a 2% digital services tax. Spain unveiled its own 3% digital services tax 10 days ago. The European Commission is considering a 3% tax on web giants' revenues.

Canada, however, cannot even be bothered to impose a simple sales tax like the one our own companies are subject to.

Speaking on the red carpet at the ADISQ gala, the Prime Minister said he had heard the culture sector's cry for help.

Hearing is all well and good, but when is he going to do something?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the review of the Broadcasting Act is currently under way, but we have not been idle.

We are investing over \$3.2 billion in our artists and creators, which is the largest investment in the G7. We have doubled funding to the Canada Council for the Arts. We have reinvested \$675 million in CBC/Radio-Canada. We have also injected \$172 million into the Canada Media Fund.

We are always proud to support our artists and creators, and we will keep supporting them.

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I think that he did not understand the question. I was talking about taxing web giants. He is not taxing web giants, but that is no surprise because the government's tax policy is illogical and hard to follow.

The Canada Revenue Agency has audited the files of 332,000 Canadians who receive benefits, but it is incapable of processing the 3,000 files of people involved in the Panama papers.

Yesterday, in his disjointed answer, the Prime Minister said that they had spent \$1 billion to carry out investigations. That billion dollars was spent to investigate Canadians who are not wealthy

enough to defend themselves. It is obvious that we have a two-tiered tax system.

Once again, what will the minister do?

• (1430)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yes, we have invested historic amounts in the Canada Revenue Agency to fight tax fraud. To ensure that there are consequences, we fully adopted the OECD Standard for Automatic Exchange of Financial Account Information and provided the resources that the CRA needs to better target taxpayers involved in aggressive tax avoidance.

With regard to offshore non-compliance, since we took office, the Canada Revenue Agency has doubled the number of audits conducted abroad. Fighting tax evasion, particularly abroad, is a priority for our government.

* * *

[English]

BY-ELECTIONS

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the leaders of the NDP, the Conservatives, the Greens and the Bloc all wrote the Prime Minister to insist that he do the honourable thing and respect the more than 300,000 Canadians who did not have a representative and call the by-elections.

I am not sure these leaders could agree on what time of day it is, but they do agree that every Canadian deserves a voice in Parliament. The only one who does not agree is the Prime Minister. Let us remind him that this place does not belong to him, that the voices of all Canadians are due respect and are deserving of a representative here.

When is the Prime Minister going to do the right thing and call the by-elections?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to call the by-election in Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes. We look forward to calling the other by-elections soon. We are all looking forward to meeting on the campaign trail in those by-elections.

I recognize and applaud the enthusiasm of the members opposite for the electoral process.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we just wish he shared that enthusiasm for the electoral process.

When it comes to Liberal promises about respecting our democracy, they are about as hollow as the pumpkins I put on the front step last night. These guys are all trick, no treat. The Liberals betrayed their promise to make 2015 the last election under first past the post. They broke their promise not to ram through an election bill, just like Stephen Harper did.

Now the Prime Minister is holding these ridings hostage for his political games. He called by-elections just last year in less time than we have waited in York—Simcoe, Burnaby South and in Outremont. What is the problem—

The Speaker: The right hon. Prime Minister.

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, all Canadians can be pleased that we have moved forward on significant election legislation, which will ensure, unlike the 2015 election that was under the Conservatives flawed elections plan, that we will have fair elections that will allow people to vote right across the country, that will recognize real limits on the expenses of third parties and during pre-writ periods. We know Canadians expect free and fair elections. That is exactly what we are delivering. Promise made, promise kept.

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CARBON PRICING

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it was a long and arduous journey, but the Liberals are starting to finally reveal the truth about their carbon tax. Yesterday it was the environment minister and her parliamentary secretary who both admitted that the new Liberal carbon tax would kill jobs and make Canada less competitive. They said that it was bad for business. They admitted that it was the rationale for exempting large industrial emitters.

Will the Prime Minister recognize that it will also affect jobs in small and medium-sized businesses and give those companies the exact same break?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, climate change is real. We are the first generation to know what to do about it, but the last generation that will actually be able to do anything about it. That is what we are doing.

We have put forward a comprehensive plan to fight climate change, to work with provinces, which are willing to do so, right across the country and to make sure that we put a price on pollution. That is something Canadians expect.

The Conservatives do not have a plan to fight climate change, are not even sure climate change is real and do not know how to meet their targets.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister was on TV in Quebec where he said that nothing Canada could do would have an impact on climate change. Therefore, he put forward a plan that would have no impact on climate change, because he has given Canada's largest emitters a special deal. He recognizes that people who work in those companies will have their jobs threatened if they are forced to pay the full price of the carbon tax.

My question is simple. For all those employees who work in small and medium-sized businesses, will they get the same deal?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we recognize that it is time Canada had a real and concrete plan to fight climate change. That is exactly what we put forward by putting a price on pollution. It is very simple. Pollution is free, so we have too much of it. We put a price on it; we reduce pollution. That is what the essence of our plan is.

We are moving forward in a way that supports families and indeed, yes, supports small and medium-sized businesses as we go through the transition toward a cleaner economy and toward protecting future generations. The Conservatives—

•(1435)

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is the Prime Minister's own plan that makes pollution free. He has given massive exemptions to big businesses that can afford well-paid government lobbyists. However, small and medium-sized businesses that do not have that ability are left bearing the full brunt. Now we learn that he has exempted coal-fired power plants from his carbon tax.

Why is the Prime Minister making pollution free and taxing individual Canadians and families?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the question from the member opposite gives me an opportunity highlight that we put a plan in place to phase out coal by 2030. Meanwhile, Stephen Harper's plan, which is the closest the Conservatives have to an actual plan because they have not put forward any plan, would have phased out coal by 2060, which is completely irresponsible. However, what is even more irresponsible is the party opposite has no plan to phase out coal or act on climate change at all. The Conservatives have no plan to do anything to tackle it as a challenge facing our kids, to make our air cleaner for kids and grandkids. We are acting while they are—

The Speaker: Order, please. The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has put forward a plan that gives massive exemptions to the country's largest emitters. He said to all those companies that had well-paid government lobbyists who could negotiate a special deal, no problem, 90% off on their carbon tax. Now we learn there is a special deal for Canada's largest emitters in the electrical generation field.

Why is it that when the Prime Minister brings forward a plan, it is individual Canadians and families that bear the brunt? Why is the Prime Minister giving a big break for polluters and a big tax for commuters?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, unlike the Conservatives, we believe that emissions need to go down and that we need to create good, middle-class jobs for Canadians. What the Conservatives are saying is, surprise, surprise, factually wrong.

We have set a target for industry to reduce pollution. If it fails to meet that target, it pays the price. If it does better, for example through innovation, then it is rewarded. Our plan will also give money directly to households where the federal backstop applies. The only mystery here is, where is the Conservatives' plan?

Oral Questions

[Translation]

DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, apparently the Prime Minister cannot tell the difference between parliamentary work and general elections. There was no need to impose a leaders' debates commission, and there is even less need for the Prime Minister to try dictating the rules of the next election.

Why makes the Prime Minister think he has the right to impose the criteria for the next round of election debates?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in 2015, we promised Canadians we would set up a leaders' debates commission precisely because the Conservative Party played so fast and loose with debate rules and the election that Canadians did not have an opportunity to see national leaders' debates during the last campaign.

I can see why he would want to perpetuate that chaos and confusion this time around, but we promised Canadians we would set up a debates commission, and that is exactly what we are doing. Canadians deserve to be well informed during the coming election.

[English]

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there were more debates in the last election than in generations, and the rules of those debates were agreed to by all parties coming together with major broadcasters.

However, this is not the first time the Prime Minister has tried to rig the system to benefit himself. He tried to rig Canada's voting system. He tried to restrict the role that opposition parties play in parliamentary debate. He is ignoring the influence of foreign money in our elections, while attempting to silence the voices of opposition parties. Now he is trying to unilaterally impose a new set of rules and new bureaucracy on election debates.

Is it not clear that the only kind of reforms the Prime Minister is interested in are those reforms that benefit his party?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): On the contrary, Mr. Speaker. We made a commitment to Canadians in 2015 that we would bring forward a debates commissioner, particularly because the Conservative Party so did not want to be in debates last time that there was no English consortium debate. The Conservatives did not allow that to happen and far too many Canadians did not have access to the debates that were held. We promised to put forward a fair and level playing field for debates in our country. Unfortunately that is something the Conservatives cannot handle.

* * *

●(1440)

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, nearly a year ago, the Prime Minister stood in the House and apologized to the hundreds of members of my community who were kicked out of the Canadian forces, often with dishonourable discharges. Now the government is refusing to revise the service records of those LGBTQ veterans to reflect their honourable service.

Offering compensation through the class action lawsuit is fine, but this is more than a question of money to those who were kicked out. Certainly those veterans deserve more than just a note on their file that will not even say sorry.

Why is the Prime Minister refusing to revise service records for those people who were kicked out for being LGBTQ?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, apologizing to the LGBTQ2 community members who had been discriminated against and then marginalized by the Canadian government in decades past was an important step in moving forward. However, we recognize there is always much more to do.

We will work with the community, with LGBTQ2 veterans and others to ensure that as we move forward, we fix past errors and make sure that kind of discrimination never has its place ever again in Canada, for any community.

* * *

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, why is public shaming the most effective tool to get this Prime Minister to do the right thing?

The Prime Minister knows organized criminals in India predicate on seniors, persons with disabilities and other Canadians with bogus Revenue Canada phone calls, swindling millions of their dollars. After more than 60,000 complaints, we finally have some action by the RCMP, which publicly admitted and acknowledged that the pressure finally led to some government action.

Will the Prime Minister tell us how we will follow up to ensure that these calls stop and to make sure that Canadians are protected against organized criminals in India?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we trust our security services and intelligence agents to do what needs to be done to protect Canadians at home and overseas. We will continue to work with partners around the world to go after criminals who are attacking or harming Canadians. This is something that we take very seriously and will continue to work on with the collaboration of all Canadians.

* * *

[Translation]

PRIVACY

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what we are hearing here in the House is troubling. We have a Prime Minister lecturing parliamentarians and Canadians and defending Statistics Canada as it collects confidential and personal data on Canadians without their consent. Today we find out that the Privacy Commissioner of Canada is launching an investigation following revelations that were brought to the Prime Minister's attention on Monday.

Oral Questions

Will he continue to defend Statistics Canada or will he put an end to this situation immediately?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, indeed, we on this side of the House, the government, expect to work with the Privacy Commissioner to ensure that Canadians' privacy is always protected. We understand that this is a priority and we will do everything we can to protect Canadians' privacy. That is why we celebrate and support the work of the Privacy Commissioner. We note that it was in fact Statistics Canada that asked the commissioner to take a second look at what is happening.

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, according to media reports, Statistics Canada has gathered data going back 15 years to get confidential and personal information on Canadians. The problem is that this is being done without their consent. This violates the Access to Information Act. The Prime Minister is aware of the situation. We have been asking about it since Monday, and he continues to stubbornly defend Statistics Canada. It is unacceptable. The Privacy Commissioner has just launched an investigation.

Will the Prime Minister continue in his obstinacy or will he put an end to this immediately?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we respect the work of the Privacy Commissioner. We will allow him to do his work. In fact, it was Statistics Canada that asked the commissioner to have another look at the program to ensure that the privacy of Canadians is always protected. On this side of the House, we expect Canadians' privacy to be protected at all times, and that is what we will always do.

• (1445)

[English]

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Milton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this Prime Minister is so out of touch that he cannot see the fact that Canadians have a big problem with the government having real-time data on how they go about their daily lives. If someone goes to Tim Hortons, the government knows they are there. If someone goes to the grocery store, instantly the government knows they are there. This is not right. If someone makes a transfer to their son or daughter, the government knows they are there because they are using their debit card and it is getting all the transactions.

Can the Prime Minister understand the invasion of privacy is so concerning to Canadians, or is he just so out of touch?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this government is unequivocal about protecting Canadians' privacy every step of the way, which is why we continually work with the Privacy Commissioner and ensure that all government agencies are protecting Canadians' privacy. The member opposite is simply engaging in scary stories to try to frighten Canadians about some sort of Big Brother statement. We know the fundamental concern the Conservatives have really is about having policy based on evidence and not on their ideology, as they proved for 10 years.

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Milton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, we have to rely upon what journalists are digging up because the government provides no information to us. What I have read this morning, and I take it to be true, is that Statistics Canada, the government, did seek real-time transactions, and that is exactly what

I am describing. Secondly, Canadians have a big problem with the fact they were not told that the information would be taken. The minister had an opportunity to report to Parliament last year the methods by which Statistics Canada is gathering data. He failed to include it in the report.

Why is he hiding this from Canadians?

The Speaker: Order. The hon. minister for innovation and the hon. member for Edmonton Riverbend seem to be having a conversation. While it may be a pleasant conversation, perhaps they could do it outside.

The right hon. Prime Minister.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for 10 years under the Conservatives, they chose to govern by ideology, not by facts or science. When facts got in the way, they simply stopped collecting them. They fired the chief science adviser and eliminated the long-form census. We have brought back both. Now, Statistics Canada is engaged with the Privacy Commissioner's office on this project and others to ensure that the information of Canadians remains protected. We will always protect the personal information and the privacy of Canadians.

* * *

CARBON PRICING

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in 2015, Liberals promised to protect our environment and make polluters pay once and for all. However, this weekend, the Liberals defied all logic with a new plan that lets some of the largest and wealthiest polluters pay less than \$1 per tonne of emissions. The Liberals want to put a price on pollution but will not actually make polluters pay. Conservative premiers call for a buck a beer. The Liberal Prime Minister calls for a buck a tonne.

Liberal, Tory, same old story. Does the Prime Minister actually think he is a real climate leader?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know that emissions need to go down and we need to continue creating good middle-class jobs for Canadians. What the NDP is saying is simply factually wrong. We set a target for industry to reduce pollution. If they fail to meet that target, they pay the price. If they do better, for example through innovation, they are rewarded. Our plan will also give money directly to households where the federal backstop applies.

Unlike the NDP, we know that protecting the environment and growing the economy need to go together. While they are playing their rhetorical games, we are focusing on delivering on protecting the environment for Canadians.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have decided that in New Brunswick the price on pollution for one tonne of greenhouse gases will be one dollar. These days, you cannot buy anything with a dollar, except for a tonne of pollution. That is not going to address climate change and protect the environment. How cynical.

The Liberals say that they want to set a price on pollution, but refuse to make polluters pay. What is that all about?

Is the Prime Minister's plan to pretend to protect the environment while giving handouts to big polluters?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are establishing a real price on pollution across the country. We always prefer to work with the provinces. However, we will impose the federal plan on those provinces that have not implemented an acceptable plan of their own.

We have set a target for industry to reduce pollution. If it fails to meet that target, it pays the price. If it does better, for example through innovation, then it is rewarded.

It is a plan that both protects the environment and grows the economy.

* * *

● (1450)

[English]

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Cristiana and her husband operate the Blue Door Gallery in Brigus. Cristiana is originally from Brazil, but now makes Newfoundland and Labrador her home. She was delayed by the previous government's immigration policies, but thanks to our new streamlined processes we have made it easier for Cristiana to obtain her Canadian citizenship.

Immigration is critical to our economy. We have an aging population and labour market challenges across Canada, which are acutely felt in my region. Could the Prime Minister update the House on the government's immigration vision for the coming year and beyond.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Avalon for this important question and for his hard work. Generations of newcomers have been the engine of Canada's growth and have enriched our communities. We know the economic potential of responsible immigration. That is why our government has an ambitious immigration plan to address labour shortages, drive innovation and create more middle-class jobs that will benefit all Canadians.

In the past three years, we have cut backlogs, shortened wait times and restored fairness. We will continue to build an immigration system that serves Canadians' needs today and well into the future.

[Translation]

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the inevitable happened. Yesterday, the Governor of the Bank of Canada indicated that low interest rates are a thing of the past, that interest rates will rise, and that Canadians will have to live with that. Unfortunately, over the past three years, we have had a completely irresponsible government that went on a spending rampage and racked up a deficit three times higher than expected and promised. The government has no idea when it will balance the budget.

Since the Prime Minister has reneged on all of his election promises, will he at least take into account what the Governor of the Bank of Canada said yesterday?

The party is over.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, the Bank of Canada's decision is an indication that the Canadian economy is doing very well. We had the highest rate of growth in the G7 last year. We created over half a million jobs across the country. We have the lowest unemployment rate in 40 years, and the list goes on.

Our plan is working because we are investing in Canadians, in communities and in the future we are building together. Our plan is working, unlike that of the Conservatives who were unable to generate any growth in 10 years.

* * *

[English]

CARBON PRICING

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister tells commuters that carbon taxes are the only way to fight climate change. However, if I can quote even the CBC right here, it states:

The new federal proposal would exempt 800 tonnes of that from carbon taxes.

That will allow...[96] per cent of Belledune's greenhouse gas emissions to pass through its giant 168-metre smoke stack for free...

When will the Prime Minister admit that his is a tax on commuters not polluters?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are putting a price on pollution. We know that putting a price on pollution is the most efficient way of actually reducing pollution and spurring the kind of innovation that we need in Canada to prepare for the economy of tomorrow.

The Conservatives do not have a plan. The Conservatives do not want to tackle climate change. They would prefer to spend their time spinning tales about what we are doing or not doing. We are showing concrete leadership on fighting climate change. They are dragging their heels and trying to stay in the bad—

The Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Carleton.

Oral Questions

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Now, Mr. Speaker, he is accusing the CBC, whom I quoted directly, of spinning tales, and I will not allow that kind of attack on our public broadcaster. He is allowing coal-fired plants to have up to a 96% exemption from his carbon tax. Again, the same question. Is this not just a new tax on commuters and not polluters?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is mistaken, because he must think we are still under Stephen Harper's plan that was phasing out coal by the 2060s. This plan, our approach, is to phase out coal by 2030. We know that we need to take immediate action to fight climate change. That is why we have a comprehensive plan to fight climate change that includes putting a price on pollution when, quite frankly, the members opposite are going to run on making pollution free again. That is not what any Canadians want.

• (1455)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, actually it is precisely what the Prime Minister wants. His plan does make pollution free for the largest industrial polluters. They get an exemption for, in this case, up to 96% of their emissions. They will be completely tax-free. Meanwhile, single mothers, soccer moms, small businesses and seniors will pay the tax on 100% of the energy they use. Is this not, again, a tax on commuters and not on polluters?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is putting a price on pollution so that we can fight climate change and grow our economy at the same time. The measures we are putting forward are actually going to leave Canadians better off in the places where we are having to bring in the federal system.

If the member opposite were to spend half the time working on his own plan as he is spending trying to twist, torque and misdirect our plan, the Conservatives might actually have something constructive to add to the debate on the most pressing global issue our planet faces.

* * *

TRANSPORTATION

Ms. Sheri Benson (Saskatoon West, NDP): Last year, Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan government killed the STC and today Greyhound Canada service ends at the stroke of midnight. The most vulnerable Canadians will suffer because of the uncertain future of safe public transportation across western Canada. People deserve better than disappearing bus routes and a last-minute promise of funding with no details and no timelines. When will the government tell Canadians how it will ensure safe and equitable transportation for all?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we recognize the significance of Greyhound's sudden reduction in bus services for many Canadians, especially for seniors and those in indigenous, rural and remote communities. While private sector transportation companies have stepped up to provide continued bus service that will cover 90% of the affected areas, some gaps remain. That is why we are prepared to assist affected provinces and indigenous communities in determining the best path forward and are open to considering avenues toward finding effective solutions for Canadians.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting that the government is still making plans even though time has run out.

Greyhound is stopping service in western Canada today. The markets will very likely replace the most profitable routes, but for many isolated communities, their coach is turning back into a pumpkin.

The minister failed to reassure indigenous and rural communities when he told them what he planned to do to prevent these regions from becoming isolated.

Can the Prime Minister tell us what concrete measures his government will take to prevent these regions from becoming isolated?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we realize that many Canadians are worried about Greyhound's sudden reduction in bus services, especially for seniors and those in indigenous, rural and remote communities.

Private sector transportation companies have stepped up to provide continued bus service that will cover 90% of the affected areas. However we are prepared to assist affected provinces and indigenous communities in determining the best path forward and are open to considering avenues toward finding effective solutions for Canadians.

* * *

[*English*]

JUSTICE

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister misled veterans when it came to restoring lifetime pensions. He misled veterans when it came to his promise about not taking the Equitas veterans back to court. Now he is forcing a distinguished naval officer into court and denying him the very documents he needs to defend himself.

Before the Prime Minister lets veterans down once again, will he commit today to providing Vice-Admiral Mark Norman's legal team the documents it needs for him to defend himself?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will take no lessons on the treatment of our veterans from members of that former Conservative government.

Oral Questions

Since 2016, we have invested \$10 billion for veterans programs and services. We have raised financial supports for veterans and caregivers. We have supported a continuum of mental health services. We have expanded a range of services available to families of medically-released veterans. In budget 2018, we announced \$42.8 million to increase service delivery capacity and introduced the pension for life plan. We also reopened every single veterans service office that the Conservatives had shut down.

• (1500)

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the one distinction of the former Conservative government is that we never lied to veterans. The Prime Minister stood with the Minister of National Defence, the member for Kelowna—Lake Country and a number of people wearing their medals, promising to restore pensions and promising never to take veterans to court. He broke both promises, and those veterans should be ashamed of themselves.

Now he is forcing a Canadian Forces officer into court over a Liberal cover-up that most of his ministers initiated. Will the Prime Minister show some respect for our veterans and our legal system and give Mark Norman the documents?

The Speaker: Order, please. I ask members to be judicious in their comments.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, we have invested in veterans since 2016. We have invested over \$10 billion in our veterans in supports for them and their families and ensuring there is treatment and support for mental health, for PTSD. We have reopened the veterans service centres that the Conservatives closed down across the country. Every step of the way we have been there for our veterans. We recognize there is more to do.

However, we will continue to demonstrate that we recognize the valour of their service and the support they deserve. We will not use them for political stunts the way the Conservatives always have.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, veterans will get to decide for themselves in October 2019.

The Prime Minister and his ministers still refuse to answer our questions about Vice-Admiral Norman. They are quick to offer an ISIS terrorist a chance to come to Canada, but when it comes to helping a distinguished soldier and providing the documents he needs, they will not budge.

Yes or no, will the Prime Minister ask his clerk to testify that the documents have been destroyed?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, after 10 years of Veterans Affairs Canada suffering from underfunding, we were proud to secure the support of many veterans in 2015. We plan to seek their support again in 2019, because we are making meaningful investments in the things they need.

We have invested over \$10 billion in veterans' programs and services. We have increased financial support for veterans and caregivers. We have supported a continuum of mental health services. We have also reopened all of the Veterans Affairs Canada offices that had been closed by the Conservatives.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Michel Picard (Montarville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very concerned about fraud, especially phone scams, which are proliferating in Canada and becoming more and more sophisticated. It has gotten very hard for Canadians to tell the difference between legitimate calls and fraudulent ones. A recently aired documentary revealed that call centres in India are targeting Canadian citizens.

Would the Prime Minister tell the House what the government is doing to protect them?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Montarville for raising the issue and for his hard work.

I was pleased to hear that, over the past two weeks, Indian law enforcement officials have made arrests and seized equipment in illegal call centres suspected of being involved in phone scams.

The recent raids were the result of RCMP efforts to take down illegal call centres and protect Canadians. Fraud is a global problem, and these arrests will go a long way toward protecting Canadians.

* * *

[English]

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister promised “a true partnership between the federal government and the provinces.”

Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario oppose Bill C-69. The Premier of Ontario says that Bill C-69 holds back natural resource development for the whole country and that Bill C-69 is the worst possible news, at the worst time, for Canada's energy industry. He is right.

Will the Prime Minister listen to Premier Ford, Premier Moe and his good friend, Premier Notley, and kill his no more pipelines bill, Bill C-69?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for 10 years, the Conservatives tried in vain to get our resources to new markets other than the United States. They were unsuccessful, because they refused to understand that getting new projects built required partnership with indigenous peoples, defence and protection of environmental science and thoughtfully working with businesses to give them the certainty they needed to move forward.

That is exactly what we are doing in Bill C-69. We are demonstrating that we understand, the way we were able to with LNG Canada, to get things—

• (1505)

The Speaker: The hon. member for London—Fanshawe.

* * *

CANADA POST CORPORATION

Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the New Democrats raised the issue of Canada Post denying CUPW members short-term disability during the ongoing labour dispute. Today we hear that Canada Post is also going after maternity leave top-up. It is ironic, because it is thanks to CUPW that we have maternity leave top-up at all.

Not only is this means-spirited, it skirts federal law. The minister indicated that she would not interfere with collective bargaining. That is fine, but will she stand by while her Crown corporation violates federal law?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, since we took office in 2015, we have been working with organized labour in the country, we have been working with employers in the country and we have demonstrated that we understand that collaboration at the bargaining table and respectful engagement is the best way of moving forward.

We do not believe in political interference at the bargaining table, on either side, unlike the two parties opposite. We will continue to respect the capacity to do collective bargaining at the table. We hope all parties reach the right settlement.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. James Maloney (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we must look ahead and pursue new technologies to find solutions and provide a sustainable future for our children.

We know that we do not have to sacrifice the environment to create jobs and provide economic benefits to Canadians. The government believes developing Canada's resources in cleaner, more sustainable ways will create good, middle-class jobs, enhance competitiveness and reduce pollution.

Could the Prime Minister update this House on steps the government is taking to modernize Canada's resource development practices, while maintaining the necessary balance between environmental stewardship and economic expansion and job creation?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Etobicoke—Lakeshore for his hard

work of this issue. Canadians increasingly value sustainable practices to provide economic benefits. We have recently invested \$5 million to position the Borden mine as the mine of the future.

This will be the first underground mine to replace all diesel mobile equipment with battery electric vehicles, bringing significant environmental benefits to the mining sector by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This project will also help create 250 jobs for communities and indigenous peoples in northern Ontario.

* * *

[Translation]

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Hon. Steven Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, listen to this recommendation: “Procure a second Resolve-class auxiliary oiler replenishment ship by 2018 to address an urgent capability gap on each coast.”

Who recommended that? The Liberal-dominated Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence. However, the Prime Minister is asleep at the switch and has been slow to order the *Obelix* from the Davie shipyard, as he did with the *Asterix*.

What is the Prime Minister waiting for—a phone call from Irving? The workers are ready and the navy needs the ship. What does he have against Quebec?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we recognize the expertise of the workers at the Davie shipyard. They did an excellent job delivering the *Asterix*. This summer we awarded the Davie shipyard a \$610-million contract for three icebreakers and the conversion of a first vessel.

When the Conservatives were in power, they excluded the Davie shipyard from the national shipbuilding strategy and all the significant work that entails. Our government continues to support the shipbuilding industry across the country.

* * *

PENSIONS

Mrs. Marilène Gill (Manicouagan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, steelworkers have been on Parliament Hill for three weeks this year to stick up for retirees who lost their pensions and insurance benefits when the companies they worked for went bankrupt. They have still not been able to secure a meeting with the minister. The government says it stands up for the middle class, seniors and workers. Give me a break. If that were true, first of all, it would be meeting with the workers, and second, it would vote in favour of my bill that seeks to protect them.

If the minister will not meet with the steelworkers, who are available right here, right now, will the Prime Minister meet with them instead?

Privilege

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House believe that when Canadians come to the end of their careers, they deserve to retire in peace and security.

In budget 2018, we committed to taking a whole-of-government, evidence-based approach to ensure a secure retirement for all Canadians. This builds on the work that we have already done. We have improved the Canada pension plan. We have increased old age security for our most vulnerable seniors. We will continue to work to support Canadians in retirement.

• (1510)

[English]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I have a notice of a question of privilege.

The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby.

* * *

[Translation]

PRIVILEGE

TIME ALLOTTED FOR CONSIDERATION OF BILL C-86

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise today on a question of privilege regarding the 850-page bill that has just been tabled in the House. This is a gargantuan bill that has been distributed to all members of the House.

[English]

I am also going to be raising an accompanying point of order on this very same legislation.

As the House well knows, this is the most massive omnibus legislation that has ever been tabled in the House of Commons. It contains 850 pages, far beyond what we saw even under the previous Harper regime, when the Liberals at the time complained of 200- or 300-page omnibus legislation and pledged to end it.

Today this 850-page bill, just delivered in the House a few hours ago, has been placed in the hands of parliamentarians without the necessary tools for us to properly consider it.

In this legislation—

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

The hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby has a point of privilege that I am trying to hear, and I am having a hard time. I would like everyone who is talking to talk in the lobby, or if they are here, to whisper a little more softly, please.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, the bill is 850 pages long. Last night, at the finance briefing, I asked how many clauses and subclauses were in the bill. Nobody there from the finance department was even able to tell us how many clauses and subclauses exist in this massive piece of legislation. When the finance department itself is unaware of just how many clauses and subclauses are in the bill, thousands surely, we have to wonder about the intention, which the Liberal government has clearly signalled, to ram the bill through the House as quickly as possible.

My contention is that the government wants to push it through with a scant few days of debate, which means, in terms of each clause, that at best, they would be getting a few seconds of parliamentary scrutiny.

As the House is well aware, we wear many hats in the House. We represent our ridings, each one of us, as members of Parliament, and we are proud to do so. I am proud to represent New Westminster—Burnaby. We represent our party caucus often, except for the independents. We represent the policies that have been put together by our respective parties, so there is a partisan part to the job we do.

A key part of our job is to vet government legislation, to go through that government legislation to make sure that the wording is right and to make sure that the legislation would do what it purports to do. That is a key part of the job of a member of Parliament, and has been since the very foundation of our country.

Vetting the laws, making sure that the amendments brought forward are well written, making sure that the changes the government seeks would accomplish what they are supposed to, is a key part of being a member of Parliament.

Many of us have seen a myriad of cases where legislation was not properly vetted. It had to go through the court system and was then returned to the House of Commons, because that vetting process, the work of members of Parliament to actively look through legislation and ensure that the legislation adopted would be effective legislation and well worded, was not done in that way. It went to the courts, and then it came back here.

Words matter. Actions matter.

What I am submitting today is that it is impossible to do our job effectively with the incredible size, the almost clownish size, 850 pages, of the legislation that was tabled by the government just 48 hours ago.

The government's intention to not even take the time to respect parliamentary procedure and work through the committee structure to allow for appropriate debate so that we get more than a few seconds of scrutiny of each clause and subclause, to my mind, indicates a breach of privilege.

• (1515)

[Translation]

On page 60 of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition, it reads that contempt “does not have to actually obstruct or impede the House or a Member; it merely has to have the tendency to produce such results.”

On page 81, it also says:

Speaker Sauvé explained in a 1980 ruling: “...while our privileges are defined, contempt of the House has no limits. When new ways are found to interfere with our proceedings, so too will the House, in appropriate cases, be able to find that a contempt of the House has occurred”.

[English]

I would submit that this is a question of privilege that deserves the attention of the House.

Here is the recent history behind omnibus legislation in this place.

Points of Order

[Translation]

When Stephen Harper's government was in power and the Liberals were in opposition, they criticized, and rightly so, the undemocratic tactics of the Conservatives, who used omnibus bills on numerous occasions.

Here is what the current Minister of Public Safety had to say about the Conservatives' budget implementation act in 2012 when he was a member of the opposition.

[English]

This is what he said at the time:

On the procedural point, so-called omnibus bills obviously bundle several different measures together. Within reasonable limits, such legislation can be managed through Parliament if the bill is coherent, meaning that all the different topics are interrelated and interdependent and if the overall volume of the bill is not overwhelming. That was the case before the government came to power in 2006.

When omnibus bills were previously used to implement key provisions of federal budgets, they averaged fewer than 75 pages in length and typically amended a handful of laws directly related to budgetary policy. In other words, they were coherent and not overwhelming.

However, under this regime the practice has changed. Omnibus bills since 2006 have averaged well over 300 pages, more than four times the previous norm. This latest one introduced last week had 556 sections, filled 443 pages and touched on 30 or more disconnected topics, everything from navigable waters to grain inspection, from disability plans to hazardous materials.

It is a complete dog's breakfast, and deliberately so. It is calculated to be so homogenous and so convoluted, all in a single lump, that it cannot be intelligently examined and digested by a conscientious Parliament.

That was the Minister of Public Safety speaking, and I could not agree with him more. The idea that we must intelligently examine legislation that is brought before us is something that is fundamental to our rights as parliamentarians and our responsibility as parliamentarians.

In 2015, the Prime Minister and the Liberal Party agreed with that point. Here is what was in the Liberal Party platform about omnibus legislation:

We will not resort to legislative tricks to avoid scrutiny....

Stephen Harper has also used omnibus bills to prevent Parliament from properly reviewing and debating his proposals. We will change the House of Commons Standing Orders to bring an end to this undemocratic practice.

As members know, the Standing Orders were changed slightly in June 2017. Standing Order 69.1 was supposed to be the Liberals' answer to the abuse of omnibus legislation. Unfortunately, since then, we have seen a number of new omnibus bills being tabled by the government. Bill C-63, the 2017 second budget implementation act, was divided for votes at second and third reading, because it contained many provisions that were not in the budget documents.

● (1520)

[Translation]

Then there was Bill C-74, the spring 2018 budget implementation bill. It was over 550 pages long and affected over 40 different acts. It dealt with matters as diverse as veterans' compensation, changes to the Parliament Act with respect to maternity and parental arrangements, and the establishment of the office of the chief information officer of Canada.

[English]

The second budget implementation act for 2018 is 850 pages long. It is without precedent, certainly in living memory. It has thousands of clauses to study. As I mentioned yesterday, no one is capable of telling us how many clauses and how many subclauses exist in this legislation. That indicates to all members of Parliament that there is a problem with legislation that might have been rushed.

We have an important job: to scrutinize, to examine and to review the legislation to make sure that it actually does what it purports to do. This massive bill, this clownishly sized bill, includes seven different stand-alone pieces of legislation inside the bill itself. Each one of them merits consideration. Each one of them merits review and examination. They have all been thrown together in a massive omnibus bill.

I would argue that we cannot simply qualify this bill as an omnibus bill. It is much more than that. The government tabled this monstrosity on Monday, and it expected the MPs in this House to be ready to start debating it and offering amendments only a few hours after it was tabled. It seems obvious to me that such measures are an obstruction to the performance of the parliamentary duties of all members of Parliament in this House.

Surely, Mr. Speaker, we have reached a point where you must intervene. We have reached the point where this is over the line of what is acceptable in any parliamentary democracy. We have to ask ourselves where this will end. If 850 pages and thousands of clauses are acceptable, could the government table a thousand-page bill or a two thousand-page bill, allocate a minimum amount of time for debate and then ram it through the House? If that would not be acceptable, then surely we can agree that there is a limit somewhere. I would argue that this limit has been reached with Bill C-86.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I hope that you will find a prima facie case of privilege here. If you do, I will be ready to move the appropriate motion.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I will take this under advisement.

The hon. member for Chilliwack—Hope.

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, from the perspective of the official opposition, we agree with many of the points the member made, pointing out the hypocrisy of the Liberal government in regard to its changing views on omnibus legislation. I would like to ask that we reserve the right of our House leader to come back to add to this question of privilege in the very near future.

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER

BILL C-96—PROPOSAL TO APPLY STANDING ORDER 69.1

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am rising on a point of order. The point of order I want to raise is for you, Mr. Speaker, to apply Standing Order 69.1 to this bill. As a reminder to you, Mr. Speaker, and to all my colleagues, Standing Order 69.1 is as follows:

Points of Order

[Translation]

(1) In the case where a government bill seeks to repeal, amend or enact more than one act, and where there is not a common element connecting the various provisions or where unrelated matters are linked, the Speaker shall have the power to divide the questions, for the purposes of voting, on the motion for second reading and reference to a committee and the motion for third reading and passage of the bill. The Speaker shall have the power to combine clauses of the bill thematically and to put the aforementioned questions on each of these groups of clauses separately, provided that there will be a single debate at each stage.

The third edition of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice* states on page 730:

[An omnibus bill] seeks to amend, repeal or enact several Acts, and is characterized by the fact that it is made up of a number of related but separate initiatives. To render an omnibus bill intelligible for parliamentary purposes, the Speaker has previously ruled that such a bill should have “one basic principle or purpose which ties together all the proposed enactments”.

● (1525)

[English]

Given that definition, it is very obvious to me that Bill C-86, with its 850 pages, thousands of clauses and seven separate stand-alone pieces of legislation inside it, is an omnibus bill. However, in this specific case, because Bill C-86 is a budget implementation act, the Liberals have used the loopholes they have added to the Standing Orders in order to include all these measures unrelated to each other.

[Translation]

Standing Order 69.1(2) states:

The present Standing Order shall not apply if the bill has as its main purpose the implementation of a budget and contains only provisions that were announced in the budget presentation or in the documents tabled during the budget presentation.

[English]

Let me point out just a few of the elements we could not find anywhere in the budget presentation or in any of the documentation tabled with the budget. In clauses 461 to 462, better protection for workers, that is not found in the budget presentation or in the documentation.

[Translation]

Clauses 535 to 625, that deal with the head of compliance and enforcement, are not found in the documentation either.

[English]

As we have seen with previous bills, the administration will likely find other cases as well. This was certainly the case for Bill C-63, and as you will recall, you divided that bill for the purposes of votes.

Obviously, we cannot say for sure that this list is complete. This enormous bill was tabled only 48 hours ago, and the size of it prevents us from being able to take the time we would need to study it in depth, as we should be able to do as parliamentarians.

[Translation]

It is also important to note that we are not necessarily against these measures. We simply want to point out that since these measures were not mentioned in February's budget, Standing Order 69.1 should apply in this case.

[English]

MEETING OF THE CANADIAN NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order related to Standing Order 151. Last evening, an unlawful and illegitimate meeting of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association was held in this very building to orchestrate a coup against its chair, the hon. member for Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill.

After the meeting had been called to order, the chair entertained a point of order about the validity of the meeting. After taking advice from a procedural clerk in attendance, she ruled that the meeting was not properly constituted and therefore adjourned. Then the majority of the association members present left the room and left Centre Block, in fact respecting the chair's ruling that the meeting had been duly adjourned.

Those members were later shocked to hear that the hon. member for Etobicoke Centre then claimed to reconvene the group and presided over an illegal and entirely out of order meeting, where a purported sham motion was passed to remove the chair and install the member for Etobicoke Centre as the new chair of the association. This was done in utter and defiant breach of the association's constitution and by-laws, in disregard of all understanding of parliamentary procedure and in total defiance of fair play and the Liberals' claim to practise positive politics.

What it was, Mr. Speaker, was a hatchet job orchestrated by the Prime Minister's office and the chief government whip, whose staffers were at the meeting taking attendance and barring Liberals from leaving. The Liberal Party, which claims to bring us sunny days, arranged for the political show execution of the hon. member for Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill because she had the courage to stand up to the Prime Minister and call out his arrogant and dangerous approach to governing.

Voltaire, an author whose works the Prime Minister probably had read to him as a child, described the court martial and execution of British Admiral John Byng with this line:

● (1530)

[Translation]

“[...] dans ce pays-ci il est bon de tuer de temps en temps un amiral pour encourager les autres.”

[English]

In English, the line is, “In this country, it is wise to kill an admiral from time to time to encourage the others.” Apparently, the same can be said about the Liberal caucus. So much for our so-called feminist Prime Minister.

As I mention, my point of order goes to Standing Order 151. That rule, which we do not often reference here, provides that:

The Clerk of the House is responsible for the safekeeping of all the papers and records of the House, and has the direction and control over all the officers and clerks employed in the offices, subject to such orders as the Clerk may, from time to time, receive from the Speaker or the House.

Points of Order

Within less than an hour after the illegal and illegitimate election, an election attended and manipulated by most of the cabinet, the sham election of the member of Parliament for Etobicoke Centre, the parliamentary website was updated to show that he is now the chair of the association.

Conservatives dispute the validity of this election and will be exploring all available avenues, including judicial recourse, to uphold the hon. member for Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill's continued service as chair of the association. I ask that you, Mr. Speaker, issue an order under Standing Order 151 to the clerks of this House to undo last night's changes in respect of the parliamentary records maintained concerning the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association.

Additionally, Mr. Speaker, I ask that you also instruct the clerks under that standing order to advise the NATO Parliamentary Assembly immediately and well in advance of the 2018 session due to be held in Halifax from September 16 to 19 that Canada's delegation will be headed by the hon. member for Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill and that any claim by the hon. member for Etobicoke Centre to head Canada's delegation is entirely false, without foundation and illegitimate.

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order, it is not commonplace that we find the activities of a parliamentary association, or even a parliamentary committee, raised here in the House, but what happened last night was so egregious that we feel we have no choice and no other recourse to address it, quite frankly, than here in the House. I want to address a few points that I believe indicate that it is within the purview of the Speaker to address this issue and the sham meeting that took place.

Section 4 of the rules of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association state clearly, under the title “Status”:

[The Parliamentary Association] shall function within the mandate of the Speakers of the Senate and the House of Commons, with the support of the Office of the Executive Secretary, and in affiliation with other NATO Parliamentary groups and the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, whose headquarters is in Brussels.

Section 6 of those same rules name the Speaker of the House of Commons as the honorary chair and an honorary officer of the parliamentary association.

Section 14 (c) of the rules that were violated repeatedly last night by the Liberal members in attendance says, “...70% [of the association's annual grant] will be included in the Estimates of the Speaker of the House of Commons.”

Finally, section 19, under “Procedure”, says, “The rules of procedure to be followed in conducting Association business shall conform to Canadian parliamentary practice and rules of procedure.”

Mr. Speaker, I believe this indicates clearly that you have the ability, the office of the Speaker has the ability, to intervene when the rules have been so clearly violated on so many occasions.

I want to go through some of the instances where the rules were violated. First and foremost, under section 9, “Nominations Committees and Elections”, subsection (c) says, “The Association secretary shall distribute nomination forms to all members of the Association.” That was not done. It says, “Nominations should be

received at least one week in advance of the General Meeting [which was called]. The Association secretary should prepare a nominations report based on nominations received.” That was not done.

Subsection (d) says, “Only positions for which no candidacy has been put forward can be filled by nominations from the floor at the General Meeting.” Again, this was not done. There was no nomination sought. Nominations, therefore, were unable to be taken from the floor. Therefore, even had the sham meeting been allowed to proceed, which it clearly was not, as the meeting was adjourned prior to the sham election, the rules were not followed.

Also, there is a general clause in section 12, “Amendment of the Rules”, which states, “Not less than two weeks’ notice must be given to the membership and proposed amendments shall be enclosed with the notice.” This was not done. “A two-thirds majority vote of those present at a general meeting shall be required to amend the Rules.” This was not done.

The member for Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill was so eminently qualified to be the chair of this association that no one else in Parliament, in either House, stood against her when she was elected in March. She was acclaimed as the chair of this association under the due process that is afforded to her. What happened last night after she properly adjourned the meeting was an absolute disgrace to this Parliament. As the association clearly falls under the auspices of the Speaker, we call upon you, Mr. Speaker, to protect the rights and privileges of all members in this House.

● (1535)

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to echo the comments of the opposition whip and my colleague from Perth—Wellington about my and many members' great concern about the conduct of a parliamentary association meeting in Centre Block last evening. I only joked in jest during my member's statement today about the fact that October 30 was devil's night. Certainly that is the case when mischief is played, but this mischief actually interfered with the procedures of a parliamentary association.

I refer the government benches, including the deputy House leader, to the ruling by Speaker Milliken in March 2011 with respect to contempt of Parliament. I would like you, Mr. Speaker, to examine the conduct of the member for Etobicoke Centre with regard to his not respecting the ruling of the chair. Members of Parliament left the room. The meeting adjourned and so the ability of members of Parliament to exercise a parliamentary association function in this building was interfered with.

Points of Order

The same issue was raised by a Liberal member, the member for Scarborough—Guildwood, in the affair in 2011, where the conduct “confused” him in carrying out his job and holding the government to account. The conduct of the member for Etobicoke Centre defying the decision of the chair, after several minutes of a meeting being adjourned, storming onto the stage, taking the podium, and running a sham proceeding after a large number, perhaps one-third of the room, had already left in full respect of the chair's decision, is contemptuous of the constitution of that parliamentary association and of the respect that should be shown not only to the chair, the hon. member for Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, but also to the members of Parliament who had left the room following that ruling.

When you leave the chair and the House adjourns, I cannot suddenly pass a bill in this place, and to suggest that I could is contemptuous of Parliament. Taking the stage and hijacking a meeting that had been adjourned, putting our professional clerks and our professional civil servants in a position that they were last night, I think is a *prima facie* sign of contempt of Parliament by the member for Etobicoke Centre.

Within the context of the point of order by my learned friend, I would ask that it be examined as well. Certainly that member in particular, who took his place in the House in 2015 after having lost in 2011, after going to the Supreme Court of Canada to fight the election result from 2011, did that “to restore the integrity of the system”. Those are his words. The same member now disregards the constitution of a parliamentary association, disregards the decision of a duly elected chair, storms onto a stage and runs a sham meeting that certainly limited the ability of parliamentarians to participate, because several had left the room, and confused the proceedings considerably and showed contempt for his parliamentary colleagues.

I know that some people are upset by a member of Parliament standing up for views she believes in. I know that on a political score basis, that member doing so has upset people, but it does not permit a member of this place to extract political revenge by defying our procedures for, and constitutions of, parliamentary functions and parliamentary international associations. I say this because the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association is part of a network of parliamentary associations within the NATO alliance. Political grudges do not permit a member to circumvent the rules and the constitution of a parliamentary association, and they do not allow them to show contempt for other members of the chamber.

Within the context of the point of order, I would like that to be considered as well.

• (1540)

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Cape Breton—Canso, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I too attended that meeting last night. I am going to start my 19th year in this place in two weeks and I have never seen anything like that in my 19 years here. Obviously what happens with these groups is that members are free to go in and are masters of their own destiny. The group of members that assembled was certainly ready to make a change in the leadership, which was brought to the floor of the meeting.

It was almost scary, but I have never seen this play out like that before. I saw young staffers in that room. I was going to say they

were being “ginned up” but I know they were not. When one checks the video—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): It seems like we are moving into debate. On a point of order what we want to do is to talk about what the process was or what procedure was broken.

I will give the hon. member for Cape Breton—Canso a chance to maybe clarify that.

Mr. Rodger Cuzner: Mr. Speaker, the process certainly was not enhanced when members of the Conservative Party were feeding vodka to their staffers, who were singing and had to be escorted out by security. Putting the security people and the clerks in that situation was unbelievable.

It was one of the most shameful and deliberate attacks on the democratic process of those types of groups and they should apologize to the House for it.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I just want to remind the hon. members that what we are trying to figure out is what went wrong with the process. Part of the process is not to shout back and forth, I will remind the hon. members.

I know we are starting to get a little bit repetitious. Hon. members should bring something new forward if they want to speak to this point of order.

The hon. member for Kitchener—Conestoga.

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I certainly do not profess to have the procedural acumen that my colleagues have, but over the almost 13 years I have been in Parliament, I have had the privilege of serving on a number of committees for interparliamentary groups, such as the Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association, the Canada-Armenia Friendship Group, and the Canada-Germany Interparliamentary Group. Some of those groups get funding from Parliament, and one of them is the NATO interparliamentary group. I have been a member of it and I received a notice that a meeting was called for last night.

I went to the meeting. A number of motions and points of order were raised. At one point, the meeting was adjourned. Upon adjournment, I left the building and went to another event. I did not know until this morning that the meeting had supposedly been reconvened. However, it could not be reconvened because it did not fall within the rules of the constitution of the NATO interparliamentary group. There was no two weeks' notice given. There was no notice of nominees. There was no way that I, as a parliamentarian, could have had meaningful input into the choice.

Thus, my privileges as a member of Parliament have been breached. As a member of Parliament and as a member of the NATO interparliamentary group, it was my right to be at a meeting that was convened for the purpose of carrying on business. That did not happen last night.

Points of Order

I do hope, Mr. Speaker, that you will take into consideration the very good procedural points that my colleagues have raised for the sanity of this place and to continue to operate these interparliamentary groups as parliamentary groups, not government-controlled groups. It was so obvious last night that the government was controlling what this parliamentary group was doing. That is not appropriate. All of the times that I have travelled with these groups and welcomed people to this country from other jurisdictions, we have worked hard to keep the groups as non-partisan parliamentary groups that represent members of Parliament.

• (1545)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): We are getting into debate. The hon. member for Langley—Aldergrove wanted to speak to this as well. Be brief, please, and to the point if you do not mind.

I will ask that of everyone, because we want to get to everyone and give them a chance to speak. Again, this is not debate. This is more about sticking to what procedures have been broken and how we can add to the debate on that.

Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley—Aldergrove, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to share my perspective and why I believe this is an important point of order for you to consider.

I also attended the meeting last night. I am a member of many parliamentary associations and I am a member of parliamentary friendship groups. Some are funded and some are self-funded, but they are all under the purview and have constitutions that need to be respected. There is a parliamentary process.

Part of that process is due notice of a meeting. I was notified of the meeting of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association. I was on the list. I was given a voting card and I attended.

The meeting started appropriately and on time. There was a point of order made by my colleague to my right. That was dealt with. There was a short recess. The chair met with the clerk. They discussed it, came back and ruled against that point of order.

Then a second point of order was made with respect to the fact that there had not been proper notice to have nominations. There was consultation. Then the meeting was adjourned. The meeting had not been properly constituted.

I then went to another meeting. I was not notified of this other meeting that has been referred to. I am part of this parliamentary association and I was not notified of another subsequent meeting. Without proper notice, my rights as a member of Parliament were infringed.

What you are going to be faced with in dealing with this is very important, Mr. Speaker. There is a parliamentary process. We are a democracy. We share around the world. We are a model. We respect parliamentary process and the rule of law. That did not happen yesterday. I look forward to your important ruling.

Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was so disappointed on so many levels with what went on last night at that meeting.

It became very clear, even before the meeting started, that there was a lot of confusion in the room about what the proper process

would be. It was very clear that no matter what happened, because there was not a clear direction on how to handle the situation, that there would be no confidence, one way or another, in what the outcome would be, that it would not have the confidence of parliamentarians.

I have travelled on with these parliamentary associations. I have travelled with the member who is now Liberal member and who is the head of ParlAmericas. We have had some great trips, working together in a non-partisan manner. We ensure that our meetings are handled in a non-partisan manner. He goes out of his way to include me and I go out of my way to ensure he is supported properly.

We did not see any of that last night. That is why I made the point of order to recommend to the chair that she seek guidance from both the JIC and the appropriate Speakers on the appropriate movement forward, that she adjourn the meeting, bring it back so when we came back together, we would know what the process was in this unique scenario. We would then have the nominations done in the appropriate manner. We would know exactly the process as laid out and would have confidence in that process to move forward so the association, at the end of the day, would be justified by all members of Parliament as legitimate.

What went on last night was not legitimate. The only legitimate process was the one that was done last March.

When I look at this situation, I think it is unfortunate. I understand the Liberals are upset because they want to have their person in Halifax. It does not make a difference. The process is the process. It cannot be rammed down people's throats. It cannot be rammed down my throat. It has to be respected.

There is a reason why things are done in a particular manner with the appropriate notices. That goes back to the convention of Parliament for many years. There is a reason why that is done and it has to be respected. It was not respected last night. To think that the Liberals can just ram it through is improper and it de-legitimizes the association.

How can we say that this is a true parliamentary association based on what happened last night? We cannot. This is just an absolute disgrace. A lot of members need to take some sober thought on what their conduct was like, on both sides of the aisle. We all need to take a deep breath and take a step back.

You have to recognize what the process is, Mr. Speaker, and then make a legitimate ruling from that.

• (1550)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): A number of members who would like to speak to this. We have heard quite a bit up until now. I understand there is a question of the process and what happened. If members have something new to add, I would appreciate it be brief and then we can move on.

The hon. member for Calgary Nose Hill.

Points of Order

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, one element that has not been discussed yet with this point of order, on which I would like to see a ruling, is the relationship to costs. Parliamentary associations are afforded the resources of the House. A lot of resources are expended for organizational meetings. Even the meeting last night had translator services and the services of the clerk. However, above and beyond that, these parliamentary associations have a great degree of House expenditures related to them.

My understanding is that the delegation afforded by this committee would be travelling to Halifax for the committee coming up. Should this matter not be resolved ahead of that, my concern is that we would be sending and expending House resources inappropriately, given that we would be putting somebody on the parliamentary dime essentially.

An hon. member: Illegitimately.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Illegitimately, absolutely.

I guess my addition to the point of order would be that this decision has to be clarified and rectified prior to any sort of announcement being made around who is going to be leading the Canadian delegation.

My colleagues here have raised some very strong and adequate questions with regard to the procedure, but there are also the costs for last night. I would also ask for clarification as part of this point of order. If procedural rules were bent, is there some sort of a requirement on behalf of the member to have to pay the cost back? That has not been clarified at all as well.

Going forward with regard to parliamentary delegations, we need some clarity on when there is a procedural breach like this and should somebody then illegitimately lead a delegation, what are the cost implications and is there a payback mechanism?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to know what you think of this point of order raised by my colleague. There are two elements that must be taken into consideration with respect to this non-existent meeting.

First, each parliamentary association has two vice-chairs. At least that is the case for the NATO Parliamentary Association. What right did one of the two vice-chairs have to decide to ask again that the meeting continue when the second vice-chair did not agree with him? That is an extremely important point.

This is how things work at committees. At a parliamentary committee, such as the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food, there is a chair, a first vice-chair and a second vice-chair. In the matter before us, yesterday evening's meeting of a parliamentary association, one of the two vice-chairs decided on his own, without speaking to the second vice-chair, to reconvene the meeting.

We must absolutely seek your guidance on this matter. Otherwise, anyone can do what they want when they want at these parliamentary committees and associations. That is completely unacceptable.

I want to raise a second very important point. What happened yesterday is a real threat to democracy. I was there in the room and I stuck around for the second part. When the deputy chair decided to take the chair's seat, I heard him reconvene the meeting. Strangely, the Liberal members were the only ones convened to the meeting. None of the Conservatives members were convened.

Does that not reek of partisanship? Why did the vice chair not get the message to all of his colleagues so that everyone would be reconvened? This action was partisan and unparliamentary, and it showed a lack of respect for the House and for the Canadians who elected us.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly believe that you must consider these two factors and find that the second meeting violated parliamentary rules. I am not particularly well versed in the rules, but this quite simply showed a lack of respect for the voters who sent us here to represent them.

• (1555)

[*English*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): This is certainly a serious matter. I have heard pretty well enough to take back. I will take it under advisement and I will come back with a response.

The hon. member for Brandon—Souris.

Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was listening to my colleague from Mégantic—L'Érable just now and I wanted to add the fact that I too was one of the people who were at the first meeting as a member of the NATO association. I was a witness to the process that went on whereby the first meeting was legitimately adjourned because of a point of order—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): We have already heard that story. I am looking for new information, if he has anything to offer. If not, I believe I have enough information to come to a decision.

The hon. member can continue if he has something new.

Mr. Larry Maguire: Mr. Speaker, as a new member of this committee, I believe it is my imperative duty to let you know that I was not even called back for this farce of a second meeting. There was no second meeting. It is irrelevant. Once the committee meeting adjourned, as you know and which you have heard, it is adjourned. Therefore, if it takes two weeks. There has to be proper notice. It has to go through the process again, as for any association, particularly one with a record amount of members who have shown up for this meeting.

I believe it is incumbent upon you, Mr. Speaker, to rule in that regard and I look forward to your ruling. However, I want to assure you that I was not called back for whatever took place after the main meeting. I called it a farce before. It could be a shambles, as my colleague has said. Many of my colleagues have stated they were not called back either. It is extremely important to note that.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I will take all of the statements made under advisement and get back to the chamber with a ruling shortly.

*Routine Proceedings***IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP**

Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to subsection 94(1) of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the annual report to Parliament on Immigration, 2018.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Mr. Speaker, I have not given an hour's notice for this question of privilege in accordance with Standing Order 48(2), "Unless notice of motion has been given under Standing Order 54, any Member proposing to raise a question of privilege, other than one arising out of proceedings in the Chamber during the course of a sitting, shall give to the Speaker a written statement of the question at least one hour prior..."

As I have been sitting in the House, I have had media requests related to the immigration levels plan. My staff had a conversation with the media that were looking for comment from me and they told me that the numbers were 350,000. I am wondering how the media got a copy of a confidential document that has not been tabled in the House, asking me for comment prior to being tabled in Parliament.

• (1600)

Mr. John Nater: Mr. Speaker, on this question of privilege, I would draw the Chair's attention to past Speakers' rulings on this matter, particularly that of Speaker Fraser, that information distributed to the media prior to being tabled in the House constituted a clear prima facie breach of the privileges of the House. I would request that the official opposition be provided the opportunity to come back with additional information and citations on this matter, confirming this egregious breach of the privileges of parliamentarians in this place.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): In my view, the hon. member for Calgary Nose Hill should have given an hour's notice. I recommend that she give notice and in an hour, she will be able to speak.

Mr. Mark Strahl: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The Standing Order that the member for Calgary Nose Hill read clearly indicates where one hour's notice is not required. The Minister of Immigration has just tabled his immigration levels. Somehow the media received the data prior to the member for Calgary Nose Hill receiving it. This is happening in real time in the House of Commons. She does not require one hour's notice because it is happening during proceedings in the House. The minister has just tabled documents and the member's privileges were clearly breached by not having this data before the media did.

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of clarification on the question of privilege. I am working in real time and for the record, my staff is informing me that the media says that the year three plan goes up to 350,000. That was the comment we were looking at.

Again, I would go back to the fact that the minister has tabled these plans. I would reference Standing Order 48(2) in terms of my ability to raise this as a question of privilege as it just happened and the fact that we have this information ahead of time.

Also, I am happy to table an email with the request that I received for comment on the levels plan earlier today.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I will take that under advisement and return to the House with a ruling.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 32(2) I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the treaties entitled, "Agreement between the Government of Canada and the Government of the State of Kuwait on Air Transport", done at Kuwait City, Kuwait, on August 1, 2018; the "Agreement between the Government of Canada and the Government of the Republic of Serbia on Air Transport", done at Belgrade, Serbia, on May 21, 2018; and, finally, the "Agreement between the Government of Canada and the Government of the Republic of El Salvador on Air Transport", done at Ottawa, on October 4, 2018.

* * *

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8) I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 21 petitions.

* * *

• (1605)

CREDIT CARD FAIRNESS ACT

Ms. Rachael Harder (Lethbridge, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-419, An Act to amend the Bank Act, the Trust and Loan Companies Act, the Insurance Companies Act and the Cooperative Credit Associations Act (credit cards).

She said: Mr. Speaker, it is a tremendous honour for me to present my private member's bill, known as the credit card fairness act, to the House of Commons today.

Since being elected in 2015, I have talked with thousands of Canadians from coast to coast, in every corner of the country. They are telling me that they are concerned about fairness and transparency when it comes to credit card use, which takes place every day. We live in a society where it is nearly impossible to function without one. We need a credit card to book flights, hotel rooms, car rentals, shop online, etc. Unfortunately, consumers are not being treated with the respect they deserve.

Routine Proceedings

Due to rising interest rates and the fact that life is becoming more and more expensive, Canadians are struggling to make ends meet and they are falling further and further behind. The credit card fairness act calls for seven specific changes that would advocate on behalf of Canadian consumers. By increasing fairness and transparency, the reforms outlined in my bill would empower credit card holders to make informed decisions, pay off their debt quicker and achieve greater financial freedom.

I want to thank Canadians for giving me the opportunity to advocate on their behalf. It is my hope that all members in the House will join me in this important advocacy work.

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

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC) Mr. Speaker, I move that the ninth report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, presented on Wednesday, May 10, 2017, be concurred in.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to stand in the House and speak to this motion today. I am proud to be splitting my time with my deputy critic, the capable member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

With respect to the ninth report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, I want to focus specifically on the order in council appointment of the hon. Stéphane Dion to the position of special adviser to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The House will recall that Mr. Dion had a very distinguished career in the House of Commons. In fact, his order in council appointment took place at the conclusion of that career, and speculation at the time was that the conclusion of his career in the House of Commons was not his own choice but was the decision of the Prime Minister.

Think for a moment about that career. This was a former minister in the Chrétien government, the author of the Clarity Act and a strong federalist.

I had a good relationship with Mr. Dion, but he was pushed aside as the member of Parliament for Saint-Laurent to become a special adviser, and ultimately, Canada's ambassador to Germany, with a cross-appointment as a special envoy to the European Union. We still have not really heard a good explanation of that cross-appointment or the specific outline of his role as special adviser.

When the Liberal government was formed in 2015, Mr. Dion became the first foreign affairs minister. It is very unusual that partway through his mandate, that minister was not just shuffled but was shuffled right out of the House of Commons. The ninth report outlines that order in council process and how that transition of Mr. Dion happened.

Members may recall that he was elected for the first time in 1996. When I was first starting to follow politics, Mr. Dion led the Liberal Party. Clearly, for the Prime Minister, after a while Mr. Dion was not helpful, or he was seen as a hindrance, and he was disposed of. He

was dismissed from his role. The report covers the order in council appointment and where the government shuffled him to.

It is clear that after a while, if people are not helpful to the Prime Minister, he makes sure that they are out of the way.

I would add that in the same time frame we are dealing with this order in council appointment for Mr. Dion, the same thing happened to Mr. John McCallum, a former minister as well in the previous Liberal governments of Mr. Chrétien and Mr. Martin. He is now Canada's ambassador to China. The foreign affairs committee, and I am the shadow minister for foreign affairs, is now seized with Canada's relations with Asian countries and with China, although Ambassador McCallum was not there when the foreign affairs committee went to Beijing to meet and study. It was quite unusual that he was not there.

In the same time frame when Mr. Dion, a former leader of the Liberal Party, was shuffled aside, Mr. McCallum was also shuffled aside. He had not served quite as long as Mr. Dion. He was the member of Parliament for Markham, and later Markham—Unionville, from 2000.

There is a pattern emerging, starting with foreign affairs specifically. The pattern is that for distinguished Canadians, once they are not helpful to the Prime Minister, there is a plan afoot to slide them out. This motion highlights the report and the order in council process that slid Mr. Dion to the side.

I cannot help but think that the same thing happened last night, on October 30, to someone the Prime Minister was upset with.

On September 17, the member for Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill made a decision, after a lot of reflection, after consultation with trusted friends, after canvassing on issues she was here to safeguard, to leave the government benches and sit on the Conservative opposition benches.

The Prime Minister, on September 17, at the beginning of this fall sitting, said that is what happens in our political system from time to time and said, "I wish her well." That is a quote from the Prime Minister of Canada. He said, "I wish her well."

● (1610)

However, sometime after that date, a plan was afoot to push the hon. member out of a role in the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association, much like, as this report references, the order in council appointment of Stéphane Dion. The Prime Minister no longer needed these people or no longer felt that they were helpful to him, so not only were they slid aside, they had to be actually removed from a position. That is what happened last night. The member for Etobicoke Centre rushed the stage. We outlined some of the concerns about that.

It is a pattern. We saw it with the former leader of the Liberal Party. We have seen it now with the member for Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, a Royal Canadian Air Force veteran and a strong and proud former business executive. She was not just shoved aside but was treated with disrespect by a Prime Minister who suggests, quite frequently, that he is a feminist.

Routine Proceedings

On that point, Christine Innes, someone who was a very active person in politics and whose partner, Tony Ianno, was a member of Parliament in this place for the Liberal Party, was shoved aside as well, in Trinity—Spadina, and was not permitted to run.

There was Julie Desjardins in Mississauga Lakeshore. In fact, a former Liberal MP, Paul Szabo, was quite upset about the way that was handled.

Another colleague on my benches, the hon. member for Lethbridge, was elected by her constituents and given the trust of her colleagues and her leader to be shadow minister for the status of women. She was denied the ability to chair a committee because she does not agree with the Prime Minister on all issues.

We see a pattern emerging with this Prime Minister. There is a public persona presented to Canadians in hashtags and photos, where the Prime Minister will suggest that he is a feminist and that there is a feminist foreign policy. In fact, the member for Etobicoke Centre has this ridiculous position of being someone who is championing a position to have an ambassador for women in peace and security, and last night, he besmirched the good name of one of the few women in this House who have worked in uniform in peace and security. It was shameful. No doubt, he was ordered by the Prime Minister's Office to do that.

It was quite distasteful to see a lot of the cabinet of the federal government marching into a room and allowing the member for Etobicoke Centre to turn it into a farce, and, after there had been an adjournment, recommencing a meeting, after people had left, all to extract revenge.

• (1615)

Mr. Chris Bittle: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I am sure the hon. member is trying to get to his point. He is moving concurrence on a half-page report, and the member is not saying anything about it. I am hoping the Chair can direct him back. I know that you, Mr. Speaker, have made rulings that members eventually get to their point. However, we seem to be on quite the tangent, and I am hoping the hon. member can be directed back to this half-page report he is seeking concurrence on.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I will leave it to the hon. member for Durham to come back to the point. I will let him continue.

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am not surprised to see another Liberal member questioning a decision of the Chair. We saw that last night as well, Mr. Speaker, on an adjournment.

I would remind the member of the order of council appointment of Stéphane Dion. I know that the member for St. Catharines was a Liberal Party activist. He probably pledged support for Mr. Dion. Mr. Dion, for a time, led that party, until he was not helpful to this Prime Minister or did not agree with him and it was time to be shuffled aside.

This is the motion I am speaking to, but it is a pattern that has emerged with this Prime Minister. If someone disagrees with him, or perhaps even hogs a bit of his camera shot, he or she is to be disposed of.

Liberal MPs, including hon. ministers, being marched in to allow a sham to take place should concern that member. I am sure it concerned Mr. Dion, whom I wish well in his role as a dual-hatted ambassador in Europe. However, the question on the order in council appointment is this. Did Mr. Dion ask to serve, or are the hand marks of the PMO of our Prime Minister still on his back? We are seeing a lot of that callous conduct from the Liberal government.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Courtenay—Alberni, the Environment; the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, Natural Resources; the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, International Trade.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Michel Picard (Montarville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as a side note, I want to say that I had the privilege of studying under Mr. Dion's father in university, and I then had the privilege of working with Stéphane.

I met the ambassador in Germany twice and have worked with him, so I know how hard he works and what an asset he is to our country in Europe. I am very disappointed to see that members keep talking about administrative procedures and are resorting to mudslinging and antagonism. They refuse to recognize Mr. Dion's accomplishments and expertise. We recognize Ambassador Dion's expertise, as we do with everyone we promote.

[*English*]

Hon. Erin O'Toole: Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind my friend that I started out by saying that Mr. Dion had a very illustrious career in Parliament and before Parliament. As author of the Clarity Act, he provided a lot of certainty for Canadians and showed a strong federalist voice, so I agree with the hon. member.

In fact, I had the pleasure of working with that hon. member on the public safety committee for some time. Perhaps he is another example. I miss the opportunity of working with him as a parliamentary secretary, as someone who brought experience from academia and law enforcement, on studies, but he seems to no longer be in that role. Perhaps he had a disagreement with the Prime Minister as well.

This is a Prime Minister whose second vote in the House was to withdraw Canadian jets from the fight against ISIS. I am sure people concerned with security had concerns about that. I know the member for Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill had that concern. A lot of the people who had concerns about the Prime Minister's decision were cast aside or are on the back benches. It is time for them to stand up as well.

• (1620)

Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the very last comment the member made was about other members standing up. Does the member have any thoughts on the member for Etobicoke Centre, who in the past has been a strong proponent of building democracies and electoral fairness and who took disputed ballots all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada? Does the member for Durham have any thoughts on what the member for Etobicoke Centre should be saying in a situation like this?

Routine Proceedings

Hon. Erin O'Toole: Mr. Speaker, that is a surprise question, but fortunately, I am prepared to respond to it. The member for Etobicoke Centre announced just a week ago that he is not running again, after so many delicious baked goods in Toronto funded his legal fund to challenge the results of the 2011 election, where he had problems with vouching, something the Liberals are bringing back, making it easier for voter fraud and manipulation to take place. The member for Etobicoke Centre spent tens of thousands of dollars fighting it to the Supreme Court of Canada, because at the time, he said that it was about the integrity of the system.

Last night, the member for Etobicoke Centre stormed the stage after a meeting had concluded, ignored the fact that ballots were littering the floor, that people had left, that there were no protocols and that they were not following the constitution, and he rammed through the orders from the Prime Minister's Office to make sure that however they could get there, they needed to exact revenge on a member who had left their benches.

Sadly, it is backfiring. The government did not follow procedure well then, and it has not since question period here today. Sometimes it is the details. I have seen this on every file with the government. It will allow a murderer to get PTSD treatment and not hold him to account. It will make mistake after mistake. It will bring in bills that end pipelines and force the government to buy one. It is the details.

Governing requires seriousness. It is more than just photographs and hashtags, and Canadians are beginning to realize that this is all this Prime Minister has to offer. Good news, a year from now, there is a choice on this side of the chamber.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Resuming debate, the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker—

[*English*]

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker...

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): There are two issues here. One, I called on the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan to speak and the hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable got up.

Mr. Tom Lukiwski: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. As you can see, I am positioned very close to both members in question. I distinctly heard the member for Mégantic—L'Érable start speaking before the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, I think you know what happens in a situation like this, so without going into further detail, I would certainly say right now that I move on this point of order, seconded by my colleague, the member for Perth—Wellington that the member for Mégantic—L'Érable be now heard.

• (1625)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I am afraid the motion is not in order. If we check the records, we will see that the hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable got up to speak before I even recognized the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan. That is according to our records, and I would have to strike that.

The hon. member for Chilliwack—Hope.

Mr. Mark Strahl: Mr. Speaker, I realize we are dealing in real time. However you said yourself when you stood that you had two issues. One was the member for Mégantic—L'Érable started speaking before the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan. I think your comment may be different from what you are hearing from the table.

When you look at it again, I think you will see that you did in fact recognize the member. Certainly members on this side heard you recognize the member, and I believe the motion is in order.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I will take that under advisement and get back to the chamber.

The parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I suspect that you do not have to take that last one under advisement. It is completely up to you, because I believe the member was trying to challenge the Chair. I do not think it would be appropriate for the member to challenge the Chair. Your ruling was very clear. Anyone listening to it would have understood the ruling. The member should just be allowed to stand up and continue his remarks, because he was recognized.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan has the right to speak in debate.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): On the point of order, if he wants to interrupt his own speech.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, I rise on the point of order. I am very keen on speaking, but unlike we saw last night, I am willing to put principle and procedure ahead of my own interests. The convention is that members rise before they are called upon to speak. Therefore, what you said in the context of your ruling is hard for me to understand in light of the convention. The convention is that members do rise before they are called upon to speak. I rose expecting to speak, and I hope members vote in my favour in light of the impending motion.

However, the convention of this place is that all members who wish to speak rise and the Speaker calls on the member who has caught the eye of the Speaker first. If there is a dispute, a member could propose a motion that the member has the right to be heard. I think you will find that is the convention. It would be important for you to at least clarify your ruling, in light of that convention.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, with all due respect to my friend, the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, what he refers to as a convention is more accurately described as sloppy practice. Far too often, people stand and await the Speaker recognizing them.

Routine Proceedings

It is very clear in our Standing Orders that when the Speaker is standing all members must be seated. It is tolerated, I suppose, that people stand up, waiting because this place is increasingly not under the control of the Speaker, with all due respect, but under the control of party whips in the back room who give people lists and give the Speaker a list. The point of it is, when we all stand to be recognized in debate, that is one thing. When people expect to be recognized and are standing, they are actually violating the Standing Orders. It is not a convention. It is simply sloppy.

• (1630)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, if he wants to debate. No?

The hon. member for Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan.

Mr. Tom Lukiwski: Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out that I heard, unless my ears are playing tricks on me, you recognize my colleague from Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan. The reason I rose on a point of order is because in the first intervention by my colleague, he said he would be splitting his time with the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan. I was anticipating my colleague who sits directly behind me to stand and start speaking. Once I heard you recognize him, I also noticed that my colleague from Mégantic—L'Érable started speaking. That is why I rose on a point of order.

Mr. Speaker, you can check the audiotapes. I would not have risen in my place on a point of order, had I not, first, heard my colleague reference the fact that he would be splitting his time, and second, heard that the member was recognized by the Chair. I have been here nearly 15 years. I have been in the position as parliamentary secretary to the government House leader for nine of those years. I am very familiar with procedural matters. In fact, on this very question in procedures and practices, I have seen it employed and I have employed it myself on several occasions in the last 15 years.

In other words, I believe I know what I am doing from a procedural standpoint. I would not have stood in my place and made a point of order had I not heard you recognize my colleague from Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan. The only reason I stood on a point of order is because my other colleague from Mégantic—L'Érable started speaking and I heard him start speaking before my colleague from Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask you to please consult with the audiotapes and the visual tapes and I think you will find that those two tapes support my intervention.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, my interpretation is not the same as that of the members across the way and that is why it is important that we recognize that we are not supposed to be debating this issue. You as the Speaker made a ruling. If the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan does not want to speak, I have a 20-minute speech in my hand and I am prepared to deliver it on this issue. I have already indicated that I would like to speak on it, so if the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan does not want to speak, I would suggest that it might be appropriate to go to another speaker.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The discussion with the table officers was exactly that point. I have made

a decision. Does the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan want to debate?

Debate.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity today to address this important concurrence question with respect to foreign policy.

Before I do that, I want to make a brief comment about the very exciting news out of Pakistan overnight, which I think is relevant to Canada's foreign policy in general.

The Pakistan Supreme Court acquitted Asia Bibi of false blasphemy charges. This is a monumental day in terms of international human rights. In particular, I want to quote the chief justice of Pakistan in his ruling. He said, "Tolerance is the basic principle of Islam." He also said, "Islam is also very tough against those who level false allegations of a crime."

I want to express what I think is a sentiment shared by all members of Parliament, that being our enthusiasm about that ruling. There is still much more work to do when it comes to responding to the challenges around the blasphemy law in Pakistan, but this is a monumental step forward for justice, equality and the rule of law. This is a day of great joy for many in the Canadian Pakistani community, as well as for people in Pakistan itself.

I think it is important to recognize as well some of the great defenders of human rights who have been engaged in the Asia Bibi case, some of whom have given their lives in the context of that advocacy. Salmaan Taseer, the former governor of Punjab, and Shahbaz Bhatti, the former federal minister of minorities, both knowingly risked their lives to speak out on that case. In fact, it was Shahbaz Bhatti's advocacy for religious minorities that inspired the previous Conservative government's initiative to create the office of religious freedom. I think it is important for us as parliamentarians to continue to engage in constructive dialogue around these issues, to welcome this step forward and also to encourage further steps that can help address the challenges faced by religious minorities in Pakistan.

From there, I would like to comment on the particulars of this motion.

Members are applauding that. I think the comments I have just made are important and relevant and worth having on the record, and ones that we all agree with.

However, the particular item before the House is the appointment of Stéphane Dion as a special adviser to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

I recall Stéphane Dion's long parliamentary career. He was someone who I had the opportunity to cross swords with in this place a bit. We did not always or even often agree on the particular exchanges we were having, but I do not think anyone would doubt his commitment to this country, and certainly his commitment to something that most of us believe is very important, the idea of Canada remaining united and the value that has come from us being together as one country.

Routine Proceedings

Some of the debates I recall us having in this place related to the office of religious freedom and the current government's decision, during the time when he was minister, to cancel the office of religious freedom. It was a decision, again no doubt, that he came to from a place of sincere motivation, but one with which we in the official opposition profoundly disagreed.

What we have seen, unfortunately, is how no longer having the office of religious freedom has limited our ability to engage effectively on these issues, as much as the government said at the time that now these issues could simply be raised by individual ambassadors in each country. I think we should recognize that ambassadors who are particular to a country have many different things on their plate and should be engaging with human rights issues. However, it is useful to have, within the department, people with particular expertise on these issues and an ambassador for religious freedom who can be a public voice and an internal voice in terms of these issues. I know that these debates that we had around the office of religious freedom are some of the context that we bring to the consideration of the decision by the government to appoint this particular member to that position in Europe, and obviously it is interesting in terms of the perspective that it brings.

What I really appreciated about the previous minister is this. He was interested in engaging in deeper conversation about issues, about his world view, about the way his foundational assumptions about the way the world worked informed the decisions he made.

• (1635)

I did not often agree with the conclusions he came to about the way we engage in the world, but I appreciated his willingness to speak about those things. I recall a speech he gave at the University of Ottawa, for example, where he championed his philosophy of what he called "responsible conviction", which he articulated as a form of erring on the side of an ethos of responsibility in how we engage.

I disagree with the way he put that together, though, because I think the previous government's emphasis on a principled foreign policy recognized that there were certain immutable principles that should inform our engagement. Absolutely, we need to engage around the world, but our engagement must always be rooted in the conviction that there are some things we cannot compromise, some principles that cannot be transgressed, and that we must even be willing to risk the displeasure of other countries that we engage with around the world if that displeasure would be constructive in the pursuit of our fundamental principles.

A principled foreign policy is one that calls for us always to champion fundamental human rights. I spoke earlier in my remarks about the situation in Pakistan. On many people's minds in recent days is the situation in Sri Lanka. I just had an opportunity to be interviewed on that issue. It is great to see the media taking great interest today in substantive issues like the situation in Sri Lanka. I certainly appreciate that.

There is a concern about a decline in democracy and human rights there with the appointment, outside of any normal constitutional or parliamentary procedure, of a previous president to serve as prime minister. That has happened in the context of a lack of progress on

issues of justice and reconciliation, which is very much needed after the civil war in Sri Lanka.

This is a good example of where Canada's principled voice on the world stage would be very much appreciated. Under the previous government, and I know the Liberals are fond of talking about him, Stephen Harper took the principled decision that Canada would boycott the Commonwealth summit in Colombo. I am glad that the member for Winnipeg North applauds this decision, because it was very much recognized in the Tamil and other communities as important for the advancement of human rights. Stephen Harper's decision was a powerful message to the world that Canada was standing for fundamental human rights in the context of that situation, and would continue to do so.

In the last election, in the case of Sri Lanka in particular, the Liberals made many promises about how engaged they would be on issues of fundamental human rights, and yet there was absolutely no action taken. In fact, I referred to the cancellation of the former office of religious freedom. That office had an important program operating on the ground in Sri Lanka, and yet the government, despite following through on the promises it had made, cancelled the office of religious freedom.

This was one of many cases in which we see the failure of the government to align its actions with the promises it has made. This is a case, again, where a principled foreign policy could have an important role to play.

One of the other issues relevant to a principled foreign policy is that we need to follow through on a motion on Iran that we passed in this place. I really have to say that I do not think the government is likely to adopt a principled foreign policy any time soon.

With some degree of pessimism about the trajectory of the government, a government we will hopefully soon replace, I move:

That this House do now adjourn.

• (1640)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

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

Some hon. members: Nay.

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

And five or more members having risen:

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

● (1720)

(The House divided on the motion, which was negated on the following division)

(Division No. 925)

YEAS

Members

| | |
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| Aboultaif | Albas |
| Albrecht | Alleslev |
| Arnold | Beaulieu |
| Benzen | Berthold |
| Block | Brassard |
| Calkins | Chong |
| Clarke | Clement |
| Cooper | Deltell |
| Diotte | Doherty |
| Dreeschen | Eglinski |
| Falk (Provencher) | Fast |
| Généreux | Genuis |
| Gladu | Harder |
| Hoback | Jeneroux |
| Kelly | Kent |
| Kitchen | Kusie |
| Lake | Leitch |
| Liepert | Lloyd |
| Lukiwski | MacKenzie |
| Maguire | Martel |
| McCauley (Edmonton West) | McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo) |
| Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound) | Motz |
| Nater | Nicholson |
| Nuttall | Obhrai |
| O'Toole | Paul-Hus |
| Pauzé | Poilievre |
| Rayes | Reid |
| Rempel | Richards |
| Scheer | Schmale |
| Shields | Shipley |
| Sopuck | Sorenson |
| Stanton | Ste-Marie |
| Strahl | Stubbs |
| Tilson | Trost |
| Van Kesteren | Viersen |
| Wagantall | Warawa |
| Warkentin | Waugh |
| Wong | Yurdiga |
| Zimmer — 77 | |

NAYS

Members

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Aldag | Alghabra |
| Amos | Anandasangaree |
| Arseneault | Arya |
| Aubin | Ayoub |
| Bagnell | Bains |
| Baylis | Beech |
| Benson | Bibeau |
| Bittle | Blair |
| Blaney (North Island—Powell River) | Boissonnault |
| Bossio | Boutin-Sweet |
| Bratina | Breton |
| Brison | Brosseau |
| Caesar-Chavannes | Cannings |
| Carr | Casey (Cumberland—Colchester) |
| Chagger | Champagne |
| Chen | Choquette |
| Christopherson | Cuzner |
| Dabrusin | Damoff |
| DeCoursey | Dubourg |
| Duclos | Duguid |
| Duncan (Etobicoke North) | Duvall |
| Dzerowicz | Easter |
| Ehsassi | El-Khoury |
| Ellis | Erskine-Smith |
| Eyolfson | Fergus |
| Fillmore | Finnigan |
| Fonseca | Fortier |
| Fragiskatos | Fraser (West Nova) |

Routine Proceedings

| | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Garneau | Garrison |
| Goodale | Gould |
| Graham | Hardcastle |
| Hardie | Hébert |
| Hehr | Hogg |
| Holland | Hussen |
| Hutchings | Johns |
| Jones | Jordan |
| Jowhari | Julian |
| Khera | Kwan |
| Lambropoulos | Lametti |
| Lamoureux | Lapointe |
| Laverdière | LeBlanc |
| Lefebvre | Lightbound |
| Lockhart | Long |
| Longfield | Ludwig |
| MacAulay (Cardigan) | MacGregor |
| Malcolmson | Maloney |
| Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia) | |
| Mathysen | |
| May (Cambridge) | May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) |
| McDonald | McGuinty |
| McKay | McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam) |
| McLeod (Northwest Territories) | Mendès |
| Mendicino | Mihychuk |
| Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Sœurs) | |
| Morneau | |
| Morrissey | Murray |
| Nantel | Nassif |
| Ng | O'Connell |
| Oliphant | Oliver |
| O'Regan | Ouellette |
| Paradis | Peschisolido |
| Peterson | Petitpas Taylor |
| Philpott | Picard |
| Poissant | Qualtrough |
| Rankin | Ratansi |
| Rioux | Robillard |
| Rogers | Romanado |
| Rudd | Ruimy |
| Saini | Sajjan |
| Samson | Sangha |
| Sansoucy | Sarai |
| Scarpaleggia | Schulte |
| Serré | Sgro |
| Shanahan | Sheehan |
| Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon) | Sidhu (Brampton South) |
| Sikand | Simms |
| Sorbara | Tabbara |
| Tan | Tassi |
| Tootoo | Trudel |
| Vandal | Vandenbeld |
| Vaughan | Weir |
| Whalen | Wilson-Raybould |
| Wrzesnewskyj | Yip |
| Young | Zahid — 164 |

PAIRED

Nil

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I declare the motion defeated.

The hon. Minister of Veterans Affairs has a point of order.

Hon. Seamus O'Regan: Madam Speaker, I am tabling responses to Order Paper Questions Nos. 1882 to 1894 and revised responses to Questions Nos. 1532 and 1680.

*Private Members' Business***POINTS OF ORDER**

ACCESS TO HOUSE OF COMMONS

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is my understanding that the Speaker's office is in charge of the parliamentary bus shuttle service. Since the changes were made, there have been numerous occasions when I have had to wait more than 20 minutes for a bus, and my parliamentary privilege was in jeopardy. Seriously, I have a medical condition as well that demands that I walk less. I would ask that your office take it under consideration to add an express Wellington bus and take away one for the Senate service.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Is the member for Richmond Centre rising on the same point of order?

Hon. Alice Wong (Richmond Centre, CPC): Madam Speaker, yes, I share my colleague's concern and need to meet that service as a senior.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I appreciate this being brought to my attention. I will certainly take it under advisement and get back to the House if need be.

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, earlier today we heard Conservatives talk about relationships. Stéphane Dion and the Prime Minister had a very special and unique relationship. It got me thinking about the relationship between the Conservative leader, not Stephen Harper but the current one, and the member for Beauce. Many of us are very curious, when they talk about relationships, as it is important for us to recognize that there are different types of relationships.

What I can tell the member across the way who has tried to explain why it is an important report is that I agree that Stéphane Dion is an outstanding Canadian. He brought to Canada the Clarity Act. He was actually one of the first individuals to talk about a price on pollution, something that is completely foreign to the Conservative Party.

I wonder if my colleague across the way would agree with me about the many positive attributes of Stéphane Dion.

• (1725)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre: Madam Speaker, the member asked a question about the outstanding qualities of Mr. Dion, and we on this side agree that he is—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): That is not a point of order. It is debate. It is debate, not a point of order.

I also want to remind members that the House is in session. Those who are leaving the chamber, please leave quietly.

The hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member across the way spoke of the special and unique relationship between the Prime Minister and Stéphane Dion. I would agree that it was a special and unique

relationship. I want to thank the member for the special and unique relationship we have in exchanging words often in this House. Any relationship can be described, I guess, in those terms.

Just as my friend for Carleton was about to say, the member spoke about the outstanding former foreign affairs minister. I know the Prime Minister is very pleased that he is standing in Europe and is no longer standing in this chamber.

Mr. Chris Bittle (St. Catharines, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the opposition brought a motion of concurrence on a half-page report warmly praising Stéphane Dion and his qualifications. He is a man of order and is an individual who comports to the highest standards of parliamentary decorum.

I wonder if the hon. member could comment on his own behaviour last night at a parliamentary meeting, serving alcohol to staffers, shouting and singing over everyone else. Can he comment on what Stéphane Dion would think of that shameful behaviour?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I want to remind hon. members that the questions and comments have to do with the issue before the House.

The hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, certainly having the approval of Stéphane Dion for all my actions in Parliament is the highest standard I consider. Maybe those members should have considered that when they tried to unceremoniously throw out the qualified chair of the NATO parliamentary group.

What happened last night is very clear. The chair adjourned the meeting when the meeting was over, based on advice she had received and based on, I think, the procedural flaws of the government's motion. After the meeting was over, social activities took place in the room, from what I understand, and that frequently happens. Once a meeting is adjourned, social activities follow in the room.

I am not sure if the member for St. Catharines has ever consumed alcohol on Parliament Hill. If he has, I am sure he will stand up and apologize now for that action.

[Translation]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): It being 5:30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

CRIMINAL CODE

Mr. Majid Jowhari (Richmond Hill, Lib.) moved that Bill C-375, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (presentence report), be read the third time and passed.

He said: Madam Speaker, it is an honour for me to rise today to address the House one last time before my private member's bill, Bill C-375, passes from here to the other place.

Private Members' Business

This moment has been a long time coming, and I would like to thank my colleagues on this side of the aisle and across who have spoken to my bill, providing support, additional context and, yes, some criticism, as well as my colleagues who studied Bill C-375 at committee and the witnesses who came to talk in support of it. I would especially like to thank my colleague, the MP for Guelph, for seconding the motion today.

• (1730)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Order. There is a debate going on here. If people are leaving the chamber, they should do so quietly. If they wish to talk, they need to have that chat in the lobby.

The hon. member for Richmond Hill.

Mr. Majid Jowhari: Madam Speaker, it is indeed an honour and privilege to be able to bring forward legislation that would alter the Criminal Code in accordance with the compassion and common sense priorities of my constituents in Richmond Hill.

In our community, I host regular talks over coffee and make time whenever I can to meet with constituents during office hours. Mental health has and continues to be a top priority in my riding of Richmond Hill. It is why I have worked to support organizations such as Home on the Hill, 360°kids and the Krasman Centre in my riding. It is also why, when I came to Ottawa, I told my constituents that I would focus my energy on advancing the progressive ideals I was elected to uphold and fight for, namely, the advancement of equality for all Canadians and, in particular, those who are marginalized and lack the support they need.

This began with my founding the Liberal mental health caucus, a group of like-minded Liberal members who heard from experts and those with lived experiences, in an effort to identify the gaps in mental health services and what resources could be best spent on in that regard. As part of this effort, my colleague, the member of Parliament for Guelph, and I went on a fact-finding mission to Kitchener, Ontario, where we toured the Grand Valley Institution for Women, operated by Correctional Services Canada. We learned that over 20% of the federal offenders have been identified as struggling with mental health problems, often with more than one disorder. Furthermore, the rate of mental illness among federal offenders has almost doubled in the last 20 years.

The correctional investigator's 2012 annual report found that 36% of offenders at federal penitentiaries were identified as requiring psychiatric or psychological follow-up. Forty per cent of male inmates and 69% of female inmates were treated for mental health issues while in prison. Most importantly, it became clear that the deinstitutionalization of mental health services and the closure of psychiatric hospitals, a victory for the compassionate and progressive treatment of individuals with mental health needs, had been replaced with a new form of institutionalization, where individuals with mental health needs find themselves falling through the cracks and being funnelled into a criminal system designed for incarceration and punishment, not treatment or support.

Since then, I have expanded the mental health caucus into the parliamentary mental health caucus, where we have heard testimony from witnesses on the topic of youth suicide. Most recently, we co-hosted many events around mental health at Parliament. However, it

was in the early days during our exploratory visit to the penitentiary that inspired the creation of Bill C-375.

Bill C-375 is one small step forward in addressing the invisible cost society bears fiscally and socially for our historical inability to provide care, treatment and support for those suffering from mental health concerns. As initially put forward, Bill C-375 would amend paragraph 721(3)(a) of the Criminal Code, mandating that unless otherwise specified, when a pre-sentencing report is required by a court, in addition to such information as age, maturity, character, behaviour, attitude and willingness to make amends, information outlining any mental health disorder as well as any mental health care programs available for the accused be provided as part of their pre-sentencing report.

• (1735)

Today, there exists no mandate for courts to consider the mental health history of an individual in pre-sentencing proceedings, yet they are mandated to take into account subjective factors such as attitude or character.

As Bill C-375 ensures that pertinent information would be taken into account during pre-sentencing, an individual with a history of mental health issues would be afforded the appropriate care and treatment during the administration of justice and their rehabilitation. Nevertheless, the Probation Officer Association of Ontario has noted that, at least in this jurisdiction, this was already standard practice and that federal legislation would simply codify and expand that across all jurisdictions.

In the long term, the legislation presents an opportunity for us to take a real step forward, decrease recidivism, improve rehabilitation, and further erode the stigmatization of mental illness.

In the short term, there are immediate benefits to the quality of life in our prisons, as well as to the efficacy of the services in the administration of justice and the rehabilitation of vulnerable populations.

In any individual sentencing, our justice system is well served by being made fully aware of relevant mental health concerns. With mental health information included in a presentence report, the interplay of mental health and the condition of incarceration can be taken fully into account. Readily available mental health information is invaluable when considering a step as drastic as solitary confinement or choosing the facility that can best provide the appropriate mental health services.

By ensuring that mental health concerns are considered in these decisions, we can reduce the strain on penitentiary security officers while creating an environment that mitigates inflammatory factors and encourages conditions that reduce recidivism in the long term. This can be particularly useful in crafting cases of conditional sentencing as well as in creating conditions for effective reintegration following release.

Privilege

During committee testimony, a representative of the John Howard Society of Canada brought up an interesting example of where this context would matter even outside of incarceration. The representative noted that there are mental health issues that can predispose an individual to committing breaches due to their inability to appropriately understand the causality surrounding their behaviour. For instance, this issue would be relevant context when considering a probation order or other forms of custodial penalties that the individual may or may not be able to discharge without committing further infractions.

It is also my understanding that ensuring relevant mental health information is available at every step of the process would also make cases less vulnerable to attack on appeal, saving time and money for our judicial system and providing a net benefit in terms of the overall cost and burden associated with mental health issues.

Following its stint at committee, Bill C-375 was returned to the House with some amendments. Principally, these changes would do the following: First, alter the terminology by replacing “mental health disorder” with “mental health condition”, therefore replacing the word “disorder” with the “word condition”. Second, they require that the mental health information be relevant for sentencing purposes, so relevancy was introduced in the bill. Finally, they replaced the term “mental health care program” with “mental health services or supports”; hence, replacing the words “care program” with “services or supports”.

I am pleased with these amendments, which I feel would strengthen the core of my legislation. One of the realities of putting forward a private member's bill is that one tries to craft legislation that will find sufficient consensus to be made into law. That can make the legislation cautious in its approach.

The other fear I expect all members have is that their legislation will return from committee weakened or watered down, which is why I am so pleased that these amendments are a positive step forward.

● (1740)

The first and third amendments I mentioned, which alter the language of the bill, actually widen its scope, covering a wider array of mental health conditions as well as services available for the offender.

During committee, there were examples given of situations where a mental health condition could be entirely separate from the judicial consideration at play and by including it, one would be party to an unnecessary and inconsiderable breach of the offender's privacy.

The second amendment ensures that there is a clear connection between the mental health condition disclosed and the judicial consideration at hand. I appreciate that this amendment actually tightens my proposed legislation to the causality between an offender's mental health condition and the judicial situation.

As I said when the bill came before the committee, the relationship between mental health care and our criminal justice system is dynamic and evolving. This complex situation must be addressed by more than a single private member's bill, and I certainly would not frame Bill C-375 as a be-all solution. However, it is a strong step forward that would have a real-world impact on the lives

of one or more Canadians, while saving the valuable time of our judicial system and money.

I would like to take a quick moment to acknowledge of the work of Mr. Glenn Bradbury, who was instrumental in working with me in drafting the legislation. I would also like to thank those experts and colleagues who have advised me along the way. Indeed, it has been a long road.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

ALLEGED PREMATURE DISCLOSURE OF IMMIGRATION LEVELS PLAN

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Madam Speaker, in relation to the question of privilege I raised earlier today. I have some important additional information that I would like to put on the record.

I want to put on the record an email exchange I had with a reporter today. This exchange began at approximately 3:20 p.m. It is in regard to the immigration levels plan that was tabled by the minister at approximately 4 p.m. today.

The exchange began with, “Hi there, I'm hoping to connect with [the member for Calgary Nose Hill] this afternoon to get her reaction to the government's new levels plan numbers and also to the fact the CBSA has been asked to step up its removals. Could she give me a call.” I responded with “Were the levels tabled today? I must have missed it.”

The exchange said, “Sorry no, but they will be. It would have happened by now but for this point of order. Just looking to set up a quick interview for after they are tabled.” I responded with, “Do you have a copy? I am happy to comment, but it would help to see them first.”

In addition to this email exchange, there was a follow-up phone conversation between my staff and the reporter, which occurred at 3:45 p.m., and again the minister tabled the levels plan at 4:00 p.m. This is a first draft transcription.

The reporter said, “I did just did get a little bit of a heads-up on what they were so that I could have something ready to move on the wire when it is tabled just in case.” My assistant said, “Oh okay I see.” “So that's where I was expecting that it would have been tabled by now but there's a point of order that obviously is taking up more time than usual.” My assistant said, “Okay I guess I will have to flip on the House in a second here but I'm so—okay, do you have some of the information and we're just kind of waiting now to see when they'll table it I guess.” Then the reporter said, “It's just kind of a continuation of what they did last year, like a three-year plan and it will go up to 350,000 in 2021.” I will note that a story was published that included details on the levels plan at 4:30 p.m. today.

I am also happy to provide the Speaker with copies of this information, if he so requests.

Privilege

As you know, Madam Speaker, there is no provision for information to be given to journalists ahead of a member of Parliament and there are numerous precedents, particularly in regard to legislation. I will give one example. On April 19, 2016, the Speaker found a prima facie case of privilege after the leader of the opposition pointed out that specific and detailed information contained in Bill C-14 was given to the media ahead of the House and members of Parliament.

During that discussion, Speaker Milliken's ruling was referenced of March 19, 2001, when he said, "To deny to members information concerning business that is about to come before the House, while at the same time providing such information to media that will likely be questioning members about that business, is a situation that the Chair cannot condone." In that 2001 case, my former colleague, Vic Toews, was called by a reporter for comment on a bill not yet tabled. He was embarrassed by the exchange. The facts in that scenario are identical to this situation. Again I would point out that this was business that was put in front of the House this afternoon with regard to the levels plan.

My colleague, the member for Milton, was also recently questioned by a reporter over information the journalist was given, but she was denied. The Speaker is still deliberating on that matter. Today, I have been put in that same position.

We have had two other rulings by the Speaker recently that I believe are relevant. On March 20, following a complaint from the hon. member for Abbotsford that the media and stakeholders received a briefing five hours before members on Bill C-69, an omnibus bill of 377 pages, this was the Speaker's comment on the matter, "there is a rightful expectation that those responsible for the information should do their utmost to ensure members' access to it. Not respecting this expectation does a disservice to all. It is particularly disconcerting when the government gives priority to the media over the members of Parliament."

Only one month later, on April 17, the hon. member for Niagara Falls brought to the Speaker's attention evidence that the CBC received information on Bill C-75 ahead of members, allowing it to post an article online only eight minutes after the bill was introduced. What the government did to the member for Niagara Falls with Bill C-75 I believe I have evidence that it has done the same thing to me, but concrete evidence that this was done ahead of it being tabled in the House of Commons with respect to the information contained in the levels plan tabled by the minister today. In the Speaker's ruling on this matter on May 7, 2018, the Speaker indicated how troubled he was that some of the members had an experience of feeling disadvantaged in their ability to fulfill their duties and that members should never have to even so much as wonder if they were not the first to receive the information from the government.

I have one final point. Given this pattern of the government on this matter and given that leaking information to the media has become part of its routine communication strategy, there comes a time, particularly when a government persists in behaviour that has caught the attention of the Speaker much too often, as I have just laid out, that another warning will not be good enough. Sometimes members deserve to be given the benefit of the doubt when they feel that their privileges have been breached. In this situation, I am again happy to

provide concrete proof of the information that I have put on the record today.

There are precedents for this that I would like to offer the Speaker. In Maingot, second edition, *Parliamentary Privilege in Canada*, page 227, he states:

In the final analysis, in areas of doubt, the Speaker asks simply:

Does the act complained of appear at first sight to be a breach of privilege...or to put it shortly, has the Member an arguable point? If the Speaker feels any doubt on the question, he should...leave it to the House.

● (1745)

In a ruling of October 24, 1966, at page 9005 of *Debates*, the Speaker said:

In considering this matter I ask myself, what is the duty of the Speaker in cases of doubt? If we take into consideration that at the moment the Speaker is not asked to render a decision as to whether or not the article complained of constitutes a breach of privilege...considering also the Speaker is the guardian of the rules, right and privileges of the house and of its members and that he cannot deprive them of such privileges when there is uncertainty in his mind...I think at this preliminary stage of the proceedings the doubt which I have in my mind should be interpreted to the benefit of the member.

I am not being critical of the journalists in this regard, because I believe they were just doing their job. The problem I have is the minister tabled this afternoon a 43-page document. I am the shadow minister for citizenship and immigration. Immigration is a topic of great concern and consternation in the public at this point of time. The minister tabled a 43-page document. The media was given an advance copy of the information contained in the document and then I was asked for comment.

I understand that some members of the media might feel like this is routine proceedings, that somehow they should be given information so they can put a story out and be newsy. I would argue that it is the opposite. It is the job of the media to respond to deliberations of Parliament and that my right as a parliamentarian with respect to being able to digest and critically evaluate information that is put in front of the House supersedes the government wanting to have a positive communications strategy or any journalist wanting to sell a paper.

This is also something journalists should be asking themselves in terms of standards. Is it right to be publishing stories on a 43-page document and asking for comments when clearly they have had the information and a member of Parliament whose task is critically evaluating it and providing comment on it does not? I would argue no.

However, going back to my point of privilege. There is no manner by which any of our rules give journalists the right to have information prior to a member of Parliament. Therefore, I ask you, Madam Speaker, to find a prima facie case of privilege. I would ask, in your ruling, to understand how one can provide comment on a 43-page document on detailed immigration policy that affects the number of people that Canada will allow into this country and under what assumption when the journalists already have this. Why should they be given the right to review that information when I am not? That is wrong.

Therefore, I ask you to find a prima facie case of privilege, Madam Speaker. I believe it is there. Should you find such, I would be prepared to move the appropriate motion.

Private Members' Business

• (1750)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I appreciate the additional information the member has brought forward. We will certainly have that considered with the other information that was provided previously.

* * *

CRIMINAL CODE

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-375, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (presentence report), be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I understand this is another Liberal private member's bill dealing with the question of sentencing vis à vis the rights of potential perpetrators. Certainly, it is important for us to attend to these questions, but I want to ask the member a general question. When are we going to see, if ever, initiatives from the government aimed at strengthening and protecting the rights of victims of crime in our country?

Mr. Majid Jowhari: Madam Speaker, our government realizes and recognizes the need to respond to mental illnesses in the criminal justice system, as well as ensuring victims are also taken care of. That is why the minister is embarking on a very comprehensive study of our justice system, to ensure that both sides are taken care of.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would like to offer my congratulations to the member for Richmond Hill. I had the opportunity to substitute on the justice committee in late April and early May of this year when he brought forward his bill to committee. There was a lot of positive witness testimony. I agree with him that the language in his bill has been strengthened, and I offer my congratulations for the bill making it to this stage of the House.

One thing I seem to recall from witness testimony is that it is one thing to codify this into the Criminal Code. However, one thing we did hear from witnesses was also the importance of backing up the pre-sentence report with actual resources to help, especially in small towns. I wonder if the member could comment on the importance of not only changing the law, but following it up with actual resources that could be utilized to deal with the issue.

• (1755)

Mr. Majid Jowhari: Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his positive comment and support of the bill. I am proud to say that our government has made a commitment by allocating \$5 billion to mental health as part of budget 2017. I am pleased to share my understanding that the ministers are working with the Minister of Health to ensure that the allocation of these funds is well under way. I understand we have an agreement where \$1.9 billion is going to Ontario and upon signing the agreement it is my hope that the provinces work very closely with municipalities to ensure that those funds are allocated especially to the smaller jurisdictions to ensure that the services, especially the community-based services, are available.

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have a comment. A great congratulations. The biggest group in Canadian jails are people with mental illness and fetal alcohol syndrome, also a

huge percentage in jails around the world. There is obviously a need in sentencing if they do not even know why they have committed a crime, or if the punishment is related to the crime, so why would there be the same punishment? It does not make any sense, so the bill would make apparent to the judge the condition of the person as to whether and how they should be sentenced based on their abilities.

Mr. Majid Jowhari: Madam Speaker, the hon. member is actually echoing what has already been said in highlighting a specific area and including this in the legislation. Passing it will help not only the mental health condition but other related conditions. This is where the review of the committee has broadened the scope and it has naturally led to us being able to identify others.

Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today and speak to Bill C-375, an act to amend the Criminal Code, to require that a pre-sentence report contain information on any mental disorder that an offender may have.

I understand and am sympathetic to those who suffer from mental health disorders. I proudly supported the private member's bill of my colleague from Niagara Falls, Bill C-233, which sought to address the challenges of Alzheimer's and other dementias on a national level. However, I am deeply concerned about this bill. This bill, when taken together with other legislation introduced and passed by the current Liberal government, continues a long and disturbing pattern of favouring the protection of criminals over the protection of the victims of crime.

Just last week, I stood in this place and compared the record of the last Conservative government on crime with the record of the current Liberal government. They stand in stark contrast. From day one of their mandate, the Liberals have demonstrated both an appalling indifference to victims and a disquieting compassion for criminals. We have seen this time and again. This is the government that willingly gave a \$10.5 million payout to unrepentant convicted terrorist Omar Khadr, who killed American medic Sergeant Christopher Speer in a firefight in Afghanistan in 2002. Further, Tabitha Speer, Sergeant Speer's widow, was awarded a judgment of \$134 million by a court in Utah against Omar Khadr. The Liberals could have, and I would suggest should have, waited to allow the courts to rule on an injunction for Mrs. Speer. Instead, they rushed payment to Khadr, making enforcement of the judgment unlikely.

What of our Canadian veterans who need help? To them, the Prime Minister had one thing to say, that they were asking for more than he was willing to give. However, for ISIS fighters, it seems the cash never stops flowing. The Prime Minister pledged to use taxpayers' hard-earned money to de-radicalize terrorists through such tried and tested means as reading Canadian poetry.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, for her part, refuses to use the term "ISIS terrorists", instead choosing to use the vapid term "foreign fighters". When pressed on her plan for these so-called foreign fighters, she offered this gem of an insight:

With respect to the foreign fighters, I think we need to remember why they are where they are right now.

Private Members' Business

We all remember why they are where they are. We remember that they left Canada to engage in horrific war crimes against innocent men, women, and children halfway around the world, crimes like beheading innocents, throwing gay people off buildings, and stoning women to death for the crime of being raped. According to the Prime Minister, these hardened terrorists can be “an extraordinarily powerful voice” in Canada. One wonders what those voices are saying.

The Conservatives have fought this disturbing hippyesque Kumbaya session with criminals and terrorists every step of the way. When Bill C-75 was introduced, it weakened the penalties for many crimes, including terrorism-related charges, to possibly as little as a fine. The Liberals spent months defending this decision before finally backing down and supporting Conservative amendments that ensured that terrorists would face the consequences of their actions. It took months of pressure and hard work to make this one obvious change. However, even now the bill remains deeply flawed.

● (1800)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands is rising on a point of order.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I am trying to keep up here and I wondered what relevance this speech has had so far to private member's bill, Bill C-375. With all due respect to my friend, I see none.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I want to remind members that there is a bit of latitude when delivering speeches. However, I do want to remind those who are speaking that their speeches have to be related to the motion or bill at hand. I am sure the hon. member will reference the bill that is before the House right now.

The hon. member for Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek.

Mrs. Kelly Block: Madam Speaker, I would point out that the comments I am making do build on a pattern we are seeing, which is certainly relevant to the bill before us here today, Bill C-375.

The bills the government has introduced have tended to weaken penalties, as in Bill C-375. The penalties were weakened to as little as a fine for many other serious crimes, such as forging a passport, impaired driving causing bodily harm, the use of the date rape drug, the abduction of children, and taking part in gang violence.

Even when the Liberals claim they are targeting criminals, they manage to miss the mark wildly. In Bill C-71, the Liberals claimed to be going after gang-related firearms crimes. That is another example, as is Bill C-375. Nowhere in Bill C-71 is the word “gang” mentioned. Instead the bill focuses on law-abiding firearms owners and does nothing to reduce gang violence. Recently, the Liberals have been talking about a hand gun ban. All that will do is hurt law-abiding Canadians. We all know that criminals break the law. Adding another law will not change that. Bill C-71 and the proposed hand gun ban are smokescreens to hide the government's disgracefully weak record on crime, and its disturbing—

Ms. Julie Dabrusin: Madam Speaker, on a point of order. I have to say I am a little confused as to how this ties in. We are talking about another bill here entirely. I am a little confused.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Once again, I will remind the member for Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek that the wording of the bill deals specifically with “any aspect of the offender's mental condition that is relevant for sentencing purposes, as well as any mental health services or support available to the offender.”

Subsection 721(3) of the Criminal Code would be amended by the addition of that wording. If the member could redirect her speech towards the bill that is before the House, which specifically deals with this, it would be greatly appreciated.

● (1805)

Mrs. Kelly Block: Madam Speaker, it is important that we understand the pattern of the current government's introduction of government bills or private members' bills, particularly justice bills. The fact is that the bills the government introduces tend to undermine the rights of victims and overly represent the rights of criminals.

I believe that the private member's bill before us today, Bill C-375 falls into that category. I am simply trying to demonstrate how Bill C-375 fits into the pattern that I was outlining earlier. It is not a well thought-out bill due to the changing nature of psychological research. The bill includes all mental health disorders. This is a mistake. It would provide prisoners with an incentive to claim they have a mental health condition, some of which are difficult to verify.

While I do have deep respect for the mental health workers in our justice system, their ability to meet their current responsibilities is already stretched. I believe that the requirements of Bill C-375 would further slow an already glacial process. I believe that would also result in an unequal application of the law, and weaker sentences for many offenders.

As I was saying earlier, my greatest concern about this bill is that it continues the Liberal pattern of prioritizing criminals over victims. For example, in my province of Saskatchewan, we were shocked to hear that Terri-Lynne McClintic, the woman who murdered eight-year-old Tori Stafford, was being housed in a healing lodge in the province instead of being held behind bars where she deserves to be.

Healing lodges are meant to help reintegrate offenders into the community, not to be housing for child killers. Tori Stafford's father begged the Prime Minister to send Ms. McClintic back to prison. The lead investigator denounced her transfer. The Nekaneet First Nation that runs the lodge is very concerned about that transfer. However, the Liberals refuse to act and send her back where she belongs.

Private Members' Business

The Liberal government ignores the rights of victims and coddles criminals. Canadians deserve better than a government that treats victims like criminals, and criminals like family. Therefore, I will be voting against this motion.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, I had my opening remarks prepared, but after listening to the previous speech, it is important to clarify a few things.

What the member for Richmond Hill is attempting to do is amend a very specific section of the Criminal Code. That is well within the rights of the federal level of government. It is very separate from victims services. As we all know, victims services fall under the provincial jurisdiction. The administration of justice in Canada falls to the provincial governments. We have a very limited jurisdiction in amending criminal law, so it is important to state that clear fact.

Furthermore, when people get to the pre-sentence stage, they are no longer suspects, they are now offenders; they have been found guilty. Given the huge amount of evidence that exists regarding mental health issues in Canada's prisons and given the previous member's own stated support for mental health supports, I do not see why we should not tackle this issue. This is not putting the rights of offenders over the rights of victims. Those are completely separate issues. A judge is the expert of the case and has heard all of the facts. This is about giving that person, who is in a decision-making stage, even more facts to make the correct and appropriate decision.

I was at the justice committee. I heard the testimony from numerous witnesses who work in the criminal justice system. They support this piece of legislation going through. It is important to hold up facts, to back up our deliberations with those facts, and not to go down some rabbit hole talking about support for offenders over the rights of victims.

On a personal note, I have a friend who recently was subjected to a crime and she accessed victims services in the province of British Columbia. I can say, with pride, that she found those services to work very well. She found the judge in her case and all of the support staff were there every single step of the way. Therefore, for the Conservatives to suggest that victims do not have rights in this country is factually incorrect, given the experiences of my personal friend. She found herself supported every step of the way by the justice system in British Columbia. I just wanted to read that into the record.

I want to thank the member for Richmond Hill because the other key difference here is that this is not a government bill. This is from a Liberal backbencher who has taken the right that we all have in this place to take an issue that is important to a member's local community, which his or her constituents or Canadians within the wider region have identified as an issue, and to bring it forward. The member has identified this as an important piece, so we need to respect that. This is not a government bill masquerading as a private member's piece of legislation.

The very specific section of the Criminal Code that Bill C-375 addresses is section 721. There are some differences in the wording of this legislation, from second reading to the stage it is in now. That is because the justice committee did its due diligence and it listened to the testimony. I agree with the member for Richmond Hill that the

language was tightened up to take account of some of that testimony. We had three meetings at the justice committee on this particular bill. I was present for two of them, where I got to listen to most of the witness testimony.

I thank the hon. member for Victoria, who serves as our party's justice critic and has done an admirable job at that committee for us. We attempted to move an amendment at the committee stage. It was not agreed to, but through all of the deliberations that went on, the bill that is now before the House has taken into account a lot of the improvements that were mentioned.

Pre-sentence reports already do exist. In section 721 of the Criminal Code, in paragraph 721(3)(a), pre-sentence reports already require that, "[an] offender's age, maturity, character, behaviour, attitude and willingness to make amends" be included in a pre-sentence report.

● (1810)

Therefore, it is key that we now include a new section 8.1, which reads, "any aspect of the offender's mental condition that is relevant for sentencing purposes, as well as any mental health services or support available to the offender". We do not want to house with the general population someone who has an obvious mental health issue. That would not serve the general population well, and it certainly would not serve that particular person well.

A lot of attention has been paid to mental health lately. At the justice committee last year we were engaged in a groundbreaking study on mental health support for jurors, because jurors are often dragooned into service from of their normal family lives. I was there when we were listening to jurors who partook in the Paul Bernardo trial. They had to watch all of the videos and hear all of the audio tapes. After the trial was done and they had delivered their verdict, they were simply given a handshake, a pat on the back, released back to their family lives and expected to go on normally. Therefore, I really hope that the Department of Justice listens to the recommendations in that report.

We are also making landmark strides in mental health with respect to first responders, our veterans, Canadians Forces personnel, and now in the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food we are tackling the issue with respect to farmers. I think the conversation is headed in the right direction, and I am glad to see that this particular private member's bill is continuing along in that vein.

We had testimony at committee from the Probation Officers Association of Ontario. These are people who are working every single day in the correctional system. We had the director from the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies there, as well as the executive director of the John Howard Society. We also had some testimony from the defence counsel of the Canadian Council of Criminal Defence Lawyers. These are people who are intimately involved with the justice system, understand it very well and understand where the shortcomings are.

Private Members' Business

However, Dean Embry from the Canadian Council of Criminal Defence Lawyers did have reservations about the bill. In his testimony, he was quite concerned about some of its privacy implications. His concerns were taken into account and that is why we see the language tightened up.

Providing information about an individual's mental health in a pre-sentence report allows the judge to make a more informed decision about an appropriate sentence. However, this measure is not intended to result in the disclosure of one's mental condition. Also, I think it is very important to note that it is not about perpetuating stigma or the false perception that those with mental health disorders are dangerous. It is simply designed to assist the individual to obtain care and receive an appropriate sentence.

It is also important, because privacy concerns were raised, that the pre-sentence reports are distributed only to members with a vested interest in the case. They include the judge, counsel for the defence and the prosecution, the parole officer, the individual and, in some cases, the institution where the sentence will be served.

We know that people with mental illness are overrepresented in the criminal justice system, and there are statistics on that. There was a report in 2012 showing that 36% of federal offenders were identified at admission as requiring psychiatric or psychological follow-up. Additionally, 45% of male inmates and 69% of female inmates received institutional mental health care services.

To conclude, we should be giving a judge as much information as possible to make an appropriate sentence for someone who has already been found guilty. Giving a pre-sentencing report, I think, is in everyone's interest. We should be giving a judge the widest amount of discretion possible to take in all of the facts of the case to make an appropriate sentence.

I thank the member for Richmond Hill for bringing this proposed legislation forward. I congratulate him for the bill's making it to this stage, and I look forward to offering my support when the House votes on the matter.

•(1815)

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of Bill C-375. The bill would amend the Criminal Code to require all pre-sentence reports to include information on the mental health of the offender.

I would like to thank the hon. member for Richmond Hill for bringing the bill forward for debate and for his hard work on the mental health caucus.

In the 19th century, Russian novelist Dostoevsky once said, "The degree of civilization in a society can be judged by entering its prisons." His meaning is clear. The administration of justice reflects the values of society.

The first MP to take a stand on this self-evident truth was also the first woman to sit in the House, Agnes Macphail. In 1935, after making a personal visit to Kingston Penitentiary, Agnes Macphail realized that the administrative system was not designed to reform prisoners, but simply to punish and separate inmates from society. Her most challenging proposal for reform was to end military and political appointments to penitentiary administration and to appoint

instead superintendents with penology training and medical doctors with psychological training.

While her series of reforms brought meaningful change to our penitentiary system, there is still much work we need to do.

If mental health policies have been slow to develop in Canada, it is fair to say that this issue is especially present in our prison system. According to the Office of the Correctional Investigator, 16.9% of male inmates have mood disorders, half suffer from alcohol and drug abuse and 16% have borderline personality disorder. Our government is seized with addressing this inequity.

Bill C-375 identifies an important gap in our justice system. It is already common place in many jurisdictions for offenders to provide information about their mental health through a probation officer. The practical result of this bill would be to signal to a sentencing judge that this information would be a relevant consideration at the time of sentencing.

Mental illness affects nearly all Canadians at some point in their lives, either personally or through a family member, friend or colleague. An estimated 20% of Canadians will personally experience a mental health illness in their lifetime. The number of individuals with mental health issues who have become involved in the criminal justice system has increased over the past several decades.

What we have in place is simply not working.

The stated goals of the bill are consistent with the mandate given by the Prime Minister to the Minister of Justice, which asks her to address gaps in services to those with mental illness throughout the criminal justice system. I think that most Guelphites, as well as most Canadians, would agree that the issue of mental illness could be better managed in the criminal justice system.

A number of factors have been cited as contributing to the increasing numbers of individuals with mental illness in the criminal justice system. Some of these include a lack of sufficient community resources, including housing, income and mental health services. They all connect.

Individuals with mental illness are more likely to be arrested, detained, incarcerated and more likely to be disciplined rather than treated while incarcerated. Once they have been released from the criminal justice system, they are also more likely to be arrested and detained again. Further, there is a high rate of substance abuse among individuals with mental illness, resulting in more complex needs.

It is an area where we must continue to work together with our provincial and territorial counterparts, as well as community stakeholders, to ensure that meaningful progress is made.

I want to be clear that improving the mental health responses of the criminal justice system is not about letting offenders off easy. On the contrary, it is consistent with our government's stated commitment to a criminal justice system that keeps communities safe, respects victims and holds offenders to account.

Private Members' Business

In particular, addressing mental health is one of the critical ways that we can divert offenders from the so-called revolving door of incarceration to both improve chances of successful reintegration and also to make more efficient use of scarce resources. These outcomes, and not simply punitive measures, should drive our decision-making tonight. As a result, every step we take to improve outcomes for those with mental illness is a step worthy of careful consideration by parliamentarians.

●(1820)

The bill complements our government's progress in addressing mental illness issues. In budget 2017, as has previously been mentioned, the government committed \$5 billion over the next five years to the provinces and territories to improve access to mental health services. In addition, to ensure that federally sentenced offenders with mental health needs receive proper care, budget 2017 also proposed to invest \$57.8 million over five years starting in 2017-18, and \$13.6 million every year thereafter to expand mental health care for all inmates in federal correctional facilities.

Last year, the hon member for Richmond Hill and I visited the Grand Valley Institution for Women in Kitchener, Ontario, not too far from my home. There we saw the complex needs of the inmates. We saw trauma, addictions and the effects of adverse childhood effects. We saw bright young women incarcerated who really wanted more access to educational resources so that they could have a better life once their term was finished.

We saw a lot of opportunities for improvement, but at the root we saw a lot of care that is needed in mental health and addictions. Our government has acknowledged the need for funding in this area and has set aside \$20 million in budget 2018 for mental health care of women offenders.

If we are to address and reverse the stigma surrounding mental health, we cannot ignore parts of Canadian society such as prisons. Often enough, society tends to make an "other" of the people on its fringes: people in the criminal justice system, indigenous peoples and people struggling with mental health issues.

Particularly for those who come before the criminal justice system, assumptions about the person's past and motivations come quickly. The bill helps to prevent the kind of assumptions from taking the place of fact in Canadian courts.

Eighty years ago Agnes Macphail took up the struggle to reform Canada's prisons. Then as now, fairness and respect are the ultimate goals of our reforms.

Bill C-375 acknowledges and seeks to address the gap in Canada's legal system that is easily addressed in the legislation before us today.

Before I end, I would like to thank again the hon. member for Richmond Hill for bringing this to the floor for debate. We both come from business backgrounds and both sit on the industry committee together and why are we talking about mental health? It is simply the biggest issue that we are facing within our constituencies. I thank the member for bringing this forward. I encourage all our colleagues in the House to support this very important legislation.

●(1825)

Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Seniors, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to participate in the debate of private member's Bill C-375, an act to amend the Criminal Code (pre-sentence report). I would like to acknowledge the contributions of the members of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights for their hard work in studying the bill.

The Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights recently completed its study of Bill C-375 and reported it back with one amendment that makes three changes to the proposed language of the bill. The bill, as amended by committee, has now been concurred in at report stage.

In my view, the committee's amendment clarifies the language in the bill and will ensure it better achieves its stated objectives.

Before I speak about the specific amendment, I would like to take a moment to speak about the bill itself. The bill seeks to amend the Criminal Code provisions relating to pre-sentence reports. Pre-sentence reports are ordered by the court and prepared by probation officers to help the court learn about the person to be sentenced and, in turn, to help the court discharge its responsibility to impose fit and appropriate sentences.

Currently, the Criminal Code specifies that a pre-sentence report should contain certain information about the offender, for example, age, maturity and character, unless the court orders otherwise. However, the Criminal Code is silent as to whether or not relevant mental health information should be included.

Bill C-375 proposes to amend section 721 of the Criminal Code to clarify that, wherever possible, a pre-sentence report should also include available mental health information about the offender.

During its review, the justice committee heard from several witnesses, each with an expertise in mental health and the criminal justice system and each bringing a different perspective to the table.

[*Translation*]

The Probation Officers Association of Ontario shared some very useful information with the committee about the collection and transmission of that information. The association noted that, if an offender has a mental health diagnosis, probation officers have to investigate and confirm the diagnosis through contact with mental health professionals where possible.

However, sometimes an offender's diagnosis is not confirmed or the offender does not disclose it to the probation officer. In such cases, information about mental health may come from collateral sources, such as family members, employers or professional counsellors. If necessary, probation officers include comments about observed or reported behaviours in the pre-sentence report.

Private Members' Business

Essentially, Bill C-375 would codify this standard practice to require the inclusion of mental health information in pre-sentence reports. All judges and criminal justice professionals would have access to that information and would take it into consideration at sentencing following criminal proceedings.

[English]

As I noted earlier, the justice committee amended the bill to reflect some of the expert testimony presented to it. The amendment resulted in three notable changes to the original language of the bill.

The first change to the language replaced the term “mental disorder” with “mental condition”. This responded to a concern that, as introduced, the wording in Bill C-375 was too narrow, as it would have required a specific diagnosis. The impact of this part of the amendment would be to broaden the wording of the bill, as introduced, to ensure that a pre-sentence report contained more general information about the mental condition of the offender that might be relevant for sentencing purposes, as well as any related behavioural challenges, and not solely a medical diagnosis.

● (1830)

[Translation]

The second change to the language will ensure that only the information about mental health with a direct relationship to the proceedings will be provided to protect the offender's privacy. This would address the concerns the committee heard about the presence in public records of information unrelated to the offence or sentence.

[English]

The third change to the language specified that information about “mental health services or support available to the offender” be included in a pre-sentence report. This broadens the language of the bill as introduced, which provided that the pre-sentence report should also include information about “mental health care programs”.

Broadening this language would ensure that the legislation would not unduly limit the treatment an offender could access. This amendment responded to three of the issues discussed by witnesses, and in my view, it is consistent with the purpose of the bill.

[Translation]

When the bill's sponsor, the member for Richmond Hill, appeared before the standing committee, he indicated that the purpose of Bill C-375 was to ensure that mental health information be considered during sentencing and that individuals with a history of mental illness be provided appropriate care and treatment in support of their rehabilitation.

[English]

I believe that the bill, with the amendment adopted at committee, strikes the appropriate balance between protecting the privacy interests of the accused and ensuring that the court has the appropriate information to make a fit sentence.

This bill would only signal that where mental health information was available to the probation officer, either from the accused directly or through collateral sources, that information would be

relevant to sentencing and should be included in the pre-sentence report.

I believe the committee's amendment strengthens this bill and responds to the concerns raised before the committee. As such, I will be voting to adopt the bill, as amended, at third reading.

Mr. Majid Jowhari (Richmond Hill, Lib.): Madam Speaker, this is the last time I will be standing in this House to provide remarks on this private member's bill.

I would like to once again thank all the members in the House for participating in this debate and helping me through this legislation. I would especially like to thank the hon. members from the NDP side and my colleagues from the Liberal side for providing positive feedback and support. I wish the member from the Conservative side had stayed for me to provide some remarks in response—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I want to advise the member that he is not to indicate who is in the House or not in the House.

The hon. member for Richmond Hill.

Mr. Majid Jowhari: Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to provide a response to the Conservative member on the other side of the aisle. This legislation is not about specific cases mentioned. It is not about choosing one over another. It is about providing equal opportunity for those who are impacted. It is about justice and caring for those who are vulnerable. As such, the bill would provide judges with all the relevant information for a given case, and we respect their independence.

I have had the opportunity to discuss my private member's bill at length. I have made it clear that mental health issues are a profound strain on our correctional system and that these systemic issues can only be solved through recognition and treatment. I have walked through the bill's history, as many of our colleagues have, and the strong positive changes brought forward by the committee.

In short, the bill is a piece of common sense policy that would do real, quantifiable good across our corrections system, saving taxpayer money, protecting the vulnerable, freeing resources in our prisons and improving quality of life for those serving time.

I look forward to the discussions to follow on my private member's bill in the other place and to its eventual return. This has been a long journey and a long time coming.

● (1835)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): It being 6:38 p.m., the time provided for debate has expired.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

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

Some hon. members: Nay.

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

And five or more members having risen:

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Pursuant to Standing Order 98 the recorded division stands deferred until Wednesday, November 7, immediately before the time provided for private members' business.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

[*English*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, it is an honour to rise in response to a question that I asked the Prime Minister earlier this year around ocean plastics. We know that a garbage truck of plastic is entering our environment every minute. I had a chance to speak in the first hour of debate in support of my motion, Motion No. 151, on Monday.

We heard that we are going to get support from all four opposition parties. I want to thank them for their support first. They understand that this is a huge issue. It is certainly an issue for Canada, with the longest coastline in the world, and it is a global issue.

We heard some of the concerns from the Conservatives that were raised in debate around my motion. They were worried about the costs to the taxpayer. I just wanted to address some of those concerns.

We heard from the World Wildlife Fund that over \$13 billion U.S. is the cost currently to our oceans right now in terms of ocean plastics that are impacting our fisheries, our coastline and our important pristine environments. Locally, we are finding over 90 pieces of microplastic in a salmon and at least two pieces of microplastic in the average shellfish. Therefore, this is potentially a huge threat to our shellfish industry and our fishing industry. We need to make sure that we are prudent about that and fiscally responsible, instead of letting plastic escape our environments into our aquatic environments that could impact future generations and put the cost burden on them.

On October 24, the European Parliament overwhelmingly backed a ban on single-use plastics, including items like plastic straws, cotton swabs, disposable plastic plates and cutlery. It has committed to banning them all by 2021 and that 90% of all plastic bottles will be recycled by 2025. I commend it. That is leadership.

Dame Ellen MacArthur, the founder of the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, on October 29, put out an op-ed in The Huffington Post, which states:

We cannot recycle and clean our way out of this crisis—we must move upstream to the source of the flow. When the boat is sinking, bailing out buys you time, but what you really need to do is fix the hole.

I could not agree more. We actually need to not just think about recycling, but eliminate and reduce the amount of plastic that we are using and that is going into the environment.

A good friend of mine, Captain Josh Temple from Clayoquot CleanUp, he always refers to the amount of plastic going in the ocean as an oil spill that is happening every day. We need tangible measurable goals that are transparent, and that are reported annually and publicly.

Back on October 24, when the European Parliament voted, its environment commissioner Karmenu Vella said:

Today we are one step closer to eliminating the most problematic single use plastic products in Europe. It sends a clear signal that Europe is ready to take decisive, coordinated action to curb plastic waste and to lead international efforts to make our oceans plastic-free.

The question I have is this. Is Canada ready? Will the government support my motion like the other opposition parties? I asked that question of the Prime Minister. I ask that question today. We need a national strategy to combat this growing problem.

• (1840)

Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my good friend, the hon. member for Courtenay—Alberni, for his tireless dedication to combatting plastic waste and protecting our oceans from plastic pollution. I could not agree more on the importance of this issue. This is why this government is taking prompt action.

We made oceans plastics a priority for the G7 presidency and put forward the Charlevoix blueprint for healthy oceans and the ocean plastic charter at the G7 leaders summit this past June. The charter commits to pursuing actions along the entire life cycle of plastics to address plastic pollution and marine litter.

To date, the charter has been endorsed by 10 governments, including Canada, Italy, France, the U.K. and the European Union. Support for the charter's commitments is not limited to government, however. I am also pleased to note that more than 18 major businesses and non-governmental organizations have endorsed the ocean plastic charter to date, including Unilever, the Dow Chemical Company, Loblaws, Coca-Cola, Walmart and A&W Canada, just to name a few. These international commitments provide a springboard for action in Canada.

Federal, provincial and territorial governments are currently working together, through the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment, the CCME, to develop a national strategy and action that responds to the charter and moves toward zero plastic waste. Our shared goal is to keep all types of plastics in the economy out of landfills and the environment.

This work is advancing rapidly and involves consultations with the public, local governments, indigenous communities, industry and other stakeholders. For example, the CCME conducted a national stakeholder consultation on a draft framework for zero plastic waste this past August, and received over 200 stakeholder responses.

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Environment and Climate Change Canada also engaged all Canadians through a public online consultation, which ran from April to September 2018. The “Moving Canada Toward Zero Plastic Waste” consultation received 13,000 comments and letters from Canadians, which will inform our approach to this issue.

We are following through on our commitments with real actions and investments. These include \$100 million to support international plastic waste management and innovation and more than \$12 million to support a domestic plastic innovation challenge right here at home. We have also committed to lead by example by diverting 75% of all plastic waste from federal government operations by 2030. We will achieve this target by increasing recycling activities, reducing the unnecessary use of single-use plastics in government meetings and events and promoting the purchase of sustainable plastic products.

Finally, it is clear that Canadians are passionate about this issue, as is the hon. member, and they want action from all levels of government as well as industry. This is a complex issue that requires a comprehensive response. That is why we are working with all provinces and territories to develop a coordinated national approach.

Mr. Gord Johns: Madam Speaker, I want to thank my friend for outlining some of the steps the government is taking. I do congratulate the government for making this a priority. However, what we would like to see is not just consultation, but the government actually to take action. However, I want to applaud it for committing to eliminate single-use plastics in all federal facilities in the next year. We would like the government to do that straight across the country.

We do not understand why the Liberals did not follow the EU and commit to a ban by 2021. I would like the member to speak to why they have not followed the EU and my motion. Will the Liberals support my motion, which is supported by Margaret Atwood and 120,000 petitioners. Ninety-five per cent of municipalities at FCM supported it. It was supported almost unanimously at the Union of British Columbia Municipalities.

• (1845)

Mr. Terry Duguid: Madam Speaker, we are taking action. Because plastics are ubiquitous and have benefits, the solutions will be varied and complex. This will require action by government, industry, retailers, consumers, researchers and individuals, including youth.

That is why we are working with our domestic and international partners to find solutions throughout the life of plastics. This includes making plastic design and production more sustainable; improving collection and management systems and infrastructure; adopting more sustainable lifestyles, including through education and improving our understanding of the issue and solutions through research and innovation; and taking action to remove the plastic litter that is already covering the world's shorelines and waterways.

I thank the hon. member for his hard work on this important file.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise tonight to pursue a question that I

initially asked in question period on June 7. It is remarkably timely these many months later, although the circumstances have changed.

My question pertained to the quite inexplicable decision by the government to purchase the 65-year-old Trans Mountain pipeline for \$4.5 billion. In my question, I compared it to having the “business acumen of buying up all of Blockbuster's assets while Netflix takes off”. In other words, it is not a wise business decision. It is quite bizarre to buy a 65-year-old pipeline that is an ongoing working concern. It does not create a single new job to buy a 65-year-old pipeline, albeit it was all in aid of trying to build the Kinder Morgan expansion.

My question at the time dealt with whether we would see the contract for purchase and sale. Since that time, the contract for purchase and sale was made public. I reviewed it carefully and it had a couple of features that are relevant to my pursuit of this matter in debate tonight.

One is that the contract for purchase and sale of Kinder Morgan's assets in Canada did not include all of its assets. It also did not include a closing date. There was no date specified for the closing of the purchase of the Kinder Morgan pipeline. There was something called the “outside date”, December 31, which has not yet arrived. It is quite inexplicable. I use that word often because I think it is the best word.

There is no explanation for the lack of fiscal prudence and lack of concern for evidence-based decision-making that would lead the government to spend \$4.5 billion on an old pipeline, particularly when the cheque to Kinder Morgan for \$4.5 billion was delivered to it on August 31, less than 24 hours after the Federal Court of Appeal quashed the permits for the expansion.

This was foreseeable. In fact, I pointed out to the government on many occasions in the House that taking the chance that the permits would not be quashed was reckless. The matter was before the courts. Why did every minister stand up and say that the pipeline would be built, the pipeline must be built? The pipeline should not be built.

Now that we have wasted \$4.5 billion on a 65-year-old pipeline, it is a little late to point out to the government that the Federal Court of Appeal's decision not only found that the Government of Canada had broken the law, but also that Kinder Morgan had broken the law through the process of the environmental review and indigenous consultations. Therefore, we had a material breach that could have gotten Canada out of wasting \$4.5 billion on a 65-year-old pipeline for purposes of building an expansion, for which it does not have permits, at a cost of at \$10 billion more.

Adjournment Proceedings

Now for the kicker. Perfectly foreseeable was that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change was going to deliver a report this October. It was foreseeable because the Minister of Environment herself played a significant role in COP21 in Paris, and the COP21 decision document mandated the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to prepare exactly this report to tell us what we already knew, that we are not moving fast enough and the Harper targets that the government has held onto for action on climate change are completely inadequate to meet the Paris target of holding global average temperature to 1.5°C. Now we know that missing 1.5°C is globally catastrophic and potentially sets in motion irreversible disaster.

The government must cancel any and all new fossil fuel projects, including the Kinder Morgan pipeline.

• (1850)

Mr. Paul Lefebvre (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands for her advocacy on this very important issue.

I am proud to be part of a government that prioritizes transparency and accountability. As mentioned by the member, the text of the agreement to which she refers was actually made public in July of this year. A copy of it was provided to her and it is also available for all Canadians to review on the Trans Mountain Corporation's website.

Let me reassure the hon. member that the purchase of the Trans Mountain expansion project and related pipeline and terminal access from Kinder Morgan is a sound investment. This investment is part of our commitment to support all Canadians and provide great jobs for Canadians. The government's \$4.5-billion investment in the project represents a fair price for Canadians and for shareholders of the company.

Under the ownership of a Crown corporation, the government will work to move the project forward in the right way.

The government is taking action to address the issues identified by the Federal Court of Appeal. We have instructed the National Energy Board to reconsider its report on the project, taking into account the effects of project-related marine shipping.

In addition, the government has decided to follow the guidance from the court to engage in specific and focused consultation with impacted indigenous groups.

Furthermore, we committed a further \$61.5 million to help the southern resident killer whale survive and recover, building on the investments under the oceans protection plan, which support this iconic and culturally significant species.

With these actions, the government is confident that it will uphold the trust Canadians have placed in it to both grow the economy and protect the environment.

Ninety-nine per cent of our energy resources go only to the United States. Now more than ever, Canadians understand that we need to diversify our markets to protect and grow good middle-class jobs in Canada.

Keep in mind there is an existing pipeline that has been there since 1953, that generates almost \$300 million of earnings a year. The challenge ahead is manageable because the court has been very clear that there are two very specific shortcomings and laid out paths for addressing them promptly and without unnecessary delay.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Madam Speaker, first of all, let us talk about the notion that this is a fair price, \$4.5 billion for a 65-year-old pipeline that Kinder Morgan purchased for \$550 million and that purchase price included additional infrastructure that we did not buy. It is a huge bonanza of a profit to a Texas-based company for absolutely no reason.

When the hon. member says Canadians realize “now more than ever” that we must diversify where our energy goes, I disagree. Canadians realize now more than ever that we have to stop using and exploiting fossil fuels while there is time to ensure our children can live out their natural lifespan without being in an unlivable world. That is the advice from the intergovernmental panel on climate change.

Maintaining the existing 65-year-old pipeline is not going to be a new investment, but expanding it will create an additional pulse of greenhouse gases. We are over the carbon budget. We have to reduce now. We have to cancel Kinder Morgan.

Mr. Paul Lefebvre: Madam Speaker, we are following the clear path provided by the Federal Court of Appeal in order to move forward on the Trans Mountain expansion project in the right way. The court was clear that we needed to do a better job consulting indigenous peoples and the NEB needed to account for the impact of marine shipping. That is the path we are taking.

The previous government's approach failed. It failed to diversify to non-U.S. markets. We must diversify our oil exports and we must do so in the right way.

We understand that protecting the environment, growing the economy and respecting indigenous peoples can be done at the same time. The court provided us with a clear path to move this project forward in the right way, and that is what we are going to do.

We will continue to make historic investments like our \$1.5 billion oceans protection plan, restore our relationship with indigenous peoples and support the jobs our energy sector creates.

[*Translation*]

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, NDP): Madam Speaker, in the NAFTA 2.0 file, the Liberals failed dairy farmers. They failed chicken farmers. They failed egg farmers. They failed turkey farmers. They failed our SMEs. They failed to defend our food sovereignty and territorial autonomy. They failed our local farmers. They failed our family farms. Lastly, they failed Quebec.

Simply put, the Liberals signed a bad deal. I am not the only one who thinks so. All stakeholders agree.

Adjournment Proceedings

I want to read some of their comments.

The Coop fédérée said:

By ratifying an agreement that will create new breaches in the tariff barriers protecting supply-managed sectors, the government is not giving full recognition to the agriculture and agri-food sectors for their contribution to the economic and social development of Canada and its regions.

Yvon Boucher, president of the Producteurs de lait de Montérégie-Est, said:

We feel betrayed by this government, which promised us that there would be no impact on dairy production, that it would not sign a deal that would have negative consequences for us. Now we see from the result that this was completely untrue. We have lost faith in this government.

Pierre-Luc Leblanc, president of Éleveurs de volailles du Québec, said that since the Liberals' new agreement, millions of tonnes of American chicken, eggs and turkey are poised to enter the Canadian market. He says that this may seem like no big deal now, but in five or 10 years this could further jeopardize poultry producers. Poultry producers are surprised and disappointed in this agreement and want compensatory measures from the government.

Jacques Demers, president of the Fédération québécoise des municipalités, said:

This agreement is harmful not only for dairy producers in Quebec, but also for every region in Quebec. We are talking about hundreds of rural communities whose economies have been compromised.

I could go on and on.

I commend the courage of the hundreds of farmers who called out the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food during a demonstration in Montérégie, and especially the farmers from my riding who gathered in Granby to express their displeasure. Dairy farmers from the RCMs of Maskoutains and Acton were there to discuss their situation.

Charles Graveline has a herd of 325 dairy cows in Saint-Jude. Mr. Graveline, who is a father of three and seventh-generation farmer, is saying that the government talks about financial compensation, but it will never measure up to the losses farmers are going to suffer. He believes that each farm is going to lose tens of thousands of dollars. This dairy farmer from my region expects to see a shortfall of between \$150,000 and \$180,000 annually. How could this government have done that to our farmers? How can they continue to claim that they signed a good agreement?

Marie-Pier Vincent, a young farmer from Saint-Valérien, started up a dairy farm two and a half year ago. Her operation has 40 dairy cows. She is worried about her future. She has said that this agreement will be very harmful to her and will jeopardize the entire future of her business. By opening up another breach, the government has just sacrificed an entire generation. Young farmers are worried, and with good reason, unfortunately. We know very little about compensation at the moment, apart from the Liberal promise that it will be paid out before Christmas.

In light of all these concerns and observations, how can the government say it signed a good agreement?

•(1855)

Mr. Jean-Claude Poissant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I

thank the member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot for raising this important question.

The Government of Canada strongly supports the supply management system, farmers, their families, and producers. Dairy, egg and poultry producers and processors have strong roots in our economy and also in our regions.

Our supply management system is viewed around the world as a model of stability. The system guarantees fair returns for producers; predictable supply for processors; and high-quality dairy, poultry and egg products for consumers.

The USMCA maintains the three pillars of supply management: production control, pricing mechanism, and import control. The government defended our supply management system against American attacks, and we will not give in. We will continue to defend our national interests and Canadian values, all while supporting our agricultural sector.

Furthermore, our government has invested \$2.2 million to implement proAction, a dairy-industry initiative focused on what today's consumers care about, like milk quality and safety, animal health and welfare, and the environment.

In 2018, we provided nearly \$3 million to the poultry and egg industries to help them improve their capacity to develop new tools to fight against outbreaks of poultry diseases and become more effective at doing so, as well as to meet the stricter animal welfare, biosafety and food safety standards.

Over the next five years, the federal, provincial and territorial governments will invest \$3 billion in the Canadian agricultural industry, including supply-managed sectors.

The Government of Canada is proud to help Canada's dairy, egg and poultry farmers build responsible and sustainable industries. For example, in order to help the dairy industry adapt to CETA, the Government of Canada invested \$350 million to enable dairy farmers and processors to modernize, increase productivity and become more competitive.

Since the CPTPP was signed, the Government of Canada has been working with supply-managed industries to help them stay strong. On October 29, the minister announced the creation of new working groups for dairy farmers and processors. These working groups will bring together representatives from Canadian dairy organizations and associations, regional representatives and senior officials from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

The structure of the working groups was determined based on consultations with Canada's dairy farmers and the Dairy Processors Association of Canada. The working groups will develop mitigation strategies to fully and fairly support dairy farmers and processors and help them adapt to the USMCA. They will also discuss what support measures will need to be implemented as a result of the CPTPP's impact.

Evidently, We are currently working with the industry, and we intend to pursue and further develop this collaboration in the future.

Adjournment Proceedings

• (1900)

Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy: Madam Speaker, a big public demonstration is planned for November 18 to support agriculture in my region. The UPA is calling on ordinary citizens, farmers, food processors and municipal and union stakeholders to march together in support of our local farmers.

The event is being called “Garde-manger en danger”, or “our pantry in peril”. It will be an opportunity for everyone in Saint-Hyacinthe and Acton Vale, my constituents, to show their support for our farmers.

Canadians care about the reciprocity of standards, clear labelling and the traceability of food, regional development and land use, as well as greater support for our agriculture and our farmers, and I invite everyone to demonstrate that on November 18 at the march to support our local farmers.

When will this government finally admit that it signed a bad agreement, one that is bad for our food sovereignty and bad for our farmers?

Mr. Jean-Claude Poissant: Madam Speaker, as I said, supply management is integral to Canadian agriculture, and I can assure the House that we did indeed protect and defend it.

The government is determined to work with dairy, egg and poultry producers to identify the best ways to ensure they get the support they need and remain strong, dynamic and innovative at all levels of the supply chain.

The government's support for supply management has always been and will always be unwavering.

[*English*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

Happy Halloween to everyone.

(The House adjourned at 7:04 p.m.)

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