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(HANSARD)

Friday, October 25, 2013

—

Speaker: The Honourable Andrew Scheer

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, October 25, 2013

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1005)

[*English*]

ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN 2013 ACT NO. 2

The House resumed from October 24 consideration of the motion that Bill C-4, A second act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on March 21, 2013 and other measures, be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the amendment.

Mr. John Carmichael (Don Valley West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to speak on our economy and the second budget implementation act of our government's economic action plan 2013. The implementation of these remaining provisions would have a tremendously positive impact on the lives of all Canadians. While many of the changes in Bill C-4 are technical in nature, many provide clear benefits for all Canadians.

Our Conservative government is focused on what matters to Canadians: growing the economy, helping to create jobs, balancing the budget and reducing the cost of government. We are achieving this with the longest-serving Minister of Finance in the G7 at the helm, who is providing Canada with strong fiscal leadership, management and responsibility.

Our actions have not gone unnoticed. Both the IMF and the OECD expect Canada to be among the strongest-growing economies in the G7 over this year and next. The World Economic Forum has rated Canada's banking system as the world's most sound for the fifth year in a row. Three credit rating agencies, Moody's, Fitch and Standard and Poor's, have all reaffirmed their top rating for Canada and expect it will maintain its AAA status in the year ahead. Canada's fiscal fundamentals are solid, and they are sustainable.

Canada is on a strong economic footing. Since the depth of the recession, over one million net new jobs have been created, mostly in high-wage industries. There are now 605,000 more jobs than at the pre-recession peak. This is the strongest job growth in the G7 over the course of the recovery. Almost 90% of all jobs created since July 2009 have been full-time positions, with close to 85% of those

in the private sector. Also, the growth levels are above pre-recession levels, as I stated.

Jayson Myers, president and CEO of Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters, had this to say:

We have a strong Canadian dollar because investors around the world want to put their money into Canada. They see a better fiscal environment, a strong financial sector, and the strength of the resource sector.

A recent study by KPMG concluded that Canada's total business tax cost, which includes corporate income tax, capital taxes, sales tax, property taxes and wage-based taxes, is more than 40% lower than in the United States. In short, our government has created an environment that encourages new investment, growth and job creation, and ensures that Canada has the strongest fiscal position and lowest business tax costs in the G7.

Earlier this week, the media were reporting that last year's federal deficit came in at nearly \$7 billion lower than projected. This is an undeniable sign that our government is on track to balance the budget in 2015-16, a promise we made to Canadians back in 2011.

As many Canadians are now aware, our government recently reached an agreement in principle on a free trade agreement with the European Union. This historic agreement will create thousands of jobs for Canadians and give Canadian business access to half a billion new customers. This is the biggest deal so far in Canadian history, and may be remembered as the biggest trade agreement that Canada has ever signed. The Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement will open new markets to Canadian exporters throughout Europe and generate significant opportunities for all Canadians. The benefits of this agreement are equivalent to creating 80,000 net new jobs, or increasing the average Canadian household's annual income by \$1,000.

On the first day that the agreement comes into force, 98% of all European Union tariffs will be eliminated, directly translating into increased profit and opportunity for Canadian businesses of all size and in every part of our country. Whether a fisherman in Atlantic Canada, a forestry worker in Quebec, an auto worker in Ontario, or an engineer in the west, each will benefit from this agreement. Jayson Myers went on to say that, "This is the Wayne Gretzky of trade deals".

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Canada's automobile industry, to name but one, stands to benefit tremendously from this deal. Currently, Canada exports approximately 13,000 vehicles a year to the European Union. This agreement will increase that number up to 100,000 units annually. It goes without saying that this increase in annual exports will have a direct correlation to the number of jobs in the Canadian automobile industry, undoubtedly adding hundreds, if not thousands, of employees to Canada's vehicle, equipment and parts manufacturing companies.

Kevin Williams, president of General Motors of Canada, had this to say:

We applaud Canada and the European Union for completing a modern, high-standard comprehensive economic and trade agreement that will provide enhanced opportunities for growth in both regions. We appreciate the hard work to find creative solutions that improve market access for Canadian-produced automobiles, while ensuring Canada continues to benefit from the integrated manufacturing sector that has developed in North America over the past 50 years.

Supporting small business is something our government takes very seriously. Small businesses make up to 98% of businesses in Canada, all of which are in the midst of celebrating Small Business Week. It makes me tremendously proud to speak about how this bill would provide support for Canada's job creators. This bill includes in it a number of key measures to support business, including extending and expanding the temporary hiring credit for small business for one year. Approximately 560,000 small businesses will benefit as a direct result of this measure. We are also increasing the lifetime capital gains exemption from \$750,000 to \$800,000 and indexing it going forward. The lifetime capital gains exemption will increase the reward for investing in small business.

In response to the global recession, the government froze the EI premium rate in 2010 at the lowest level since 1982. We are again freezing EI premium rates, this time at 2013 levels, for the next three years. With this freeze in 2014 alone, we are leaving \$660 million in the pockets of job creators and Canadian workers. This tax relief will help provide employers, especially small businesses, with the certainty and flexibility that they need to keep growing.

Since forming government in 2006, our low-tax plan for Canada has allowed for small business to see their tax bills drop by 34%. Corporate income taxes have been lowered as well. In fact, Canada currently has the lowest corporate income tax rate in the OECD, as I referred to with regard to the KPMG report. That is a carrot that is more powerful and effective than any marketing campaign in attracting foreign investment to Canada.

In recognition of the ongoing uncertainty in the global economy, the bill also announces extending the temporary accelerated capital cost allowance for new investment in machinery and equipment in the manufacturing and processing sectors for an additional two years. This will provide the sector with support of \$1.4 billion over four years for retooling, and will enhance competitiveness and economic growth and enable manufacturing and processing companies to plan and invest over the coming years.

We are delivering a new \$53 billion building Canada plan to invest in Canada's public infrastructure over the next 10 years. This will create jobs, promote economic growth and provide a higher quality of life for families in every city and community across this great country. One of the new building Canada plan's three key

funds, the community improvement fund, has had a direct investment in my riding of Don Valley West, by providing just under \$1 million to the Canadian National Institute for the Blind. The funds are being used to renovate, and eventually reopen, the CNIB's pedestrian bridge, which has been closed since 2011. This bridge is essential for patients, visitors and employees to safely cross one of Toronto's busiest streets.

I will wrap up by saying that this bill puts forth a number of measures that are meant to respect taxpayers' dollars. While the opposition is busy focusing on issues that do not matter to Canadians, our government remains focused on the task at hand. We continue to look for ways to increase the efficiency of the inner workings of government and making sure that job creation and economic prosperity are at the forefront of any new legislation. With that in mind, this bill would make significant improvements that would benefit all Canadians.

•(1010)

Ms. Chris Charlton (Hamilton Mountain, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I note that the member who just spoke on Bill C-4 is wearing the poppy, like I am, and as all of us should be in these weeks before Remembrance Day.

I know the member, and I know he is sincere in wanting to honour the men and women who served our country with such courage and made such tremendous sacrifices on behalf of the Government of Canada and, more importantly, on behalf of all the people of Canada.

However, in Bill C-4, we have changes that adversely impact those very veterans we are honouring by wearing the poppy. Bill C-4 reduces the number of permanent members of the Veterans Review and Appeal Board, from 28 to 25. If we are going to be serious, we need to address the fundamental issues with respect to the board.

On this side of the House, my NDP colleagues and I, and in particular the member for Sackville—Eastern Shore, have been advocating for a very long time that we replace the politically appointed board with a medical, evidence-based, peer-reviewed process for making decisions on veterans' disability applications.

I want to ask the member a question. He, like us, is wearing the poppy in this House today. Will he not do the right thing, honour veterans and vote against this bill that takes away services from Canada's men and women in the armed forces?

•(1015)

Mr. John Carmichael: Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege of Don Valley West being home to the largest veterans home and hospital in the country. That is Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, which has a veterans wing with 450 residents who fought in World War II and the Korean War.

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I do support and applaud our veterans. I had the privilege this past week of hosting seven veterans from Sunnybrook Hospital for lunch on the Hill. It was the first time that they had taken a tour of this great facility.

Our government believes in our veterans. These are the people who have provided us with freedom and democracy in this great country. I applaud them, and I support them.

I also encourage the member to recognize that we have increased access to service for our veterans, whether at home or through offices across this country. I will vote for this bill. I support our veterans and will continue to do so.

Mr. Rick Norlock (Northumberland—Quinte West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank my caucus mate for explaining to Canadians the benefits of this particular part of Canada's economic action plan.

I listened when he was speaking, particularly with regard to small business people, who are the principal generators of Canada's gross domestic product. I wonder if the member could expand on what this bill means to people in small business, who are hiring anywhere from 2 to 55 people in order to keep this country going, and expand our ability to trade, not only in Canada but with the rest of the world. What are some of the benefits to small business in this bill?

I wonder if the member could expand on that for the benefit of people who are watching and listening today.

Mr. John Carmichael: Mr. Speaker, small business is the lifeblood of this country.

I come from a small business background, as does my colleague. As we celebrate Small Business Week in this country, we applaud those who take risk in small business through personal hard work and hard-earned investment.

To the member's question with regard to the opportunities in front of us, we will be opening up a market of 500 million new consumers. Small business from coast to coast will have access. EI tax credits specifically give small business the opportunity to invest in their employees and create an environment of stability and sustainability.

However, do not take my word for it. Let me read what Dan Kelly, president of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, had to say:

Overall, this is a good budget for small business. [The finance minister] has done a solid job by remaining on course to eliminate the deficit while announcing some important measures for Canada's entrepreneurs. [...] We're particularly pleased the government publicly acknowledged taking some of these measures—such as the expansion of the EI Hiring Credit—at the recommendation of CFIB's...members.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé (Saint-Lambert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, for the fourth time in this Parliament, the Conservative government is introducing a massive bill to implement certain provisions of its last budget.

Bill C-4 is an example of why we have been criticizing this government since it came to power; it is an example of the government's lack of respect for parliamentary processes, as it imposes unrelated measures in a single piece of legislation and limits the work of members of Parliament. It is the epitome of a tired old

government that has no vision for Canadians, a government whose pathological partisanship is affecting our parliamentary institutions and the interests of Canadians.

This bill amends close to 70 laws and includes a number of provisions that have nothing to do with the budget, strictly speaking. Bill C-4 contains dozens of measures that could have been introduced in separate bills. In one bill, the government is amending taxation, employment insurance rules, economic immigration parameters, arbitration in the public sector, the Veterans Review and Appeal Board, and so on.

Instead of making room for real parliamentary debate, the government has crammed dozens of measures into one single piece of legislation. Instead of allowing members of Parliament to do their jobs, the government has chosen to impose an anti-democratic approach and a dogmatic vision of politics.

Not only does Bill C-4 violate the whole parliamentary process, but the Conservatives also waited until the very last minute to present the content of the bill. The bill was finally introduced 48 hours ago. We have had 48 hours to review almost 300 pages and to assess the impact of dozens of measures. This is preventing us from doing the job we were elected to do.

The Prime Minister shut down Parliament for five weeks, which is simply outrageous and unacceptable for a democratic country like Canada. Clearly, the negative consequences of this approach cannot be denied. This single vote on a huge number of measures is certainly going to limit debate, and it will increase the potential for errors. As a result, the content will be less representative.

Furthermore, a clear example of the potential danger is the mistake that caused credit unions to face a tax hike of 28% rather than 15%. An in-depth study of the measure in committee and the testimony of many witnesses would have made it possible to avoid that blunder. If parliamentary committees have one meeting only to consider such wide-ranging measures, of course, members of Parliament do not have all the tools they need for a proper review.

In the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, we had only 40 minutes to study measures in Bill C-60 that had major consequences. We had 40 minutes to study a piece of legislation that easily would have required more committee meetings. That is the anti-democratic approach the Conservatives are taking with Bill C-4.

As if the general structure of Bill C-4 was not enough of a violation of democracy, the government moved a time allocation motion yesterday to further limit debate. If that is not mocking democracy, I do not know what it is. The situation is all the more worrisome and deplorable considering that some parts of Bill C-4 have serious and troubling implications.

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First of all, the budget implementation bill eliminates the Canada Employment Insurance Financing Board, thereby allowing the Minister of Finance to manipulate the rates for the employment insurance fund. Clearly, the Conservative promises to make the management of employment insurance parameters more independent and transparent are now no more than a distant memory. Once again, the government is going back on its commitments and, in some cases, its own actions.

The Conservatives criticized the Liberals—and so did we for that matter—for helping themselves to and squandering the surplus in the employment insurance fund. In total, \$57 billion was taken by those governments. In the past, the Conservatives rose up against that, but now, with Bill C-4, they are changing their tune once again.

• (1020)

With Bill C-4, the Conservatives are once more setting up the same mechanisms that allowed finance ministers, both Conservative and Liberal, to dip into the premiums paid by workers.

With access to benefits constantly decreasing, Canadians find this decision unacceptable. After all, the money involved belongs to the workers and the Conservatives are acting as if it were theirs.

We in the NDP maintain that the employment insurance fund must be managed independently and transparently. The Minister of Finance has decided otherwise by granting himself discretionary powers that will tarnish the very management of the fund.

In addition, Bill C-4 will amend the Public Service Labour Relations Act by redefining the process by which disputes are resolved in the government.

Not only is the government reserving the right to define essential services, but it is also imposing a process of binding arbitration in disputes where less than 80% of the members of a bargaining unit are performing essential services.

As a result, the Conservatives are reserving the right to define the rules on resolving disputes in the public service of Canada and to impose working conditions on its employees through arbitration.

Clearly, the government wants to give itself some elbow room so that it can attack the unions that stand up for the rights of workers.

Amendments of this kind require discussions in depth, with other voices to be heard on the matter, not just Conservative voices. To roll out measures of this kind without real debate is to lay oneself open to regrettable errors.

That applies to the amendments to employment insurance and the dispute resolution processes in the public service. It also applies to the omnibus bill in its entirety.

In closing, never has a government shown so much contempt for our parliamentary institutions and for Canadians. Here we are with a single bill with 300 pages of measures amending about 70 acts. It is impossible for members of Parliament to do their jobs properly. Then we get a time allocation motion that restricts debate even more.

Clearly, our democracy is suffering. All the work by members of the House of Commons is also being placed in jeopardy.

• (1025)

[*English*]

Mr. John Carmichael (Don Valley West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to address the EI issue, which the member spent quite a bit of time discussing.

An EI freeze for the next couple of years would create an incentive for business and workers. It would reduce costs in business. It would put money back in the pockets of our workers.

I wonder if the member would be good enough to explain why she is against job creation and sustainability in small business.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question.

Clearly, what we are also seeing is a major move on the part of the Conservatives to control workers and unions.

In Bill C-4, we see that the Minister of Finance is given the power to manipulate the setting of rates. The Conservatives, in fact, have now completely broken their promise to have an independent and accountable body oversee employment insurance funding.

The government talks about and champions transparency, and forges ahead saying that it is the government that stands for greater accountability and much more transparency. Unfortunately, that is not at all what we are seeing here and these are not at all the principles that this government claims to have guaranteed.

Clearly, this amendment in Bill C-4 will simply prevent workers from having meaningful access to their unions and, at some point, will clearly and specifically prevent them from having any access to their premiums.

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Beauharnois—Salaberry, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the hon. member for Saint-Lambert for her excellent speech. She is always ready to stand up for her constituents and for workers in general.

On a number of occasions, she emphasized how completely absurd, irresponsible and anti-democratic it is to table such a lengthy bill and to allow parliamentarians so little time to study the repercussions of all the amendments to the 70 acts, not to mention the two new acts, contained in Bill C-4.

The Conservatives say loud and clear that they are standing up for workers. However, as we read the bill, we see clearly that they are continuing their attack on employment insurance.

Could the hon. member provide more details of the attack on the public service? She discussed it briefly, but we must understand the dangers and the concerns that lie in store for workers in terms of their right to present cases and in terms of the unions.

• (1030)

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for her question.

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First, I would like to go back to Bill C-4, another omnibus bill that deals with technical changes.

Clearly, this is another smokescreen, but we have not been taken in. It does not hide the fact that Bill C-4 really is trying to slip in major changes with no real prior consultation.

Once more, we are seeing a complete lack of democracy and of debate. Debates in this House have become impossible, and all workers, all Canadians, are having a hard time with that.

We are talking about major changes to the public service. A huge number of our workers will be affected by this tired old government's latest moves to take control of all our institutions at all costs. It really is unacceptable.

[*English*]

Mr. Rick Norlock (Northumberland—Quinte West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to stand today and speak to economic action plan 2013.

I rise in the House to better inform not only members here but more specifically Canadians on the impact that the act would have and the key measures in economic action plan 2013, as well as certain previously announced tax measures to help create jobs, stimulate the economy and secure long-term prosperity across our great nation.

I am pleased to first address our government's continued reduction of Canada's deficit. This past Tuesday the Minister of Finance introduced the "Annual Financial Report of the Government of Canada" for 2012-13. The report shows the continued downward track of Canada's annual deficit. In 2012-13 the deficit fell to just under \$19 billion. This was down by more than one-quarter, or \$7.4 billion, from the deficit just last year, and down by nearly two-thirds from the \$55.6 billion deficit recorded in 2009-10. This shows that we are still on track to balance the budget by fiscal year 2015-16.

Economic action plan 2013 would provide support for job creators. Since 2006 our government's top priority has been the economy and job creation. We are extending and expanding the hiring credit for small business, which will benefit an estimated 560,000 employers right across this great country of ours.

Currently, there are thousands of jobs available across Canada that are unfulfilled. In fact, CIBC World Markets stated in a report in December 2012 that 30% of businesses in Canada are facing skilled labour shortages. In addition, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business stated in its "Business Barometer" report that 34% of small and medium-size businesses identified a shortage of skilled labour as a constraint to their growth.

Difficulty in hiring has increased over the recovery and is becoming a key issue for employers in some sectors and regions of our country. In particular, persistent pockets of unfilled positions exist for skilled tradespeople and professionals such as electricians, millwrights, carpenters, machinists, heavy equipment operators, engineers and architects, just to name a few. The hiring credit for small business will continue to bridge that gap.

In recognition of the importance of small business owners, farmers and fishers, economic action plan 2013 proposes to increase the lifetime capital gains exemption to \$800,000 from \$750,000. The

lifetime capital gains exemption increases the potential rewards of investing in small business, farming and fishing. The exemption also helps these entrepreneurs better ensure their financial security for retirement and facilitates the intergenerational transfer of their businesses.

From speaking with farmers in Northumberland—Quinte West as well as small business owners, whether they be at the corner store, an insurance agency or many other businesses, this is their RRSP in addition to the money they have been able to save, and in some instances it might not be that much. This is their future. This is their ability to be able to retire after a lifetime in some cases of working from about 5:30 in the morning until about 8:30 to 9:30 at night and sometimes longer.

Furthermore, to provide support to job creators, we are freezing employment insurance premiums for the next three years. This will leave \$660 million in the pockets of job creators and workers in 2014 alone.

Economic action plan 2013 would ensure that the government will promote education in high demand fields, including the skilled trades, science, technology, engineering and math. It is critically important for young Canadians to have access to information on a variety of careers in order to make informed choices about their education early in their lives. Making good choices early can help ensure that young Canadians obtain the skills and experiences necessary to find work quickly, avoid unnecessary debt and get a better start to their careers.

● (1035)

Economic action plan 2013 proposes to reallocate \$19 million over two years to help inform young people about the fields of study that are relevant to the existing and forecasted demand for labour in particular occupations. The government would provide more information on job prospects and the benefits of working in various occupations and it would develop new outreach efforts to promote careers in such high demand fields as science, technology, engineering and mathematics, as well as the skilled trades.

Economic action plan 2013 would help break down youth employment barriers. This past June, in my riding of Northumberland—Quinte West, a community training and development centre in collaboration with Habitat for Humanity Northumberland received over \$90,000 from the skills link program for one of its projects. The skills link program is part of the Government of Canada's youth employment strategy. With annual funding of approximately \$300 million across Canada, the youth employment strategy helps youth, particularly those facing barriers to employment, obtain career information, develop skills, find jobs and stay employed.

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If I can go back to the Habitat for Humanity program that I am referring to, the particular Habitat project in question is called the “Faith Build”. For the benefit of those outside of Northumberland, who are unaware of this particular build, Habitat for Humanity wanted to build one housing unit for a worthy family. Of course, we know that Habitat for Humanity depends on a lot of volunteer help. Madelaine Currelly, who works at the community training and development centre, was successful, as I mentioned, in obtaining a \$90,000 grant. Ten young people who were experiencing barriers to employment were hired to work on this project, utilizing this \$90,000. Today, I am told that the vast majority of those young people are now working in full-time jobs because they obtained the necessary skills and experience on that project.

In addition to pre-existing funding, economic action plan 2012 invested an extra \$50 million to enhance the youth employment strategy with a new initiative that connects young Canadians with jobs in high demand, and helps them develop tangible skills and gain work experience. Economic action plan 2013 proposes an additional investment of \$70 million over three years to create 5,000 more internships.

Furthermore, our government not only assists youth in finding jobs, it also assists young scientists and engineers with the launch their businesses. Northumberland Community Futures Development Corporation launched two initiatives in collaboration with FedDev Ontario, the Spark Centre and the IDEAHUB in Port Hope. Scientists and engineers in business provide matching performance-based grants to graduates of science, technology, engineering or math, or as we refer to them, the STEM programs.

The CFDCs offer free business counselling and financing for small and medium-size enterprises for start-up and expansion, strategic planning support for local projects and community economic development in rural areas right across our great country. Economic action plan 2013 would continue to fund programs such as the Community Futures Development Corporations, which promote the growth of science and technology, as well as other fields.

Manufacturing in Ontario must increasingly seek to become more competitive by investing in innovation and moving up the value chain. That is why, in economic action plan 2013, we propose to provide a new, advanced manufacturing fund to be delivered by FedDev or the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario.

Firms in manufacturing sectors, including information and communication technologies, life sciences, machinery and equipment, and sophisticated niche sectors are pursuing competitive advantage through the development of transformative products and technologies that open and expand markets. To support the efforts of advanced manufacturing in Ontario to become more competitive, economic action plan 2013 would provide \$200 million over five years for the creation of an advanced manufacturing fund. The new fund would support investments by manufacturing firms and activities that create new and innovative products or production methods, such as prototyping, demonstrating projects and advancing product testing.

● (1040)

I am confident that economic action plan 2013 will continue to provide for Canadians, and in the face of global economic uncertainty, keep our economy strong.

I am prepared now to answer any questions and hear comments from my fellow parliamentarians.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Chambly—Borduas, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his speech. He spoke at length about the importance of creating jobs for young people. However, we know that the youth unemployment rate is double the national average for other age groups.

Could the hon. member explain his government's really depressing record? In addition, could he tell us what he thinks of measures such as the one that the hon. member for Parkdale—High Park and I proposed a few weeks ago? This was a tax credit for small and medium businesses to train and hire young employees. I feel that this is a great way to help businesses, and especially young people, whom this government seems to overlook.

Given the importance he attributed to the issue, especially at the end of his speech, I wonder if he might be ready to help us get such an important initiative passed.

[*English*]

Mr. Rick Norlock: Mr. Speaker, indeed, during my speech I mentioned specific instances where we have, through different government programs, shown how we can employ young people, especially those with barriers, those who do not possess the skills necessary to get the jobs that are available. I mentioned the Habitat for Humanity project and the fact that we now have young people who are currently fully employed who probably would not be otherwise.

The hon. member mentioned that youth unemployment is double the average, and he is correct. There are far too many young people who are not employed. However, what he leaves out of that statement is the fact that in the western economies, Canada is one of the best when it comes to youth employment. It is still not where it should be. We readily agree with that, but when he mentioned credits for hiring people, I already mentioned in my speech the hiring credit for small business, where the Government of Canada provides credits for people who hire workers, and in particular, workers who have the skills necessary.

This government, more than any other government, has concentrated more money in the science and technology fields. Therefore, while the hon. member mentioned some facts, he left out the fact that Canada is doing, compared to our neighbours, fairly well when it comes to youth employment.

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Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I want to change the focus slightly from what the hon. member covered in his speech and just ask him about the measures we are seeing brought forward in Bill C-4 about which he is excited. I have to admit, I have less excitement in the sense of happiness about them. I am concerned that it is becoming too predictable a trend that the bulk of the government's legislation that we see in any session of Parliament is coming to us bundled together with many unrelated pieces of legislation. In fact, over 30% of the government legislation in the previous session of Parliament came in the form of omnibus bills.

These measures, about which my hon. friend is so happy, are ones that I am very concerned about, such as the changes to the Canada Labour Code, changes to the public service act, changes to the Supreme Court Act. These have nothing to do with one another or with the budget. Would they not have been better handled as separate bills?

•(1045)

Mr. Rick Norlock: Mr. Speaker, let me begin by saying that during the lead-up to the last election, the Green Party candidate in my riding said that the economic policies of the Green Party were very conservative in nature, yet I noticed the voting record of the only member of the Green Party is pretty close to 95% to 100% of that of the New Democratic Party. The policies of the Green Party are very democratic socialist in nature.

She mentioned that we have these omnibus bills and we need to talk at length about all the things that happen. My constituents tell me they are tired of a bunch of politicians who talk and talk, and very little gets done. I tell my constituents that we are getting things done, that we have had more private members' bills in the history of this country happen under this government, that we get things done such as the economic action plan, that our place in the world, especially in the G7, is at the top of the heap and not where we want it to be quite yet but getting there. They tell me that they want to see action taken, not more talk from a bunch of politicians here in Ottawa.

I am happy that we get things done and that we do not sit here babbling ad infinitum about things that are not really of interest to average Canadians. They want action, and that is what they are getting from our government.

Hon. John McCallum (Markham—Unionville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak to this bill, which, as you know, the Liberals will oppose.

I would like to address three issues. One is the fact that it does nothing for middle-class families. Second is the omnibus nature of the bill. Third are issues related to immigration.

[*Translation*]

The basic problem with this bill is that, really, it does nothing for the middle class in Canada.

[*English*]

This is an important issue, because the middle class is really struggling. It is only this week that the Bank of Canada came out with a radically more pessimistic projection for the Canadian economy. We know that the youth unemployment rate is twice the

national average. We know that there are 224,000 fewer jobs for young people today than there were before the recession. We know that Canadian debt levels are at a record level. It is about \$1.6 dollars for every dollar of income, which is considerably higher than it is in the United States. We know that tuition fees have been going sky high way faster than the rate of inflation.

We know all this, yet I do not think the government does anything significant to address these fundamental issues facing middle-class Canadians. Yes, the Conservatives would extend the hiring credit, but that is just the status quo. Yes, they would refrain from further increases in employment insurance premiums, which they had for the last three years, to the tune of \$600 million per year. They would freeze them. They should have frozen them for the last three years as well as for the next two years, because this is a job-killing tax. A time of economic weakness is not the time to increase EI premiums.

Yes, the books have to be balanced over the longer term. Economists agree with that. However, that does not mean that we have to have increases in premiums every single year during a period of economic hardship. The fact that the Conservatives have increased those premiums in each of the last three years has done damage to the economy and damage to jobs.

There are many other details, but the fundamental point is that middle-class Canadians are struggling, and this budget implementation bill has essentially nothing to provide assistance or to provide hope to those people. At best, it is the status quo with little that is new or novel or helpful to help the Canadian economy at this time of weakness.

The second issue I would raise is the question of omnibus bills. This is a bill of 308 pages with 472 clauses.

•(1050)

[*Translation*]

We are fully aware that the problem with this kind of bill is that it goes against democratic principles. Neither the House nor the committees of the House have had the time to study the provisions of this bill. This has been a problem since this government arrived and it continues to be a problem.

Another aspect of this problem is that mistakes are made.

[*English*]

One example of mistakes I would mention is the question of credit unions. In the budget, the Conservatives proposed a major increase in taxes on credit unions. This bill has a decrease in taxes on credit unions, but that is only because they made a mistake the first time around. They increased the tax on credit unions radically more than they intended. That was a mistake partly related to the omnibus, complicated nature of the bill, and now they have to undo that mistake.

They throw in corrective measures regarding the Supreme Court, which have absolutely nothing to do with the budget. It is an important issue for Canada but one parliamentarians will not have the opportunity to study in any detail.

Government Orders

The last point I would like to make has to do with immigration, which is currently and recently one of my responsibilities. There are two aspects I would like to mention. The first is potentially positive. It is the idea that new economic immigrants would first write a letter of interest, and then the government would decide whether those people were likely to have the skills and qualifications to match the needs of Canada before they were allowed to make a formal application. Other countries have done this. To some extent, it makes sense, in principle. However, here is a case where the devil is in the details. How would the government implement this? Which people would be advantaged? Which people would be disadvantaged, and according to what criteria?

This is where the regulations and the details of the proposal, which are absent from the bill, have to be studied in detail by the immigration committee to see whether the proposal, which in principle maybe makes sense, will in practice make sense, given the way the government plans to implement it, which is something we do not yet know.

The last issue I would like to mention is perhaps the most egregious, the most serious, in the area of immigration. It is the dramatic increase in waiting times for family class immigrants.

Over the last five years, we have seen those waiting times double, triple, and quadruple. In the case of China, the average waiting time five years ago, in 2007, was seven months. In 2012, that had ballooned from seven months to 39 months. In other words, the average waiting time has gone from just over half a year to more than three years. China is not alone. For India, the waiting time has tripled from eight months to 24 months. The situation is at least as bad, or worse, for Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and many other countries.

Many new Canadians come into my office desperate, often in tears, because they are waiting interminably for their spouses, their children, or their parents to be allowed in. The waiting times keep growing and growing. The government said absolutely nothing about this issue in the throne speech except a modest amount of self-praise, if one can believe it, for its treatment of family class immigrants. There is nothing in the budget to correct this egregious situation.

As one who represents Canada's most diverse community, Markham, I know very well from the day-to-day work in my office that this is a huge issue for new Canadians. It is not only the waiting times to be reunited with children, spouses, or parents. It is also the denials for parents or grandparents who want to come to attend the weddings of their grandchildren or funerals in the family or other important family events. They keep being turned down, for no apparent reason.

This is a sin of omission, not of commission. There is nothing in the throne speech and nothing in the budget bill to address this problem, which is of huge concern for all the new Canadians across the country.

• (1055)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I have a serious economics question for the member. A lot of us in this place talk about economics. The member for Markham—Unionville is one of those who is actually qualified to speak to it,

having achieved a Ph.D., having taught at four universities, and having been the former chief economist at the Royal Bank.

I am curious about his views. We keep hearing the mantra that cutting corporate tax rates, so that Canada now has the lowest corporate tax rate in the OECD, is helping the job creators. However, we are also seeing that our job creation rate is very low. Youth unemployment is 14%.

Current RBC staff are telling us, as Mark Carney from the Bank of Canada pointed out, that low corporate tax rates are resulting in a large accumulated pile of what Carney called “dead money”. It is not going into the economy. It is not stimulating jobs. A current RBC economist says that it is now \$600 billion. I believe that is 32% of our current GDP. I wonder if my friend from Markham—Unionville has any comments on this.

Hon. John McCallum: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her reciting of my various credentials.

I believe that Canada already has a very low corporate tax rate on the largest corporations. I believe that it is something in the order of 25%, when we include both the federal government and the provinces, whereas in the United States, it is something in the order of 39%. There is a huge gap.

In previous election campaigns, we in the Liberal Party said that we did not want to go back to super high corporate tax rates, but we thought that given other needs of the economy, this gap was larger than it needed to be. At the time, we wished to freeze corporate tax rates rather than allow them to go down further.

That was in the past. If we look to the future, I take her point about the proceeds from these lower taxes not always being used to advantage the Canadian economy through investment. There is a lot of what Mark Carney called dead money. Personally, if one thinks of all the possible tax cuts, it seems to me that the cut in corporate tax rates to the low level it is at today would not be among my top priorities. I do not think there is a great deal of evidence that the cuts we have seen to date have had a major positive effect on investment and jobs in the country.

Mr. Dan Albas (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, here we go again. The Liberal candidate in Toronto Centre says amen to taxes. The Liberal member over there is talking about corporate taxes. He thinks they should be reallocated. In fact, Stephen Gordon, an economist who runs the Worthwhile Canadian Initiative, has actually pointed out that a low corporate rate lends to better productivity and eventually higher wages for skilled workers. There are some very good benefits there.

I would also like to remind the member that when corporate taxes are raised, the people who are able to manage the taxable amounts they pay to the treasury are corporations. He refers to dead money. The market will actually allocate where those resources can be best put to use. It is not dead money; it is called savings.

Statements by Members

Hon. John McCallum: Mr. Speaker, I would say that my hon. friend over there is guilty of what one might call selective Conservative listening. I certainly never said that I was advocating an increase in corporate taxes. What I said was that among the options for lowering taxes, I would put corporate taxes fairly low on the list.

It was not I who talked about dead money. It was the Governor of the Bank of England. His name is Mark Carney, who, the member might remember, used to be the governor of the Bank of Canada. He is hardly a railing socialist or communist, yet he was the one who used that expression with regard to Canada's corporate sector.

There are only a limited number of dollars available. If we have very low corporate tax rates, we have to have other kinds of higher taxes or lower social spending. There is only so much money in the pot. We have to make choices. My point was that taking corporate taxes to the point where they are some 14 percentage points lower than they are in the United States may not be the best allocation of limited Canadian resources.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

• (1100)

[English]

BRUCE MELANSON

Mr. Bernard Trottier (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to recognize the life and achievements of long-time Etobicoke resident and D-Day veteran Bruce Melanson.

Bruce volunteered with the West Nova Scotia Regiment and went overseas at the age of 17, stretching the age requirement to join the fight against tyranny in Europe in 1940. He soldiered in the Battle of Britain and then joined the D-Day invasion of Normandy, a time he would never forget. He fought with the Allied forces in the battles of Caen, Falaise Gap, Belgium, Holland, and finally Germany.

Bruce went on to become a small business owner and alderman in the city of Etobicoke. He was a volunteer with veterans groups, including the Royal Canadian Legion and the Juno Beach Centre, where he served as director. Bruce worked tirelessly to raise funds for the construction of the five-acre facility in Normandy, which honours the brave Canadian men and women who served during the Second World War.

For his efforts to raise awareness of the sacrifices Canadians made, I was honoured to award Bruce a Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee medal in 2012.

To his partner, Sonya, daughters Ann and Sue, and his extended family, I extend my condolences.

To his friends, I am sure Bruce would say, "Let us never forget".

* * *

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Mike Sullivan (York South—Weston, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this past summer, the city of Toronto suffered what is described as a

once-in-a-hundred-years storm. Thousands of homes were flooded, families lost cherished possessions and spent millions rebuilding. Neighbourhoods in my riding of York South—Weston were among the hardest hit.

I visited the flooded streets to offer comfort and assistance. I saw tremendous resilience from the very young to the very old. I also saw the aftermath of the current Conservative government's neglect of our city and its critical infrastructure needs, such as improved sewer systems, some of which are over 100 years old.

With climate change, severe storms like the one that hit Toronto on July 8, will become more frequent. The Conservative government needs to get off the sidelines and start investing to prevent widespread flooding from happening with each big storm.

I have written on these matters to the Minister of the Environment and the Minister of Infrastructure, but the response did not offer any assistance.

This is a prime example of the climate change adaptation the government talks about. The time to help is now. My constituents not only expect it, they demand it.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Joan Crockatt (Calgary Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my husband gave me a book for our anniversary yesterday called *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed*. The crux of this book is that countries succeed by working with their environments. This is exactly what our government is doing: encouraging economic growth, while protecting the environment.

It is too bad the NDP wants to stop all development, and the Liberals do not know what they think.

This summer when I was door-knocking in my riding of Calgary Centre, it was very interesting because this is the crucible of the energy industry, and I met a lot of environmentalists, not the extremists that hang off smokestacks but the environmental engineers, scientists, and researchers. Do members know who they work for? It is oil companies: Suncor, Syncrude, Nexen, Imperial Oil, CNRL.

It is true that we can develop our economy and protect the environment. That is why, under the Conservatives, our country is succeeding.

*Statements by Members***KINGSTON PENITENTIARY**

Mr. Ted Hsu (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Kingston Penitentiary opened 32 years before Confederation in 1835. After 178 years of continuous operation, the Pen, or “KP”, as this national historic site is locally known, officially closed on September 30.

I want to recognize the generations of Kingstonsians who have worked at KP. They held the often stressful jobs of running the prison or serving as guards, doctors, nurses, teachers, counsellors or chaplains. May their work be remembered and their legacy be preserved.

I also want to honour all of the staff and leadership of the Correctional Service Canada Ontario Region, including the members of the Union of Solicitor General Employees, and the Union of Canadian Correctional Officers who, under difficult circumstances, executed and continued to manage the regional effects of this closure.

Finally, let us remember those offenders at KP who did turn their lives around; there is no achievement more worthy of our joy.

* * *

CIBC CELEBRATION OF HOPE

Mr. Paul Calandra (Oak Ridges—Markham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by giving my congratulations to the CIBC Celebration of Hope luncheon committee from my riding of Oak Ridges—Markham for over 25 years of successful events.

This year's event will take place this Sunday, October 27, in support of Markham Stouffville Hospital. This luncheon brings community together to educate and create awareness for breast cancer and the people it affects.

I would like to recognize and congratulate the co-chairs, Karen Gerrard and Christine Taylor, as well as the event's host, Erin Davis and her co-host, the one and only Allan Bell. Their selfless commitment to the community is something to be honoured and celebrated.

Efforts like the CIBC Celebration of Hope luncheons are evidence that Canadians will continue to play a leading role in creating a future without breast cancer—indeed, all cancers.

* * *

●(1105)

[Translation]

KLAUS HOCHHEIM, DANIEL DUBÉ, AND MARC THIBAUT

Mr. François Lapointe (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, NDP): Mr. Speaker, on Monday, September 9, 2013, three Canadians who had a passion for the Far North were the victims of a helicopter accident.

Today in the House, I would like to pay tribute to Klaus Hochheim, researcher; Daniel Dubé, helicopter pilot; and Marc Thibault, commander of the Amundsen, the Coast Guard icebreaker.

Commander Thibault was from the municipality of L'Islet-sur-Mer, in the riding I am privileged to represent. Commander Thibault

provided support to scientists, rescued shipwrecked individuals and created trade routes. He did a great deal to ensure our country had a physical presence in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the sometimes hostile environments of Canada's North.

The remarkable skills of Coast Guard pilots and commanders make it easy for us to forget, in the comfort of our own homes, the heroic risks they sometimes take and their key role in building our national security and our country.

On behalf of all my constituents and the elected members of the House, I would like to extend our condolences to the grieving families and say how grateful to and proud we are of Marc Thibault, this son of the South Shore.

* * *

[English]

POPPY CAMPAIGN

Mr. Royal Galipeau (Ottawa—Orléans, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as of today, we see poppies pinned close to the hearts of our fellow Canadians.

In Orléans earlier this morning, I participated in the launch of the poppy campaign together with members of the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 632.

We owe many thanks to Susan Ierfino, Bill Gloss and Daniel Dion for undertaking this campaign and to the numerous dedicated volunteers who participate in its annual success.

[Translation]

The bright red poppy, a symbol of our support for our soldiers and veterans, adds a splash of colour to brighten up the dreary month of November. It is a pleasure to encourage all Canadians to proudly display the poppy on the left side of their clothing, near their hearts.

[English]

By wearing this precious symbol, we remember all those who fought for freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law in such conflicts as World War I, the Korean War, and the war in Afghanistan.

[Translation]

We will remember them.

* * *

[English]

EID AL-ADHA

Mr. Parm Gill (Brampton—Springdale, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to wish Muslims around the world a happy Eid-al Adha. Eid-al Adha is about sacrifices.

This week I had the pleasure of attending a marvellous celebration of Eid on the Hill. Members of the Muslim community travelled a great distance to attend the celebration on the Hill, including members from my own riding of Brampton—Springdale.

Statements by Members

Canadian Muslims continue to make an incredible contribution toward our great nation. I often meet with Muslim businessmen, women, faith leaders, and hard-working families who play a vital role. Individuals such as Kamran Ali, Aqeel Akram, Tahir Khan and Safdar Hussain constantly go out of their way to help others. One of the wonderful initiatives they have taken on is to provide aid to the less fortunate in the region of Peel by helping pay for funeral and burial services.

From the bottom of my heart, I would like to wish Muslims around the world a happy Eid Mubarak.

* * *

[*Translation*]

PROJECT BUMP

Mr. Tyrone Benskin (Jeanne-Le Ber, NDP): Mr. Speaker, on October 10, 2013, the Little Burgundy community and I celebrated the 10th anniversary of project BUMP. My heartfelt congratulations go to Steve, Francesco, and Renée for their ongoing work with youth through this project.

[*English*]

Ten years ago, in response to the violence that engulfed Little Burgundy, Rosemary Segee took it upon herself to develop a means to bring her community together in settling its conflicts, and project BUMP was born.

[*Translation*]

Ten years later, Little Burgundy is a new community. The joint efforts of the police, organizations, and the community help our young people reach their full potential, be more determined, and accomplish great things.

[*English*]

I stand in this place today and proudly offer my most sincere thanks to all those who work so tirelessly with and for our young people.

* * *

SMALL BUSINESS

Mr. Costas Menegakis (Richmond Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today is Shop Small Business Day. What better day than today to highlight the importance of investors making a real contribution in exchange for the security and pathway to citizenship that Canada provides?

This week the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration launched the new business incubator stream under the start-up visa program to recruit dynamic foreign entrepreneurs. This will attract early-stage and high-growth businesses. It will encourage innovation and economic growth. It will position Canada ahead of other countries in the global competition of the 21st century.

Our government is focused on creating jobs, economic growth, and long-term prosperity for Canadians. It is critical for Canada that we attract the best and brightest entrepreneurs and innovators from around the world

● (1110)

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Jamie Nicholls (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, NDP): Mr. Speaker, early yesterday morning I made my way to the Montreal airport to welcome home a Canadian mom and her three children.

Ola Elgadi spent more than a month trapped in Gaza after Egyptian authorities closed the Rafah border. While many Canadians question why a woman and three children would travel to a country under a travel advisory, the answer is simple: the undeniable and unbreakable bonds of family.

[*Translation*]

In August, Ola and her three daughters went to Gaza to visit their grandfather, who is very ill. The three girls, aged 12, 8, and 3, had never met their grandfather before.

[*English*]

Canadian citizens abroad, regardless of their country of origin, their religion, profession, race, sexual orientation, age, or gender, are Canadian citizens and deserve the aid of their government in times of need.

We cannot ask, we should not ask Canadian citizens to sacrifice their family bonds because their ancestry is not composed of Canadian citizens. To do so would simply be un-Canadian.

I welcome home the Elgadis, residents of Vaudreuil—Soulanges and proud Canadian citizens.

* * *

[*Translation*]

LEADER OF THE LIBERAL PARTY OF CANADA

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we all know that the Leader of the Liberal Party likes to travel all over the country to talk about himself on the taxpayer's dime. In February, he told the *Ottawa Citizen* that he had earned \$277,000 as a speaker since 2008, while working as an MP. That is a lot of extra money.

Members of Parliament now have until the end of the month to submit a form to the House of Commons management, listing their salaries as speakers, which could ultimately hurt the Leader of the Liberal Party.

We have said a number of times that the Leader of the Liberal Party should not accept money from schools or charities for his speeches while earning a salary as an MP.

I know that I would not want my children's school to pay a politician for bragging about his accomplishments to the students. It is sad to see that he is happy to accept their money.

Oral Questions

[English]

1993 GENERAL ELECTION

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Cardigan, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today marks a momentous anniversary. Twenty years ago today was the 1993 election that elected many of my colleagues, but it also elected the government of my great friend, former prime minister Jean Chrétien.

I send my congratulations to Mr. Chrétien this day, but also to the person he always called his most trusted adviser, his wife Aline.

I appreciate the confidence the former prime minister showed in me. I was honoured to serve in many roles, including minister of labour and solicitor general.

Together our team achieved much to be proud of: turning a \$42 billion deficit into nine years of balanced budgets, team Canada trade missions, massive job creation, a UN land mines treaty, sustaining the CPP, the Clarity Act, and the list goes on.

I would also like to sincerely congratulate my colleagues in the House who are celebrating their 20th anniversary today.

We may have different views, but we are all here to make a better Canada.

* * *

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, one week ago today, the Prime Minister signed the historic European trade agreement in principle, which means a 20% increase in trade with Europe and 80,000 net new jobs.

With NAFTA and the European deal, Canada will soon have preferred access to over 800 million of the world's best consumers.

In the face of this huge win for Canada, the NDP members continue their doublespeak on trade and on the European deal. This week they have placed the MP for Windsor West on the trade committee. This member is noted for his anti-trade positions, and last year he supported a big union plan to stop negotiations with Europe and all our other foreign allies in our trade negotiations.

Trade is good for Canada; there is a \$1,000 net benefit for families with the European deal. The NDP has to stop speaking out of both sides of its mouth and get behind our European deal.

* * *

•(1115)

[Translation]

CONSERVATIVE MEMBERS

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Chambly—Borduas, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it must be fun to be a Conservative member these days, tucking yourself in each night saying that it was another good day and pretending that it was not your crew that appointed Mike Duffy, Pamela Wallin, and Patrick Brazeau to the Senate.

It is also a good day for them to be reminded that the Conservative Party has broken all of its promises about the Senate, to face the fact that the Conservative leader put the country in the hands of rogues

like Nigel Wright and Ray Novak, and to applaud like trained seals when the Prime Minister invents his latest version of the facts and treats Canadians like nincompoops.

I imagine that the Conservatives dreamed of a more wholesome political career before they were corrupted by power, but we will let them live with their consciences.

Meanwhile, we are going to hound them until they stop their pitiful excuses, admit to their failings, and start telling the truth. In 2015, we will deal with the Senate.

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[English]

LEADER OF THE LIBERAL PARTY OF CANADA

Ms. Roxanne James (Scarborough Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we all know that the Liberal leader likes to travel across the country to talk about himself on the taxpayer's dime.

In February he told the *Ottawa Citizen* he had earned \$277,000 in speaking fees since 2008 while earning an MP's salary. That is a lot of extra money.

MPs now have until the end of the month to submit a form to the House of Commons administrators listing all of their paid speaking engagements, which may eventually pose a challenge for the Liberal leader.

We have mentioned several times that the leader of the Liberal Party should not be taking money from schools and charities for speaking engagements while earning a salary as a member of Parliament. I would not want my child's school to pay for any politician to tout his or her accomplishments to students. It is sad that the leader of the Liberal Party happily accepts this money.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

ETHICS

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, after months of saying Nigel Wright acted alone, claiming on June 5 that Nigel Wright's cheque to pay off Mike Duffy and his bad debts was "...not communicated to me or to members of my office", yesterday the Prime Minister contradicted himself and said the Duffy cover-up scheme was communicated to "[a] few people" in his office.

Which statement was true, and which one was a lie?

The Speaker: I do not think the hon. member is suggesting that any member in this House would have deliberately misled the House. I just encourage members to avoid using that word during the course of question period.

Is the hon. parliamentary secretary rising to answer the question?
The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister.

Oral Questions

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what is clear is that the Prime Minister has been actually very clear and concise on this matter. Nigel Wright, in his own filings, expressed whom he brought into his confidence on this matter. The Prime Minister spoke about this in July when he was asked this question.

However, what is also clear is that when Senator Duffy approached the Prime Minister to try to justify his inappropriate expenses, the Prime Minister told him he needed to pay back any inappropriate expenses he did not incur. What the Prime Minister said to Senator Duffy is very clear: he should back the expenses that he was not entitled to.

I wish that the opposition, especially the opposition Liberals, would get on board with us and pass the suspension of the senators and stop obstructing that motion in the Senate.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, let us just ask the Conservatives to focus on their own mess for a moment. The minister does not seem to have understood the question.

The Prime Minister has now given two completely contradictory versions of events. I asked which one was the truth and which one was not. Two opposite statements cannot occupy the same place at the same time.

Let us try another simple question: who are the “few people” in the Prime Minister's Office who were aware of the cash for repayment scheme to buy off Mike Duffy?

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have been entirely consistent. Nigel Wright, in his own filings, identified the people he brought into his confidence with respect to this issue.

However, it is also clear that when Mike Duffy approached the Prime Minister with respect to his inappropriate expenses, he was told clearly and concisely to repay any expenses to which he was not entitled. He talked to us in caucus and he talked to senators and to the senior staff and to the MPs, making it quite clear to the rest of us not to accept payment for expenses we did not incur, and if we did to make it right. If we did not, we would not be sitting as a Conservative in this caucus.

That is the standard they should accept.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I do not think my hon. friend across the way understands what the definition of being clear and consistent actually means, because this Prime Minister has been anything but.

The Prime Minister's explanations about the involvement of his office in a serious ethical scandal have now proven to be false. In documents filed by police in Federal Court, Nigel Wright said that at least four people who worked in the Prime Minister's Office knew about the cash for repayment scheme.

Why will Conservatives not simply come clean, tell Canadians the truth, and let us know who else was involved in this scandal?

• (1120)

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, he is referring to the exact same documents that we are referring to. The Prime Minister was very clear on this. He responded to this as well in July.

What is very clear is that the opposition needs to come on board, especially the opposition Liberals, and pass the suspension in the Senate immediately.

What is also clear is that the Prime Minister said to Senator Duffy that if he had inappropriate expenses, he had to repay those expenses. It was very clear. There can be no ambiguity about that. If he incurred an expense to which he was not entitled, he had to pay it back.

[Translation]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé (Saint-Lambert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, one of the people named by Mr. Wright in his RCMP document is Benjamin Perrin. However, the Prime Minister refuses to provide any details on that person's involvement.

The day before yesterday, the Prime Minister said: “any information that we can provide, we have provided and will continue to provide.” So the Prime Minister too has provided information to the RCMP. Is that information about Benjamin Perrin?

[English]

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as the Prime Minister said just the other day in this House, Mr. Perrin has actually spoken on this matter. What is also very clear is that Mr. Wright, in filings with the court, identified the people he brought into his confidence on this matter.

Again what is very clear is that when Senator Duffy approached the Prime Minister on this matter, the Prime Minister told him that he had to repay those expenses. What the Prime Minister also said was that he expected more from the people in his office, and had he been aware of this, there was no way the Prime Minister would have accepted a deal like this.

* * *

[Translation]

DEMOCRATIC REFORM

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé (Saint-Lambert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, can the government commit to appointing no further senators before receiving the final opinion from the Supreme Court?

[English]

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have been very clear since we were elected in this place that we do not want to appoint senators: we want to elect senators. We want a Senate that is accountable to the people of Canada. It is the NDP that has consistently obstructed us in that matter. When it comes to accountability in the Senate, it is the New Democrats and the Liberals who constantly obstruct us.

Oral Questions

We will not appoint any senators if they agree to elect senators.

* * *

ETHICS

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when the Prime Minister is in trouble, he resorts to Conservative lawyer Arthur Hamilton. Mr. Hamilton led the Prime Minister's unsuccessful defence in the illegal in-and-out election financing scam. The police raided Conservative headquarters, charges were laid, the party pled guilty, convictions were entered, and the biggest possible fine was imposed.

Mr. Hamilton is also the lead Conservative on robocalls, election fraud, throwing Michael Sona to the wolves, and so on. What was Mr. Hamilton's role in paying off Mike Duffy?

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, again, in his filings Nigel Wright has identified the people that he brought into his confidence on this matter.

More importantly right now, why are the Liberals in the Senate obstructing the passage of this motion, which would see these three senators stripped of their pay? Why do they not get on board in bringing real accountability to the Senate, stand up for taxpayers, stop obstructing the Senate's work, and vote in favour of this motion to respect taxpayers?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I say establish a committee and let us hear the evidence under oath.

Arthur Hamilton and Benjamin Perrin, the Prime Minister's former lawyer, are members of provincial law societies. As such, they are considered to be officers of the court with a duty to uphold the law.

As the Duffy deal and cover-up evolved since last December with hush money, threats, intimidation, deliberate interference with the Deloitte audit, and corruption of a Senate report, did these lawyers or any others warn the Prime Minister about potentially illegal activity, and did the Prime Minister ever ask?

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is very clear that Nigel Wright, in his filings, has identified the individuals whom he brought into his confidence on this matter. What is also clear is that we on this side of the House want this motion respecting taxpayers' rights in the Senate to pass. We want it to pass immediately and we are asking the Liberal senators to stop obstructing it and pass the motion so that we can respect taxpayers' rights, get rid of these three senators, and stop paying them.

That is what Canadian people want us to do, and the Liberals should stop obstructing us.

• (1125)

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Liberals will not be complicit in the Conservative cover-up.

In terms of who beyond Nigel Wright was involved in the PMO's cover-up of the Mike Duffy scandal, "no one else" has changed to "a very few", and the circle keeps expanding.

Has the Prime Minister asked any questions of all the people who have worked for him since last December about what they knew of

the Duffy payoff and what they did about it? Is it the Prime Minister's story that his most senior staff, fully knowing about the payoff, told him nothing and allowed him to mislead the country for months? How is that believable?

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will repeat that Nigel Wright, in his filings, identified the people he brought into his confidence here. This is really an issue between Senator Duffy and Nigel Wright.

Senator Duffy accepted payment for expenses that he did not incur. That was wrong. He was told to pay them back. Nigel Wright then paid those expenses back and has accepted responsibility for making that payment.

Now we have an opportunity in the Senate, and the Liberals are obstructing us. They need to get out of the way, respect taxpayers' rights, and help us get these three senators out of—

The Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Gatineau.

Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I honestly think, and so do Canadians, that all of them need to get out of the way.

[*Translation*]

The Prime Minister is still refusing to say why he changed his version of the facts about the February 13 meeting between Nigel Wright, Mike Duffy and himself. He still refuses to say why he misled the House about the number of people who were aware of the \$90,000 cheque.

Can the Prime Minister tell us the exact number of people who were aware?

[*English*]

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister was very clear. On February 13 when Senator Duffy approached him to try to justify these inappropriate expenses, the Prime Minister was very clear. He said, "Repay those expenses". Senator Duffy then went on TV and issued a press release saying that he had repaid those expenses by taking out a mortgage on his home. This is what he said. Obviously, that did not happen.

What Nigel Wright did was inappropriate. He is accepting responsibility for his actions. Senator Duffy should do the exact same thing, as should Senator Brazeau and Senator Wallin. The opposition needs to get out of the way and let us do our job.

Oral Questions

[*Translation*]

Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP): Mr. Speaker, none of this has any credibility. The Prime Minister pats himself on the back for making Mr. Duffy reimburse Canadians, except that he is the one who created the problem by appointing the Wallins, Brazeaus and Duffys of the world. So much for credibility; there is none.

The Prime Minister waited until February 2013 to act, even though Mike Duffy's scandalous expenses began to come to light in November 2012. Why do nothing for so long?

[*English*]

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Again, Mr. Speaker, I will be very clear. I like standing on this point because the Prime Minister was very clear. When he was approached by Senator Duffy, who tried to justify these inappropriate expenses, the Prime Minister said to him, "Repay those expenses". Senator Duffy then went on TV and said that he repaid those expenses by taking out a mortgage on his home. That was not right and when we found that out, he was removed from the Conservative caucus because, as the Prime Minister said, we expect a higher standard on this side of the House. We cannot expect our colleagues to support us when we do not live up to that standard and disrespect taxpayers' money.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jamie Nicholls (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister knew, in October 2012, that there was something fishy about Mike Duffy's expenses. When the scandal erupted, his chief of staff, the now-famous Nigel Wright, wrote in an email to Mike Duffy that this was just a smear campaign.

Was the Prime Minister of the same view as his chief of staff at the time?

[*English*]

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has been of the same view: do not accept a payment for an expense was not incurred. He has said that in the House. It is a standard that we expect on this side of the House. He said to our caucus and senior staff that if there is an issue with expenses, they need to repay those expenses and if they do not make that right, they will sit outside of this caucus. That is the standard that we expect on this side of the House.

Contrast that to the Liberals, who would have been prepared to invite back disgraced Senator Mac Harb, or the leader of the opposition, who waited 17 years to tell police about a bribe he got. We expect more on this side of the House and so do Canadians.

• (1130)

Ms. Chris Charlton (Hamilton Mountain, NDP): Mr. Speaker, let us try again to clarify the doublespeak coming from the Conservatives about the Senate-PMO scandal.

The Prime Minister admits he spoke to Mike Duffy about his expenses in February. Therefore, can the minister confirm that between then and May 15 the Prime Minister asked his staff no questions about Mike Duffy, nor was he told anything by his staff about Mike Duffy? Is that really the official Conservative story?

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what is clear here is the high standard that this Prime Minister expects of Conservative members of Parliament and our senators. He has made it very clear. If members have inappropriate expenses, if they claim expenses that they did not incur, they must repay those expenses. That is the standard that Canadians expect. It is, unfortunately, apparently not the standard that the NDP or Liberals expect.

I would call on them now to work with us to make sure that the suspension vote in the Senate passes immediately. Stop this obstructing. Have the Liberal senators stop obstructing and pass this immediately.

Ms. Chris Charlton (Hamilton Mountain, NDP): Let us try again, Mr. Speaker.

When the Prime Minister says a few people in the PMO knew about the Nigel Wright-Mike Duffy cash for repayment scheme, is he talking about the four people listed in the RCMP production order, the 13 people reported by CTV, or some number in between?

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Again, Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister addressed this in July. Nigel Wright, in his court filings, identified the people who he brought into his confidence on this matter.

This is an issue between Senator Duffy, who should repay the expenses that he did not incur, and Nigel Wright, who understands that what he did was wrong. He has accepted responsibility for that and is ready to accept the consequences of that. Unfortunately, Senators Duffy, Brazeau and Wallin have not taken the same responsibility. That is why we are bringing a motion forward in the Senate to remove them from the Senate, to have their pay stripped. Unfortunately, Liberal senators are standing in the way of that. They need to pass that immediately.

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the government claims to be co-operating with the authorities, yet it has not yet said whether it has handed over any documents or which Conservatives were involved.

Has the Prime Minister's Office handed over any documents to the police? Which Conservatives were involved? Has anyone now working in the PMO been interviewed by the police?

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as the Prime Minister said from day one, we will continue to work with the authorities and provide them with any information that they require, but at the same time, the Prime Minister has been very clear. He wants the motion in the Senate to pass. The Prime Minister has been very clear, if members have an expense which they did not incur, they should repay that expense. The Prime Minister has been very clear, if they do not make that right, they will not be sitting in the Conservative caucus.

Oral Questions

That is the standard that Canadians expect. That is the standard that they are getting from this party and the Prime Minister.

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the member talks about clarity. I would hate to see his definition of murky.

How can Conservatives ask Canadians to trust them to manage billions of tax dollars when they cannot even trust them to tell the truth? Let us just try again. Can the government confirm that Ray Novak, Carolyn Stewart Olsen and Marjory LeBreton were involved in conversations demanding Pamela Wallin step down? Was the Prime Minister aware of these conversations?

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has been very clear on this. Nigel Wright in his own court filings has identified the people that he brought into his confidence. What this is, is that Senator Duffy accepted expenses that he did not incur. He needs to repay those expenses. At the same time, Nigel Wright made a payment that he should not have made. He has accepted responsibility for making that payment and is prepared to accept the consequences of that.

Mr. Mike Sullivan (York South—Weston, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the member seems to forget that this scandal was created by the Prime Minister who appointed these senators in the first place and by the Prime Minister's Office, which tried to cover it up.

Let us try again. Can the government confirm Pamela Wallin's assertion that the Prime Minister directed Marjory LeBreton and Ray Novak to request her resignation?

• (1135)

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, again, we have been very clear on this matter. Nigel Wright in his filings identified the people that he brought into his confidence on this matter. This is an issue between Senator Duffy and Mr. Wright. Senator Duffy accepted expenses which he did not incur. Nigel Wright then paid those expenses. That was inappropriate. Nigel Wright has accepted sole and full responsibility for his actions and is prepared to accept the consequences of those actions.

In the meantime, we have a motion before the Senate that the opposition Liberals in the Senate need to help us pass immediately so that we can continue to respect taxpayers' money.

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, if the government were being very clear, we would not need to keep asking questions. Conservatives refuse to answer questions, evade responsibility and use their power as a tool to induce others to do their bidding. Yesterday in the Senate, Marjory LeBreton said she and Ray Novak told Mike Duffy he had to leave the Conservative caucus because "this is the only option that can ensure your future livelihood".

Does the government think it is ethical to threaten senators who do not go along with its schemes with the loss of their livelihood?

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will let the NDP and the Liberals defend these three senators. I will let them do that. The Prime Minister has been very clear on this matter: members should not accept payments for expenses that they

did not incur. If they did that, they had better make it right. If they do not do that, they will be sitting outside of the Conservative caucus.

That is the standard that we expect on this side of the House. The Prime Minister has also been very clear that he wants this motion of suspension passed in the Senate. I hope that the Liberals in the Senate will get out of the way and let us pass this motion immediately.

Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister stated twice during a radio interview that no one in the PMO ever briefed the Prime Minister that others beyond Nigel Wright knew about the Duffy-Wright deal. The PM says he learned of the scandal on May 15 and he has repeatedly claimed he only learned of the cheque on July 5, but RCMP court files released on July 5 revealed his entire senior staff knew what was going on.

Are Canadians really supposed to believe he never asked his staff for all the facts until July 5? Is it normal for a parliamentary secretary to say his boss is incompetent?

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): It is clear, Mr. Speaker, that the member perhaps has his facts wrong after all of these weeks of talking about it.

The Prime Minister said that May 15, when this came out in the media, was when he learned of the cheque. He addressed the people on the staff who may have known about this in July when Nigel Wright, in court filings, identified the people he brought into his confidence on this.

The reality is that right now in the Senate we have a vote to suspend these three senators. It is the Liberal senators who are standing in the way, obstructing this, and they are doing that because they support the status quo. They need to get out of the way, let us pass this suspension motion and get on with reforming the Senate.

Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member is not speaking of Hugh Segal or Don Plett, is he?

[*Translation*]

No one believed the Prime Minister when he said that Nigel Wright was the only person who knew about the cheque to Mike Duffy. No one believes him today when he says that very few people were aware of this deal. His senior staff were more than aware. They devised the plan to cover up the bribe.

When will the Prime Minister commit to testifying under oath?

[*English*]

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has been very clear on this matter.

Mr. Duffy approached the Prime Minister on February 13 and tried to justify these expenses. The Prime Minister said to Mr. Duffy, "Repay those expenses". That is what he said.

Oral Questions

Right now before the Senate we have a motion that will suspend these senators without pay. The Liberals are defending the status quo. They are doing everything in their power to obstruct the motion. They need to get on board, and as the Prime Minister said and as we all believe, pass the motion to get these three senators out of the Senate, because that is what Canadians expect, respect for their tax dollars. Get out of the way and let us do that.

Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, no one believed the Prime Minister when he said in June that only Nigel Wright knew of the \$90,000 cheque to Mike Duffy. No one believes him now that he has changed his story to “very few people knew”.

We now know the Prime Minister's entire senior staff not only knew, they devised the plan to cover up the bribe, extortion and corruption.

The Prime Minister refuses to tell the truth to Parliament. When will he commit to testifying under oath so Canadians will finally hear the truth?

• (1140)

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if this member would like to come outside of the House with me right now and repeat those exact same words in front of a TV camera. We will wait for the press gallery to go outside, then he can repeat those same words outside.

The Liberals will do anything to try to avoid the fact that it is their senators who are obstructing the motion in the Senate that would strip these three of their pay. That is the standard that Canadians expect, not the Liberal standard of hiding \$40 million from the taxpayers, and not the Liberal standard of slinging mud with no options. Come outside of the House and say that.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Claude Gravelle (Nickel Belt, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the last report from Environment Canada confirms what Canadians have known for years. Under the Conservatives, serious action on climate change is a fantasy. In fact, the Conservatives are further than ever from meeting their own weakened emissions targets. In other words, even after they moved the goalposts, they still cannot score.

Does the government intend to take immediate corrective action or does the minister still doubt climate change?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of the Environment, Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and Minister for the Arctic Council, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to achieving Canada's targets, and our leadership and actions prove this.

We introduced new emissions regulations for vehicles and we are the first major coal user to ban construction of traditional coal-fired plants. Thanks to our actions, carbon emissions will go down close to 130 megatonnes from what they would have been under the Liberals.

We are accomplishing this without the NDP carbon tax, which would raise the price of everything.

[*Translation*]

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, “not even close” is what Environment Canada's report says about the Conservatives' prospects of reaching their 2020 greenhouse gas reduction targets. What is worse is that we are taking a step backward. At this rate, by 2015 their record will be just as bad as the Liberals. Enough with the nonsense.

When will the minister announce reduction targets for the oil and gas sector to get the polluters to start doing their part?

[*English*]

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of the Environment, Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and Minister for the Arctic Council, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we introduced new emission regulations for vehicles, and we are the first major country to reduce coal-fired power plants. Thanks to our actions, carbon emissions will go down close to 130 megatonnes, unlike what they would have been under the Liberal government.

Unlike the NDP who thinks we can tax our way out of every problem, we are getting results without having to impose a carbon tax.

[*Translation*]

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, one day the minister might understand the consequences of the government's inaction when it comes to fighting climate change. I think one of the saddest examples is the gradual disappearance of beluga whales from the St. Lawrence. Climate change has caused the population of this marine mammal to drop by 12% in the past decade. This emblem of Quebec could even be put on the list of endangered species in the next few months. What concrete measures is the minister going to take to fight climate change and save the belugas?

[*English*]

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of the Environment, Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and Minister for the Arctic Council, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government has taken action to address climate change. We are a founding member of an international coalition taking action to reduce pollutants like black carbon, and we have made it a priority under the Arctic Council.

These actions are seeing real results for Canadians without killing the economy, like the opposition wants to do.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau (Berthier—Maskinongé, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the minister does not get it. The Conservatives' attacks on science are preventing us from properly monitoring changes in the beluga population in the St. Lawrence. Are the belugas victims of an epidemic? Are toxic algae responsible for the population's decline? We do not know, and because of the Conservatives' cuts to the St. Lawrence research program, we will likely never know. Will the Conservatives restore the funding and the beluga research station that they cut?

• (1145)

[English]

Hon. Gail Shea (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, CPC): Mr. Speaker, researchers from DFO have been working with partners to study the beluga whales in the St. Lawrence. A scientific peer review meeting was held to review the knowledge on the state of the population, and that peer-reviewed science advice will be published in the coming months.

We will continue to conduct research on marine mammals in co-operation with all of our partners.

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CONSUMER PROTECTION

Mr. John Carmichael (Don Valley West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the CRTC launched an initiative to consult with Canadians on the future of television. According to Jean-Pierre Blais, the chair of CRTC, this is an opportunity for all Canadians to provide feedback on what they think of their television system and how they would like to see it changed.

Could the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage please tell the House what our government is doing to ensure Canadians have greater consumer choice in television services?

Mr. Rick Dykstra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member has a lot of concern about this issue and a lot of constituents from his riding will participate in the dialogue.

When it comes to television service, Canadian consumers have told us that they want choice. It is consistent with our Speech from the Throne, where we committed to unbundling TV channels while also protecting Canadian jobs.

Consistent with that commitment, yesterday the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission launched a dialogue with Canadians on the future of television. That dialogue will play a part in fulfilling our Speech from the Throne commitment to ensure that consumers do have a choice when it comes to TV and their selection of channels.

* * *

[Translation]

THE BUDGET

Mr. Mathieu Ravignat (Pontiac, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I asked the President of the Treasury Board what public service jobs will be affected by the changes in the budget implementation act. His

answer is an incredible example of stupidity, and I quote: "that is utterly false". What a flop. I ask him who will be affected and he says that is false. That is not an answer.

Let me try to ask the question again. Which public servants will be affected?

[English]

Mr. Dan Albas (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we will not speculate on a potential designation. These changes are still before the House.

Unlike the opposition, our Conservative government cares about the safety of Canadians and not lining the pockets of big union bosses.

Mr. Mathieu Ravignat (Pontiac, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the President of the Treasury Board said "We do need to have a bureaucracy that works for Canadians, that is competent, that is serving the public interest", yet the minister did not display any level of competence when trying to answer simple questions about his own legislation.

When will the minister practise what he preaches, stop attacking the public service, and start taking care of the public interest?

Mr. Dan Albas (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I find it incredible that the member raises this point. The NDP has never been on the side of taxpayers because it is in the pockets of big unions. Not believable? Its constitution uses the word "labour" and "union" 18 times, but does not say anything about fiscal accountability, not even once.

The Public Service Labour Relations Act will be amended to ensure that the public service is affordable, modern and high performing, as taxpayers expect. We will sit at the bargaining table on behalf of taxpayers to make sure they are represented, and where the rules are fair and balanced.

* * *

LABOUR

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the President of the Treasury Board is having a very hard time explaining changes he is making to the public service. He failed to provide examples of essential services that are affected. He failed to provide timelines for when details would actually be made public, and he failed to consult those affected. He launched a terrible diatribe against public service workers. How can Canadians trust the minister to manage the public service when he cannot even be trusted to explain his own legislation?

Mr. Dan Albas (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the budget clearly stated that the Government of Canada's intent is to set public service pay and benefit levels that are reasonable, responsible and in the public interest. The Public Service Labour Relations Act will be amended to ensure that the public service is affordable, modern, and high-performing, as taxpayers expect. The proposed amendments will bring savings, and streamline practices and bring them in line with other jurisdictions. We will sit at the bargaining table on behalf of the taxpayer where the rules are fair and balanced.

• (1150)

[Translation]

Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we do not know about that, especially coming from the President of the Treasury Board, who has been described as bargaining in bad faith. That did not come from me or the NDP, but the labour relations board.

What is most shocking is that the President of the Treasury Board does not even know himself who will be targeted by the budget implementation act. That reeks of amateurism. I will give him a second chance by asking a simple question. Which essential services and which public servants will see their fundamental right to strike violated?

[English]

Mr. Dan Albas (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we will not speculate on a potential designation. These changes are still before the House.

Unlike the opposition, our Conservative government cares about the safety of Canadians and not lining the pockets of public sector unions and their bosses. I look across the aisle, and a great many of the NDP caucus are former union leaders who continue to put those interests forward rather than the people who put them in office and who they are supposed to represent: the Canadian taxpayers. I hope they will look at the changes and agree that they are reasonable.

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THE ECONOMY

Hon. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Bank of Canada has joined with the IMF in downgrading Canada's growth numbers, which are now an anemic 1.6%. This year, in fact, U.K. and U.S. growth numbers are 50% higher than Canada's.

Canadians, especially young Canadians, are being left behind. There are 224,000 fewer jobs for young Canadians today than back in 2008. Why are the Conservatives more interested in helping find the Franklin expedition than in helping find jobs and opportunities for young Canadians? Why are the Conservatives so out of touch with middle-class Canadian families?

Mr. Andrew Saxton (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada has the best jobs record in the entire G7, with over one million net new jobs created since July of 2009. Both the IMF and the OECD forecast that we will have among the strongest economic growth in the years ahead.

However, as we have always said, we are not immune to the ongoing global economic turbulence. That is why we are working hard to implement the pro-growth measures in economic action plan 2013, including extending and expanding the hiring credit for small business, increasing and indexing the lifetime capital gains exemption, and much more.

* * *

TAXATION

Hon. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, credit unions, like the Victory Credit Union in Kings—Hants, are important economic drivers for rural and small town Canada. It

Oral Questions

makes no sense for the Conservatives to raise taxes on credit unions by \$75 million. In Manitoba alone, this will be a loss of \$5 million to credit union owner-members. In Steinbach, it is going to cost citizens there over a million dollars.

Why are the tax-and-waste Conservatives ripping off the credit union owner-members of Steinbach for over a million dollars? Why the attack on rural and small-town Canadians?

Mr. Andrew Saxton (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, credit unions will still have access to the lower small business tax rate. That has not changed.

We are simply eliminating an outdated tax subsidy from the 1970s, put in by the member's government, I might add, when the tax system was very different. No other small business received that special tax subsidy.

* * *

[Translation]

TRANSPORT

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the people and locally elected officials in the Lower St. Lawrence are anxiously awaiting the announcement of phase 3 of the project to upgrade Highway 185, a four-lane highway that is part of the Trans-Canada Highway.

When completed, the highway will be a vital tool for the economic development of the region and will improve the safety of one of the most dangerous stretches of highway in Quebec.

Can the minister confirm whether she discussed this with her Quebec counterpart at the most recent meeting of transport ministers? If so, did she guarantee the federal government's support, as was the case with phases 1 and 2 of the project?

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government and the Quebec government collaborate on all transportation issues affecting the province of Quebec. We will be working together.

Mr. François Lapointe (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, NDP): Give me a break, Mr. Speaker. Is it possible to have an even more vacuous reply next time and to be given even less information?

We need a commitment now. Too many families have lost loved ones on Highway 185. Instead of sitting back and putting the ball in Quebec's court, the federal government has an opportunity to show leadership. The minister can be proactive and sign a federal-provincial funding agreement right now. She can confirm the federal government's participation and be prepared when the province is ready to move forward.

Oral Questions

Accordingly, can the minister guarantee right now that the federal government will participate in this phase, just as it did in the first two phases of upgrades to this stretch of highway, which, need I remind members, is part of the Trans-Canada Highway?

• (1155)

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind my colleague that we always work with the Quebec government on transport issues in Quebec to the extent permitted by our programs. Quebec can establish its own priorities.

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[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Ms. Joan Crockatt (Calgary Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, though the opposition might be fooled by Rouhani's charm offensive in Iran, we on this side of the House will not.

As the UN rapporteur notes in his latest report, the human rights situation in Iran continues to be abysmal. The number of political prisoners executed is at an all-time high. Average citizens remain subject to arbitrary arrest, imprisonment, threat, harassment, and torture.

Can the Minister of Foreign Affairs please tell the House the government's views on the regressive, clerical, military regime in Iran?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I share the member's disappointment with the NDP's recent statements in this regard.

They have a president in Iran who got elected when they would not even allow women, who represent 51% of the population of Iran, to even contest the office. Iran has issues, as mentioned. It has stepped up its death penalty cases this year, which is deeply concerning to Canada. It is supporting Assad's war against his own people, including providing him with material support. It is financing and actively supporting terrorism around the world.

Its nuclear program causes us deep concern. They do not need to manufacture medical isotopes under 300 metres of rock.

* * *

REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Cardigan, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it seems the Conservative government is continuing its march toward eliminating the federal presence on Prince Edward Island.

Now it seems that the Vernon River post office is the next federal service to be axed. The government continues to remove federal jobs, assets, and services from Prince Edward Island.

Will the government commit to keeping the Vernon River post office open, and stop its attack on rural Prince Edward Island?

Mr. Jeff Watson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are choosing to communicate in ways other than sending letters.

Due to the lack of demand, mail volumes have dropped almost 25% since 2008 and continue to fall. Since 1981, Canada Post has had a mandate to operate on a self-sustaining financial basis. We are concerned that it is posting significant losses.

* * *

[Translation]

RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Tarik Brahma (Saint-Jean, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we are dealing with an incompetent government. That is what the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives report on railway safety confirms.

It is simply irresponsible to cut the railway safety budget by 19% when the amount of oil shipped by rail has gone up from 500 carloads to 140,000 carloads.

Out of respect for the victims of Lac-Mégantic, will the Minister of Transport finally explain how she will correct the lax approach taken by her government?

[English]

Mr. Jeff Watson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, CPC): Mr. Speaker, quite the contrary, the minister has been taking action.

With respect to Lac-Mégantic, obviously our thoughts and prayers are with the families and victims who were affected by this tragic accident. We do need to let the authorities continue their investigation. Transport Canada will not hesitate to act on recommendations.

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VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. Rick Norlock (Northumberland—Quinte West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, since 2006, our government has invested almost five billion new dollars to improve financial benefits and improve services like snow cleaning and home cleaning while focusing on veterans' rehabilitation. In total, this represents one-third more than previous governments spent on a yearly basis for Canadian veterans.

Would the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs please update this House on any new improvements our government has made?

Mr. Parm Gill (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for Northumberland—Quinte West for his hard work for Canadian veterans.

In fact, according to the Veterans Ombudsman, a 24-year corporal who is medically released from the military will now receive upwards of \$2 million in total financial benefits because of improvements our government has made. What is more, a veteran who is injured in the line of duty will now have up to \$75,000 for university or college tuition for retraining and certification programs.

Our government is focused on helping veterans transition to civilian life, and we will continue to do that.

•(1200)

[Translation]

ETHICS

Mr. André Bellavance (Richmond—Arthabaska, BQ): Mr. Speaker, to get out of the crisis of confidence caused by the Prime Minister, his entourage and his senators, some are asking him to testify under oath, while others are asking him to submit all the documents or even to make them public.

However, there is a solution that addresses all those requests. Why not have an independent public inquiry, like the Gomery commission or the Charbonneau commission?

To get out of the mess he got himself into and to prevent him from being hoisted by his own petard, why does the Prime Minister not set up an independent public inquiry right away, as the Bloc Québécois has requested since the beginning of the crisis?

[English]

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, again, we are going to continue to work with all authorities and provide any information they require.

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[Translation]

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Mr. André Bellavance (Richmond—Arthabaska, BQ): Mr. Speaker, to please their voter base, which is grumbling about the deluge of ethical scandals in the government, the Conservatives are stepping up their vicious attacks against Quebec. The controversial appointment of Justice Nadon, the challenge to Quebec's Bill 99, and the unilateral reform of the Senate are all designed to stir up conflict and distract attention.

Now the Minister of Human Resources is putting his oar in too. He is planning to interfere once again in manpower training, and he is criticizing Quebec's requirements for apprentices in construction trades.

Why does the minister want to lower standards that fall under Quebec's exclusive jurisdiction?

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, manpower training is very important.

We would like Quebec and other provinces to work within our program, because we have jobs available in Canada. Canadians can get training. Matching skilled workers with job vacancies will be good for Canada's economic future.

* * *

[English]

ETHICS

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, no due process, we have no presumption of innocence, no natural justice, three senators with very different fact sets lumped together for punishment. If this kind of vigilante justice took place in any

Routine Proceedings

other place in Canada, these people could go to the courts for redress following these numerous violations, but because it is in the Senate, as it would be in the House, if this precedent goes unchallenged, they will find themselves, just as Helena Guergis did, being told it "is royal prerogative and you have no right to complain if your reputation is ruined".

Will the Prime Minister do the right thing: stop this farce in the Senate, and call a full inquiry?

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, I will let the NDP, Liberals, and now the Green Party stand up for these three senators who are accused of very large infractions with taxpayers' money.

The Prime Minister has been very clear. We want this motion passed. We want the Liberals in the Senate to stop obstructing this. They can pass this immediately. On this side of the House, we are going to stand up for taxpayers, and we want the opposition to do the same and have the Liberal senators get out of the way. Let us pass this motion immediately.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

PROHIBITING CLUSTER MUNITIONS ACT

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-6, An Act to implement the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

He said: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the special order made previously, I would like to inform the House that this bill is in the same form as Bill S-10 was in the previous session at the time of prorogation.

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

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The Chair is satisfied that this bill is in the same form as that of Bill S-10 when it was before the House at the time of prorogation of the first session of the 41st Parliament.

[Translation]

Accordingly, pursuant to order made on Monday, October 21, 2013, the bill is deemed read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development.

Routine Proceedings

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

* * *

• (1205)

[English]

CANADIAN MUSEUM OF HISTORY ACT

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (for the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-7, An Act to amend the Museums Act in order to establish the Canadian museum of history and to make consequential amendments to other acts.

She said: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the special orders made previously, I would like to inform the House that this bill is in the same form as Bill C-49 was in the previous session at the time of prorogation.

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

[Translation]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The Chair is satisfied that this bill is in the same form as Bill C-49 was at the time of prorogation of the first session of the 41st Parliament.

[English]

Accordingly, pursuant to an order made on Monday, October 21, 2013, the bill is deemed read the second time, considered by the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage, reported without amendment and concurred in at report stage.

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee, reported without amendment, and concurred in at report stage)

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the second report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs. That report states:

The Committee advises that, pursuant to Standing Order 91.1(2), the Subcommittee on Private Members' Business met to consider the items added to the Order of Precedence as a result of the replenishment of Wednesday, June 5, 2013, and recommended that the items listed herein, which it has determined should not be designated non-votable, be considered by the House...

[Translation]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Pursuant to Standing Order 91.1(2), the report is deemed adopted.

* * *

[English]

PETITIONS

LYME DISEASE

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to rise to present two petitions. The first deals with Bill C-442. It is a private member's bill calling for a national Lyme

disease strategy. I happen to be the person who tabled it, but I like to think it comes from all members of the House.

I have heard from many members of Parliament who have, as I do, constituents who are suffering from this terrible disease. This strategy will be of assistance to people who have Lyme disease, and significantly, will help with prevention and greater awareness.

FOREIGN INVESTMENT

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, the second petition comes from residents of Kingston and Toronto. It is calling on the government to avoid, refuse, and stop the ratification of the Canada-China investment treaty, which would bind future governments for 31 years to allowing the People's Republic of China's state-owned enterprises superior rights to bring arbitration cases against Canada if they do not like the laws we pass here.

[Translation]

RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Jamie Nicholls (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I present to the House a petition signed by constituents in Vaudreuil-Soulanges who are calling upon the Parliament of Canada to ask the Canadian Transportation Agency to review the regulations pertaining to the speed of trains and to make it mandatory to install integrated command systems on trains.

• (1210)

[English]

CELL TOWERS

Mr. Frank Valeriote (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to table yet another petition on behalf of several hundred more constituents in Guelph with regard to their health concerns about cell towers.

The petitioners reference the World Health Organization, which has classified cell towers as a class 2B carcinogen. They also reference a National Research Council press report that cell towers should not be placed within 500 metres of residential properties, schools, hospitals, and daycares but should be at least 1000 metres away.

My constituents call on the Government of Canada to revise the Health Canada Safety Code 6 and enforce a moratorium on all new installations of cellular and wireless antennae and base stations until there are more studies. They also call for the immediate implementation of unbiased, non-industry-funded scientific research and ask the government to adopt the House of Commons Standing Committee on Health's report, entitled "An Examination of the Potential Health Impacts of Radiofrequency Electromagnetic Radiation".

The indiscriminate installation of cell towers at just any location must stop now.

FERRY SERVICE

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Cardigan, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I am pleased to present a petition on behalf of a large number of people from Prince Edward Island who wish to draw the attention of the House of Commons to the fact that the Northumberland Ferries Limited contract ends on March 31, 2014.

The economy of eastern Prince Edward Island depends heavily on the ferry service. It helps maintain the three industries on Prince Edward Island, namely farming, fishing, and tourism. Therefore, the petitioners wish to direct the Government of Canada to negotiate a new contract that is equal to or greater than the previous three-year contract with Northumberland Ferries Limited, taking into account the increase in the consumer price index, and to provide public funding to ensure that the infrastructure meets or exceeds the level of today's standards.

OLD AGE SECURITY

Ms. Chris Charlton (Hamilton Mountain, NDP): Mr. Speaker, since I do not see any other members rising, and we have a bit of time left, I hope that you will allow me to introduce two petitions today.

First, I am pleased to be able to rise in the House to table yet another set of petitions, with hundreds of signatures, about protecting old age security. I know that the government had hoped that this issue would go away, but there is no such luck.

The petitioners want to remind the government that the changes to OAS hurt the poorest seniors the most, that they disadvantage younger Canadians, and that there is no need to make these changes, since OAS is fully sustainable in the long term without these punishing changes. For all of these reasons, the petitioners call upon the government to maintain the retirement age of OAS at 65 years and to make the required investments in the guaranteed income supplement to lift every Canadian senior out of poverty.

While I know that the rules of Parliament do not allow me to endorse a petition, let me just say that I am delighted to have had the opportunity to present it in the House today.

INCOME TAX DEDUCTIONS FOR TRADES PEOPLE

Ms. Chris Charlton (Hamilton Mountain, NDP): Mr. Speaker, last month I was in Nanaimo, where I had the opportunity to meet with a large number of labour activists from all over Vancouver Island, alongside my colleague from Nanaimo—Cowichan. One of the issues we discussed at length was my private member's bill, Bill C-201, which will be debated in the House for the first time next week.

I am delighted to say that the second petition I present in the House today was circulated as a result of those conversations. It is signed by almost 100 people from Vancouver Island, who are all urging the government to support Bill C-201 so that tradespersons and indentured apprentices can deduct travel and accommodation expenses from their taxable income when they work at a construction site more than 80 kilometres away from their homes.

Government Orders

I very much appreciate this expression of support from the west coast, and I am pleased to be able to table this petition in the House today.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN 2013 ACT NO. 2

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-4, A second act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on March 21, 2013 and other measures, be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the amendment.

Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today to speak to economic action plan 2013 act no. 2.

This act would implement key measures from economic action plan 2013. It would also implement certain previously announced tax measures that will help create jobs, stimulate economic growth, and secure Canada's long-term prosperity.

Canadians have come to rely on our Conservative government to remain focused on the priorities that matter most to them: creating jobs for hard-working families and economic growth for local economies in all of Canada.

Since the depth of the global economic recession, Canada's overall job growth record remains the strongest among all G7 countries. Our government's plan for jobs and growth has helped contribute to the creation of more than one million new jobs, and we are on track to keep creating jobs and balance Canada's budget by 2015.

However, we also recognize that the global economy also can be volatile. We sympathize with those who are still struggling to find a job and we realize we are not immune to what happens outside our borders. That is why our government is working hard to implement positive job-creating measures from economic action plan 2013. These includes tax breaks to help small businesses create jobs, the Canada job grant to help get more Canadians trained and into skilled jobs, the largest-ever federal investment in job-creating infrastructure, new tax relief to help our manufacturing sector, and much more.

Government Orders

Nowhere is it more apparent that we need more skilled Canadian workers than in my riding of Prince George—Peace River. In fact, several local employers have come to me to express their increasing frustration with their inability to fill jobs because they cannot find workers with the right skills. Meanwhile, there are also far too many Canadians out there looking for work. That is why so many employers within my riding are looking forward to the full implementation of the new Canada job grant.

The Canada job grant would provide \$15,000 or more per person in combined federal, provincial, territorial, and employer funding to help Canadians get the skills they need for in-demand jobs. Once fully implemented, the grant will help nearly 130,000 Canadians each year to access training at eligible institutions such as community colleges and trade union centres. This new program will ensure that Canadians have the skills employers are seeking and that employers are able to fill those key jobs.

In addition to the new Canada job grant, economic action plan 2013 is investing in skills and training for Canadians by reducing barriers to apprenticeship accreditation, supporting the use of apprentices in federal projects, and strengthening training support for persons with disabilities.

Building on these important new job-creating measures, we continue to remain focused on Canada's long-term prosperity by introducing economic action plan 2013 act no. 2. As we all know, small business entrepreneurs are big job creators, responsible for nearly half of all private sector jobs in Canada, and are a key driving force in making Canada a leader on the world stage.

We also know that to help create jobs, we must also help businesses. That is why Bill C-4 introduces more positive job-creating measures for small business entrepreneurs. One important measure is extending and expanding the hiring credit for small business for one year to help employers with the cost of new hires.

In addition, we will promote stability and predictability for employers and their employees by freezing employment insurance premium rates for the next three years. This will leave \$660 million in the pockets of job creators and workers in 2014 alone.

We have also included measures that will increase the lifetime capital gains exemption to \$800,000 from \$750,000 and index it going forward. This positive measure will increase the rewards of investing in small business by making it easier for owners to transfer their family businesses to the next generation of Canadians.

Manufacturers and processors are also major contributors to our economy, employing approximately 1.8 million Canadians in a wide range of industries across Canada. A strong manufacturing sector also helps create jobs among suppliers and contributes to innovation throughout the economy. That is why in economic action plan 2013 act no. 2 our government is strengthening the competitiveness of this sector by expanding the accelerated capital cost allowance to further encourage investments in clean energy generation. This measure will allow businesses in Canada to face current economic challenges and improve their long-term prospects by adopting new and innovative technologies to increase productivity, thus helping businesses to compete globally while creating jobs in all regions of Canada.

● (1215)

These initiatives demonstrate our government's clear commitment to support small-business entrepreneurs to create jobs, growth, and long-term prosperity for all Canadians in all communities, like those in my riding of Prince George—Peace River.

At the same time, we understand that we must also respect Canadian taxpayers' dollars. Whether on job creators, hard-working families, or any other Canadians, low taxes are a crucial part of our economic success. Our Conservative government has cut taxes over 150 times, including income taxes, the GST, and business taxes, and we are justifiably proud of that record. Because of our actions, the average family is now saving over \$3,200 a year. Economic action plan 2013 would take further action to support Canadian families by eliminating tariffs on babies' clothing, sporting goods, and athletic equipment.

Canadian seniors are also benefiting from a low-tax plan. In fact, the average senior pays \$2,260 less in taxes each year as a result of our tax reductions. The average single senior can earn almost \$20,000 a year and the average senior couple almost \$40,000 a year without paying a single nickel of federal income tax, one thing that definitely affects my parents.

Small businesses as well are benefiting from our government's tax reductions. A small Canadian private business with a taxable income of more than \$500,000 now pays 34% less federal tax than in 2006, equivalent to a tax savings of \$28,000 that can be reinvested to fuel growth and job creation.

Bill C-4 would take further action to ensure Canadian taxpayers' dollars are respected by introducing measures to improve the efficiency of the temporary foreign worker program by expanding electronic service delivery.

Economic action plan 2013 also includes measures that would modernize the Canada student loans program by moving to electronic service delivery, as well as plans to phase out the labour-sponsored venture capital corporations tax credit.

Meanwhile, we remain on track to balance Canada's budget by 2015. Earlier this week, the annual financial report of the Government of Canada for 2012-13 was released. It shows the continued downward track of Canada's annual deficit. In 2012-13, the deficit fell to \$18.9 billion. This was down by more than one-quarter from the deficit of \$26.3 billion in 2011-12 and down by nearly two-thirds from the \$55.6 billion deficit recorded in 2009-10.

Our government's responsible spending of taxpayer dollars has played an important role in these results, with direct program expenses falling by 1.2% from the year prior and by 3.8% from 2010-11. This is just further proof that we are finding savings within government and are refusing to spend recklessly. We will find these savings without raising taxes or cutting transfers to Canadians or the provinces and territories.

These initiatives demonstrate our government's clear commitment to support small business entrepreneurs to create jobs, growth, and long-term prosperity for all Canadians while respecting Canadian taxpayers' dollars. That is why I am pleased to support this bill, Bill C-4.

• (1220)

Mr. Mike Sullivan (York South—Weston, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I enjoyed the comments from my colleague from the west.

However, he did talk about creating opportunities in the trades, and if he would go to the front page of the economic action plan website, he would find a link called “creating opportunities in the trades”, where there is a link to a video in which 90% of the people who are getting education in the trades are men and the only education being given to women in the trades is for cutting hair, applying fingernails, and cutting food.

Over on this side of the House, we think that women can do anything that men can do. Why do the Conservatives not think so?

Mr. Bob Zimmer: Mr. Speaker, I am a tradesman myself. I was a carpenter for many years before I got this job, and one thing I will say is that trades are open to both males and females. It is just up to them to decide which trade they would like to enter.

I notice that in my particular trade, carpentry, there are many more females on the work sites today than there were before. Things are changing. Our government would like to see both males and females becoming skilled tradespeople in all types of trades, and we would welcome that in our current economic job market.

Mr. Bernard Trottier (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the member for Prince George—Peace River could expand on measures in Bill C-4 that build on the budget and address investments in communities and infrastructure. We know it is very important.

I know the member has some communities that are very challenged with respect to building up infrastructure. There is a lot of growth and there are some big needs when it comes to moving people and goods around. If the member could expand on that aspect, I would like to hear his comments.

• (1225)

Mr. Bob Zimmer: Mr. Speaker, infrastructure is a big deal for us in the northeast of British Columbia. I always tell my constituents that we have a big economic engine in the northeast and we need more resources and more infrastructure to keep that engine working efficiently.

The gas tax transfer fund has been well received in British Columbia. We are seeing some changes within our municipalities in the way that funding is being designated, but it is being well received within our part of the province and our part of the country, as I am

sure it is across the country. It will provide the much needed infrastructure to keep this economic engine running at full capacity.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Chambly—Borduas, NDP): Mr. Speaker, since the debate began, I have heard a number of government members talking about employment and the economy. This always leads me to the same question, and I still have not managed to get an answer.

I am trying to understand why this omnibus bill contains a provision regarding the appointment of Supreme Court judges. My own theory, which many of my colleagues on this side of the House share, is that the process was bungled for the most recent appointment in Quebec. The problem is ongoing and still has not been resolved.

With that in mind, it seems the government tried to create a catch-all budget implementation bill by including provisions concerning the Supreme Court. I still do not see how that is relevant.

Can my colleague tell us why these measures were included? If not, can he tell me whether the government will support a motion that we plan to introduce to separate this aspect from the rest of the omnibus bill?

[*English*]

Mr. Bob Zimmer: Mr. Speaker, a colleague from this side of the House said earlier that we are a government that likes to get things done. Including legislation in budget bills is often a way for us to get a lot done in short order.

That has been our Conservative mantra over the last few years: we are a government that does get things done, instead of just having endless debate over issues that we know Canadians want answers for right now. That is why we do what we do in terms of getting legislation through. We see it as an efficient way of passing legislation, as opposed to what the opposition would say.

Mr. John Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member and I are both from the west coast. I would appreciate it if he could give us some insight on how the provisions we are discussing this morning would impact the west coast.

Mr. Bob Zimmer: Mr. Speaker, our government is focused on the economy and on keeping the Canadian economy in general chugging along. Among the things we talked about, the job skills grant is going to affect us greatly and will answer the need, especially in the west, for skilled workers in our workforce. We are already being hit by that need. It is going to hit us even more, and we are responding to that need.

Mr. Mike Sullivan (York South—Weston, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak to Bill C-4, which was to be a budget implementation bill but it is much more. It is that much more that has a bunch of us on this side of the House worried about what the government really intends to do. For example, this budget implementation bill includes a redefinition of what constitutes a danger in the workplace.

Government Orders

The definition has been in the Canada Labour Code for many years and is well understood now by the health and safety officers, workplace safety committees, employers, and employees, and to change it in a manner that will not allow us to have full and fulsome debate is a dangerous practice in itself.

We will not know what the new definition means. The old definition talked about any existing or potential hazard or condition, or any current or future activity that could reasonably be expected to cause injury or illness to a person exposed to it.

The new definition requires that this danger be imminent or serious. What the heck does imminent or serious mean? To find out, we have to ask the minister. The minister is the only person who is now able, under this legislation, to determine whether something is an imminent or serious threat to an individual, because the government has taken out health and safety officers across the country and replaced them with one individual.

Each and every declaration of a danger to a person in a workplace in Canada now has to be determined by the minister himself or herself. I do not know if the minister has enough time to get to all the workplaces in Canada. The minister is pretty busy legislating companies back to work, so I do not know if he or she has enough time to do that.

It is a very serious measure that is being taken in a budget implementation bill with very limited time for discussion.

The other thing that is happening in the bill is that for the public service the definition of what can be arbitrated, in terms of what we call interest arbitration processes, has changed dramatically. The definition of what constitutes an essential service is now in the head of the minister. It is not in a jointly agreed to by both parties system.

The minister can decide what is an essential service in the civil service. For example, the minister could decide that his or her driver is an essential service and therefore that person would be prohibited from taking any action.

The danger with this kind of tinkering with the existing well-known and well-understood legislation is where it may lead in the rest of Canada. We have police forces, fire departments, ambulance services and paramedic services across the country that rely on an arbitration system to feel as though they are getting paid appropriately for their work and that their terms and conditions of work are dealt with. They are not allowed to go on strike. They are not allowed to exercise what the rest of Canadians have, which is the ability to withdraw their services.

All of those other folks across the country have to be wondering where the heck the government is going and where it will lead the provincial governments that deal with these things as well.

The government has not only redefined what is an essential service and just basically said that the minister can pick and choose what he or she wants it to be, but it has redefined what constitutes the terms under which an arbitrator can decide a collective agreement.

As members will recall from a year and a half ago, or maybe two years, the former minister of labour actually set the conditions under which an arbitrator was free or not free to decide a collective agreement. When it came to Air Canada, Canada Post and CP Rail,

those agreements were decided by an arbitrator, except the arbitrator's hands were tied.

If I were in the police force or if I were a firefighter, I would be worried about where this federal government was leading us, down the road of re-defining what could and could not be done by an arbitrator.

I want to talk about this issue, because I am the deputy critic for persons with disabilities. The member for Winnipeg South Centre talked in glowing terms about the fact that the government had made the enabling accessibility fund a permanent feature of future budgets, which is a good thing. The problem is that fund is a Conservative slush fund, unfortunately. I do not mean that any of the groups that receive the money are somehow complicit in this, but 85% of the money goes to Conservative ridings.

• (1230)

Conservatives do not represent 85% of the population of Canada. I think something like 24% voted for them last time. How is it that 85% of the enabling accessibility fund goes to Conservative-held ridings, or if a group or organization is turned down for money under the enabling accessibility fund, all it has to do is have a friend like the Minister of Foreign Affairs and that minister will grease palms or whatever it is he has to do to change the decision by whoever made the decision so a group or association can get money out of the enabling accessibility fund?

We do not have any objections to there being an enabling accessibility fund. In fact, it should be bigger than it is, but we would like to see it distributed fairly across the country. I have groups in my riding that have been turned down for enabling accessibility money and cannot fathom the reasons why, because they are not given. There is no sudden decision that a group did not get it because of X, Y or Z. The decision is made that they just did not get it. When we hear that groups in Conservative-held ridings have no trouble getting money, we wonder where the money is coming from.

The other thing I want to say about the budget implementation act is that the government has determined it can add new stuff that was not in the budget. Not only were the issues dealing with the redefinition of what constitutes a danger, the removal of health and safety officers and replacing them with the minister, the changing of the arbitration for the civil service, but a redefinition of what constitutes a Supreme Court justice has been added, someone coming from Quebec. How is that in a budget bill? How is that something that we can think costs money? The Conservatives response, and I understand where they are coming from, but I do not like it, is that it is something that came up just recently, that they have to fix it really quick and that they can rush this thing through and get it done in a hurry.

There are a whole bunch of other things that came up just recently that have not been included in the bill but have to do with money, that have to do with budgets, that have to do with taxpayers and their pocketbooks. The Conservatives talked about them in the throne speech, but they are not here.

Government Orders

The throne speech talked about “pay to pay”. For those who do not know what that means, a cable TV or a cellphone subscriber with any of the big carriers in Canada has to pay \$2 to get a paper bill. If they do not have Internet to get their bill, they have to pay \$2 and the government collects tax on that \$2. No wonder it is delaying it because it wants to keep collecting that tax.

Most of the people affected by that are seniors who do not have access to the Internet, who do not have ready accessibility to electronic forms of payment. Not only that, even those people who have opted to get it electronically are now being told that if they want the detailed billing, they have to pay \$3 to get it electronically, and the government will tax that. Therefore, there will be 15¢ federally and in Ontario another 8¢ provincially going into the coffers of the government every time people pay their bill or accept the bill in paper. The Conservatives promised to do something about that in the throne speech. Where is it? If they can do things really quick like this, why can they not put this in the budget implementation act?

There is no help for airline passengers. The Conservatives voted almost unanimously, if not unanimously, against Bill C-459, which would have provided a system to help airline passengers from the vagaries of the airlines bumping them off a flight. There was talk about that before the throne speech, but there is nothing in the throne speech or in the budget bill.

There is nothing in the budget bill that is a relief for the 200% increase in cable TV fares that have cable and satellite fees that have taken place since it was deregulated completely by the CRTC. In the throne speech the Conservatives did not even talk about that. They said that consumers would be able to pick and play whatever they want, but at a cost. If I pick a channel, it would cost me an arm and a leg. There is nothing in here for the pocketbook of the ordinary Canadian. If the Conservatives want to talk about pick and play, let us apply it to this legislation. We would like to pick and play those things that are good for Canadians and not have to vote against them, while we can vote against those things that are not good for Canadians. That is the kind of pick and play I would like to see.

We have no relief for bank fees. People from the Syme Seniors' Centre in my riding told me that just recently the banks told them that in order to get a printed statement of their bank account they would have to pay. It is a not-for-profit seniors centre that is trying to struggle through with whatever little money it can get from grants and the rest. It now has to pay to get that statement. It did not used to because it was a seniors centre. Now that it has to pay to get the statement, there is no relief. There is nothing in the budget bill that actually reduces those exorbitant bank fees.

We need to rethink how we do these budgets and not put things in a budget that have nothing to do with budgets.

• (1235)

Mr. Dan Albas (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like the member to answer a question in regard to essential services. He mentioned firefighters and police officers would be subject to this. The Public Service Labour Relations Act is legislation that only applies to those who come under it. Could he explain how he would square the two? It seems to me he is creating some confusion for the people who are watching. I look forward to his answer.

Mr. Mike Sullivan: Mr. Speaker, that is not in fact what I said. What I said was that there were groups of individuals in the country who were bound by the definition of an essential service, and I referred to police, firefighters and ambulance attendants. Those individuals, seeing a change at the federal level, ought to be worried about where that will take us at the provincial level. When the federal level starts re-deciding what can be arbitrated and how badly an arbitrator's hands would be tied, those kinds of indications at the federal level will spring up at the provincial level. We get, “If the feds can do it why can't we?” Those individuals ought to be worried about where the government is taking us.

• (1240)

Mr. Tyrone Benskin (Jeanne-Le Ber, NDP): Mr. Speaker, one of the government members mentioned that it created these omnibus bills to get things done. I want to ask my colleague if he would comment on this ends justifies the means type of attitude, particularly in terms where the Conservatives seem to divide Canadian workers from Canadians. Canadian workers are the bulk of Canadian citizens. Thus, the attacks they are making on these workers are attacks on Canadians. Would my hon. colleague comment on that?

Mr. Mike Sullivan: Mr. Speaker, I agree with the comment that the government tends to attack working Canadians. It does this more than any other I have ever seen. The attacks that we find in this omnibus budget bill are attacks on ordinary Canadian workers. I use the term “budget bill” lightly because it really is not a budget bill when the government includes redefining the definition of a danger in a workplace. Those attacks take place in the context of something that the government is saying is a necessary part of the budget bill.

The government wants us to think, and wants Canadians to think, that this is ordinary, regular business, that it is ordinary for governments to throw everything into a budget, including the kitchen sink. It is not ordinary. It is extraordinary and it is extraordinary to limit debate on it. We, as parliamentarians, will not be given the opportunity to say our piece on the matters that the government has added to the bill.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Chambly—Borduas, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to continue to talk about the catch-all nature of this budget bill. Rather than really talking about the economy, it seems that this bill is actually a way for government ministers to correct the mistakes they have been making from the outset. The Minister of Justice made mistakes in appointing Supreme Court justices? No problem. We can change that in a budget bill. The President of the Treasury Board is a bad negotiator with public servants? No problem. We can change that in a budget bill.

Government Orders

This type of mentality is unbelievable, particularly from a government that says that the economy is its priority. That does not seem to be the case in this budget bill.

I would like my colleague to comment on how important it is for small businesses to have low tax rates. I was looking at the report on the state of the federal government's finances, and I noticed that the tax rate for small businesses has dropped by only 1% since this government has been in power. In comparison, the tax rate for large corporations has dropped by about 20%, if I remember correctly.

Like me, the hon. member is probably a member of the chambers of commerce in his riding. He must understand that this is unacceptable for such a government.

[*English*]

Mr. Mike Sullivan: Mr. Speaker, my colleague's question certainly points to the difference the government has made when it comes to big business versus small business.

Obviously, big business has done very well under the government because their taxes have been reduced substantially, to the point where they are now sitting on half a trillion dollars in free cash that they are not investing. The whole point of cutting taxes for the big businesses was that they would create jobs. They did not. The real job creators in this country are the small businesses and they have not received the same kind of tax relief that we would have proposed. The government has not done this for those small businesses.

Those small businesses are the first ones to say that the bank fees they are being faced with when it comes to credit cards, which are not in the budget, are not being addressed by the government. Those small businesses are hurting from those bank fees.

Mr. Bernard Trottier (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to rise in the House today to talk about Bill C-4, the budget implementation act.

As members know, the bill is on the budget that was introduced in the spring of this year, and it is a very important budget.

The economic action plans that we have had have really helped the Canadian economy weather the storm of the financial turmoil that we have had around the world. We are also taking some important measures for my own city of Toronto and my constituency of Etobicoke—Lakeshore, and I would like to talk about that. However, before doing that, I would like to talk about the broader strokes of why the economic action plan is so important.

First of all, there is the identified need when it comes to skilled people in our economy, the disconnect between the available jobs out there and the people looking for work. We have put in place a plan, through the budget implementation act, to actually make that happen. We will get the provinces to get on board. They have been doing things for a long time now and we have had a lot of feedback from businesses.

The missing stakeholder in all of this job creation when it comes to labour training has been businesses and they have said very loudly, and we have responded to their request, to put in programs that really respond to their needs. That is why we have proposed the

Canada job grant, subject to participation by the provinces. We hope that they will see the need and enough businesses will tell the provinces to get on board with that program.

The other big element in the economic action plan, of course, is the long-term infrastructure plan, which is critical. This is the first time that a government has put such a big infrastructure investment plan together. We are looking to invest in the much-neglected infrastructure in our cities, provinces and communities. It is critical that we have a long-term investment in infrastructure, and not just to move people around but to move goods and create jobs. That is why it is an important pillar of the economic action plan, and I will talk about some specific projects in my city of Toronto and why they are so critical.

There is also a recognition that we are now in the 21st century and our economy will be transitioning all the time, more so now than ever. That means there is a needed investment in research and innovation with a focus on the commercialization of all the great R and D that we do in this country, recognizing that once we have a commercialized set of programs, projects and services, it becomes a virtuous cycle of investment. That is the kind of far-sighted thinking that we have in this budget and why I support it so much.

Another important pillar is supporting families and communities. There are a lot of things we need to do to make sure that the costs associated with raising a family are recognized and that the measures we take in our communities to support the raising of families are also recognized.

As well, we have to look at the great successes we have had in our country with our great companies and the businesses that are world players. We have companies based in Toronto and cities across the country that can compete with anyone. They need the tools to succeed on the global stage, and they have been doing that, but they need that extra help from the federal government. In many cases, it is a "get out of the way" for the federal government. There are some measures in place in this budget implementation act that would do exactly that.

Underpinning all of this is an overall plan to return to balanced budgets, which is really critical. We are leading the G7 and most within the OECD when it comes to having a manageable debt to GDP ratio, and we are going to continue with that. We have a plan in place that would reduce our deficit and balance the budget. It is a combination of growing the economy and at the same time not raising taxes, unlike the opposition parties that keep talking about new taxes.

Members within the opposition parties say things like "amen" to new taxes. We are not saying that. We want to listen to Canadians who are saying "keep our taxes low". They recognize that when they give \$100 to the government, far less of that is actually spent on them. There is a big cut that the government takes for its bureaucracy.

Government Orders

Canadians want to keep their taxes low and in many cases they want to deliver the services themselves for things such as child care, for example, where they can find efficient means within their own home communities. That is why we introduced the universal child care benefit several years ago. They know they can efficiently get the child services they need.

I am going to talk about some of the context before talking about some of the specifics.

We have created over a million net new jobs since the depth of the recession in 2008. By far, it is the best job creation record in the G7. It is not just this government saying that, it is many other bodies, such as the IMF and OECD. They project that Canada is going to have the strongest growth in the G7 in the years ahead. That is because of strong, stable and consistent government when it comes to supporting business and investment, and making sure that we have the foundation for a strong economy.

• (1245)

The World Economic Forum ranked our banking system the soundest in the world. It is the fifth year in a row it has done that, and of course, we have our AAA credit rating in this country, which lowers our borrowing costs, again keeping our deficits low. It is really important that we keep doing some of those things and stay on the track we have been on.

Before the global recession, the Conservative government, between 2006 and 2008, actually paid down \$37 billion in debt. We were looking ahead, recognizing that we needed to pay down debt. I should also mention that we did that while reducing income taxes, consumption taxes and business taxes. We grew the economy and reduced taxes and paid down a lot of debt. There was an increase in the debt during the recession. Ours was actually less than most countries around the world. Now we are looking to get back to a balanced budget.

Let me talk about taxes. A significant source of revenue for the government is tariffs and in the economic action plan we are going to eliminate tariffs on some important items, such as baby clothes, sporting goods and exercise equipment. That is about \$76 million in tariff relief. This is over and above the half a billion dollars a year in tariff reduction that we have already put in place. This is very important to people who need to be able to buy things affordably and support their families, things such as baby clothes and sporting goods, even clothing. There are all kinds of things on which we have reduced tariffs significantly and we hope to keep doing that.

Another important form of taxes, of course, is EI premiums. We are looking to extend the hiring credit for small business up to \$1,000 for new hires. I should mention there were over half a million employers that benefited from that. They saved about \$225 million in EI premiums. That is really important. It provides that added incentive to hire some new people. There has been some strong feedback from the small business community, in particular. It really supports that program.

I am going to mention briefly some things that we are doing in BIA 2 now. There are some specific actions that we have put into BIA 2 that talk about how we need to improve the fairness and integrity of the tax system. It is really important that everyone pay

their fair share. In many ways people are getting more sophisticated when it comes to avoiding taxes and we have put some measures in place that will show that we mean it when we say we are going to crack down on tax cheats. We are going to close some tax loopholes, clarify the tax rules and reduce international tax evasion. There are some tax shelters that have been utilized by Canadian companies and they will not be able to use them anymore. We are really going to reduce that aggressive tax avoidance.

One thing that really impressed me was the level of detail that we went into in BIA 2, describing even how we are going to introduce new criminal offences to deter the use, possession and sale of electronic suppression of sales software. There are businesses that have actually built tools into their point of sale software so they can avoid taxes. That is clearly illegal and it is finally time that our legislation caught up with some of these tricks that certain people are using. We are going to make that a criminal offence and that is why it is part of BIA 2.

I want to mention another important measure that I talked about earlier, which is infrastructure. This is the largest and longest federal commitment to provincial, territorial and municipal infrastructure in Canadian history. No government in Canadian history has planned to spend as much for as long a time as this government when it comes to municipal infrastructure. We are seeing some of the benefits of that in Toronto.

I should mention that since 2006 the federal government has spent over \$4.5 billion on infrastructure and investment in the GTA. The GTA is an important part of our country. It is an economic engine, as are many other parts of the country. It has also had a lot of growth. Some of my colleagues from the GTA can testify to that. It has basically doubled in size as a city within our lifetimes, yet the infrastructure has not caught up. There is a real important need to make those investments. That includes things such as the Bloor-Danforth subway extension in Scarborough. We are investing in the Spadina subway extension. We are making investments with our partners in the Ontario government to improve GO Transit, for example. Of course, there is the Union Station revitalization, which is a really important building architecturally but also as a transportation and transit hub for the entire GTA.

• (1250)

I should mention some of the specific measures that are outlined in BIA 2, the budget implementation act. We are helping businesses succeed by providing tax relief for manufacturers. Manufacturing is important in southern Ontario, and through these measures tax relief will temporarily accelerate the capital cost allowance so the industry can make new investments in critical equipment that improves its productivity.

Government Orders

Regarding some specific items that are outlined in the budget, I appreciate very much the investments in things like Massey Hall, which is an important institution for the city of Toronto.

I hope the opposition will support the BIA 2. It is an important bill to keep the country moving forward.

• (1255)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his speech.

It would be nice to be able to support and pass this kind of bill, and we would really like to do so. However, the hon. member for Chambly—Borduas raised a number of fundamental problems.

I have a simple question I would like to ask. What are clauses 471 and 472 doing in Bill C-4? What are two clauses about appointing judges to the Supreme Court doing in a budget implementation bill?

The devil is always in the details when it comes to the Conservatives, and that is unfortunate. Then they turn around and criticize us for voting against something that is being referred for an opinion, that is challenged just about everywhere and that has nothing to do with any budget items.

Mr. Bernard Trottier: Mr. Speaker, it is very important that Quebec be represented on the Supreme Court.

This therefore needed to be included in a budget bill immediately, quite honestly, because it is crucial that this judge be appointed to the Supreme Court as soon as possible. This is simply a technical qualification.

[*English*]

Let me get back to the main point about the budget. There are so many good measures when it comes to keeping taxes low and encouraging investment. That is the most important thing. That is what creates jobs in this country. Of course, the legal framework has to be there. We are a fine country when it comes to having that framework to support business investment.

That is what is really attractive about this budget, and that is why I support it.

Mr. Dan Albas (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary has touched on many great projects that are in both economic action plan 2013 as well as this particular budget implementation act.

I want to make my comments, and then I have a question with regard to the Canada job grant.

Like many MPs, I spent a lot of time in my riding over the break consulting with local businesses and employers: job creators. I heard from many of them. West Manufacturing, in my area of West Kelowna, makes some of the most creative products for forestry, as well as tanks for oil and gas. However, it specifically noted that a lack of skilled labour is a key concern. The company wants to go from two shifts to three shifts, and it does not have the skilled labour.

I also met with a lot of people who are underemployed; they have credentials but they cannot find the work.

Could the parliamentary secretary flesh out why this is an important program to carry forward?

Mr. Bernard Trottier: Mr. Speaker, it is not just small businesses; I have many small and medium-sized businesses in my riding of Etobicoke—Lakeshore. I spent some time this summer with the construction crafts union, a local trade union that has a fabulous training facility in Richmond Hill. It would like to participate in the Canada job grant. It says it could do the training much better than the province, and it would like to participate with the federal and provincial governments to help train much-needed people in the construction industry in the GTA. It was interesting to note that they pointed out the same gaps in the current training programs that the employers have identified.

I hope the opposition and the provinces will get on board with this great new plan.

Mr. Jamie Nicholls (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canada's global competitiveness has been hampered by the Conservative government's inaction. Low taxes alone have not attracted innovators, and it is not a creative marketing policy for our economy.

According to the World Economic Forum, Canada's competitiveness would be further enhanced by improvements in its innovation ecosystems, particularly government procurement of advanced technology. It has been saying the same thing for the past five years. Why did the government wait this long? Unfortunately, my suspicion is that the government's libertarian market recklessness was responsible for this hesitation in changing its economic policy.

• (1300)

Mr. Bernard Trottier: Mr. Speaker, when it comes to making Canada a more innovative place, governments in general across the country have been spending a lot more. We are basically at the top of the OECD countries when it comes to spending.

Where we have been lacking is in the private sector. Private sector employers in Canada do not spend nearly enough on research and development. We recognize that. That is why we are supporting some advanced research and commercialization projects. We are trying to get some of the colleges and polytechnics on board, which could do some of that work when it comes to commercialization. That is one of the important measures in the budget, and I support it.

Ms. Chris Charlton (Hamilton Mountain, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in a week that has been dominated by the drama of a Senate scandal and the political noose that is tightening around the Prime Minister's neck, the Conservatives' latest budget implementation bill all but flew under the radar of Canadians' attention. Despite this, Bill C-4 is profoundly important to my constituents in Hamilton Mountain.

Government Orders

As with all budget implementation bills, I always look forward to them with some hope. I am always optimistic that the government will recognize the trajectory of economic indicators and play a positive role in mitigating potential negative impacts for hard-working Canadians. However, while hope springs eternal, my optimism vanishes when I crack the spine of the latest Conservative budget bill. Bill C-4, unfortunately, was no exception.

In fact, this latest Conservative effort was summed up perfectly by the *Toronto Star's* columnist, Chantal Hébert, who aptly described the content of the 308 page bill as amounting to “a handful of sometimes half-baked and always ill-defined promises”. It was indeed a huge disappointment.

We returned to Ottawa last week after a summer recess from parliamentary proceedings that was extended by yet another prorogation. All of us have had plenty of time to knock on doors in our communities and talk to the very people who are most directly impacted by the government's budgetary policies. I certainly did that this summer. What I heard was continuing anxiety about stagnating wages, job insecurity and high household debt. Those fears are well-founded; they are not based on paranoia.

Let us review some of the facts. Over the past 35 years, under successive Liberal and Conservative governments, incomes have increased for the top 20% of Canadians, but have decreased for everyone else. There is 80% of Canadians who have seen a drop in their income. Our economy has grown by 147%, yet the real income of the average Canadian family has dropped by 7%.

At the end of last year, Canadians' household debt reached 166% of disposable income. Canada's total household debt is now dangerously close to the peak levels prevailing in the United States just before the 2008 economic crisis. Indeed, the Bank of Canada is now referring to this debt as “the biggest domestic risk” to the Canadian economy. This is not only a burden on Canadian families, it is a threat to our entire economy, yet all the Conservatives have to say to the millions of families struggling to make ends meet is that they have to make do with less, and their children have to make do with less.

Conservatives have done nothing to reign in the high cost of living for families. They have done nothing to guarantee retirement security for seniors. They have watched a generation of middle-class jobs disappear, but they have done nothing to create the next generation of middle-class jobs. We can and must do better.

It is time to put the interests of Canadians first. The budget implementation bill could and should have been the perfect opportunity to do just that. It should have made life more affordable for hard-working families. It should have created quality well-paying jobs. It should have ensured secure retirements. It should have fostered opportunities for young Canadians. What we got instead was a continuation of the austerity agenda, which is premised on the mistaken belief that we can cut our way to prosperity.

As David Olive from the *Toronto Star* noted in March of this year:

...sucking demand, or cash, out of an economy with cutbacks to government spending—including essential services and infrastructure upgrading—merely adds to the jobless lines and cuts household incomes. That, in turn, drives up social-spending costs related to mounting unemployment.

It is not as if the finance minister were oblivious to that. He, himself, has repeatedly warned of the threat that household debt poses to the economy, yet neither his spring budget nor Bill C-4 does anything to offer help to Canadians.

In a scathing review of the Conservative record on the economy, Michael Harris said, in *iPolitics*:

Apart from pitching a free-trade deal with Antarctica, the PM has nothing to offer on the economy besides glowing self-appraisals, bad commercials on the public dime, and discount-rate foreign workers inflating his dismal job creation numbers.

He also said:

The PM and his government are not good managers. The nauseating repetition of the claim that the Tories know what they're doing with the country's finances will not make it so. They've pissed away more money than Madonna on a shopping spree—a billion on the G8—20 meetings that put a dent in the world's Perrier supply and little else.

They just plain lost \$3.2 billion and the guy in charge over at Treasury Board is still there [...]

They are such good fiscal managers that we now have the highest deficit in our history.

With that as the backdrop, let us have a look then at Bill C-4. Unfortunately, its provisions would do nothing to prove the previous statement wrong. Instead of acting on the economy and creating jobs for an agenda of growth, the Conservatives are doing the exact opposite. Instead of creating jobs, they are continuing their ideological attacks on Canadian workers. A full third of the bill is designed solely to undermine the rights of workers.

● (1305)

The bill would eliminate the basic right of workers to a healthy and safe workplace, and continues its attack on the federal public service. Allow me to say a few words about those outrageous changes.

It is no exaggeration to suggest that Bill C-4 would place the lives of workers in the federal sector at risk as a result of the cynical amendments that the Conservatives would make to the Canada Labour Code. The bill would attack the right to refuse dangerous work, a hard-fought right that offered basic protection to Canadian workers. By redefining and limiting the word “danger” and undermining the work and expertise of health and safety officers by giving many of their powers to the minister, the Conservatives are essentially saying that forcing workers to work in unsafe conditions is absolutely fine by them. No New Democrat will support that. No worker should ever be forced to work in unsafe conditions and I cannot believe that any member of the House would ever knowingly vote to put workers in harm's way.

I urge my Conservative colleagues to please do the right thing and respect the rights of workers. With lives literally hanging in the balance, I urge them to ignore the party whip and do what they must know is the right thing to do, which is to oppose these objectionable changes to Canada's labour laws.

Government Orders

In fact, let us delete all of the labour sections from the omnibus bill. The changes that Bill C-4 would make to the Public Service Labour Relations Act would eliminate binding arbitration as a method to resolve disputes in the public service. What could possibly be the motivation for that, other than to prompt labour unrest and conflict with civil servants. Again, if my Conservative colleagues do not believe in gratuitous attacks on the very people who serve both them as government and the Canadian public, then they must vote to oppose the bill.

I am sure all members heard the interview that the Conservatives' colleague, the MP for Parry Sound—Muskoka and President of the Treasury Board gave on CBC Radio in Ottawa yesterday. It must have given every Conservative backbencher pause. The minister was being asked about sections of the bill that arbitrarily designate what “essential services” are. This is important because, as members know, any public servants that are deemed “essential” are not allowed to go on strike. That is a very serious infringement of a fundamental right. In essence, the government is stripping workers of their full collective bargaining rights.

In the very tense exchange with the CBC reporter that I referenced above, the minister absolutely refused to spell out how the government would use this new power. The President of the Treasury Board said, “I am waiting for this legislation to pass and then details will come forward.” That is contempt of Parliament. How can we be asked to vote for something that is not defined?

In the interview, the minister suggested that border guards would be deemed “essential”, but he hedged on scientists. When he was asked whether he would clarify who would be deemed “essential” ahead of the upcoming contract negotiations with a large number of bargaining units over the coming year, the exchange got downright testy. He would not deny that he could change whom he deemed “essential” at any time, including in the middle of the bargaining process. I would commend the verbatim record of that exchange to all members of the House, and Bill Curry has helpfully reproduced it for us in *The Globe and Mail*.

To recap, we are being asked to approve a bill that fundamentally would change collective bargaining in our country, yet we are not allowed to know the details before we vote. Instead of being ashamed of that, the minister became downright hostile when interviewed on CBC Radio.

That attitude is all of a piece when it comes to the way the current Conservative government operates. Whether it is the Senate scandal or this budget bill, there is zero accountability. The Conservatives have utter disdain for Parliament, and by extension, for the Canadians who elect us to represent them here.

I am not worried about my voice being silenced; the government should be so lucky. However, I am profoundly worried about a government whose members believe they are above the law, a government whose members believe they can do whatever they want, a government whose members believe the end always justifies the means. Nothing could be further from the truth. Our number one priority has to be to address the real priorities of Canadians. That is what I was sent here to do, and that is the responsibility that my NDP colleagues and I take very seriously.

No, I cannot vote for this budget implementation bill, and I would encourage members on all sides of the House to oppose it with me. At best, we are being asked to adopt a pig in a poke. At worst, we are continuing down a road of stagnating wages, job insecurity and high household debt. Canadians deserve better. As parliamentarians, we can and must do better. As a member of the government in waiting, I can tell members that an NDP government will do better, starting in 2015.

● (1310)

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for Hamilton Mountain for that very clear and passionate speech.

She referenced the CBC exchange, and I have a bit of the transcript here.

The CBC says, “Who will you deem to be essential?”

The President of the Treasury Board says, “Well, I’m not going to be on your show to decide that right now, but I think we have to be fair and reasonable who we deem essential.”

CBC: “Well, can you give us an example, because...people want to know”.

The President of the Treasury Board: “Border guards.”

CBC: “Okay. I mean scientists, government scientists, would they be deemed essential?”

The President of the Treasury Board: “Look, you’re going through a speculative question-and-answer and I am not going to indulge you with that.”

CBC: “Well, when will you tell the public that?”

The President of the Treasury Board: “When we are ready to tell the public.”

I wonder if the member could tell us what happened next.

Ms. Chris Charlton: Mr. Speaker, I would be delighted, because I am sure it was absolutely the worst interview that any minister’s communications assistant has ever seen their minister give.

The next question was, “And when will that be?”

The answer was, “Well, first of all this bill has to be passed, so to engage in speculation when a bill is still before Parliament I don’t think is appropriate.”

The CBC asked, “Well, will you make that clarification, though? Will you make it from the outset, or will you make it in the middle of a labour dispute and suddenly deem a group of people essential so that they are not allowed to strike?”

The minister responded, “Let me answer the question this way. I think that whatever we do still has to be fair and reasonable, still subject to judicial review and the rules of natural justice, so I think the answer to your question is the government still has to act reasonably when it acts, and that hasn’t changed.”

Government Orders

The reporter asked, “Except for that doesn't answer my question, because what I wanted to know is, are you going to deem essential a certain group of public servants from the outset, or do you have this rolling power to change who you deem essential at any time you want?”

The minister responded, “I've already given you a fair and reasonable answer to that question.”

The CBC asked, “I'm sorry. Maybe I misunderstood it, but can you just clarify?”

The minister responded, “No. Next question.”

The reporter asked, “Sorry? You can't clarify your answer to that?”

The minister responded, “I've already given you a good answer. Thank you.”

The reporter asked, “I'm sorry. I wasn't satisfied with that answer. I'm just—”

The minister broke in, “I'm sorry about that, but I'm giving you the answer that is the fair and reasonable answer.”

Finally, the last question was, “Okay. Well, let's just try a yes or no, then. Will you set the group of people who will be deemed essential from the outset?”

The minister responded, “I am waiting for this legislation to pass, and then details will come forward.”

Mr. Bernard Trottier (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Hamilton Mountain for her speech, in which it was perfectly clear to anyone listening that the NDP is on the side of the public sector unions when it comes to negotiations. I did not hear anything that said the New Democrats would stick up for the taxpayers who are paying the salaries of all of the people who are in the public sector unions.

Clearly there is a negotiation that will have to occur. The member has the audacity to say that the NDP is a government-in-waiting; well, it would be interesting to see if the NDP government-in-waiting would give away the store to the public sector unions. Can the member clarify whose side she would be on when sitting down with public sector unions and negotiating?

Ms. Chris Charlton: Mr. Speaker, it is a bit rich having a member from the Conservative caucus, whose colleagues in the Senate are currently wasting public dollars at record speeds, lecturing me about accountability to taxpayers.

I will make no apologies for standing up for workers in the federal civil service. He differentiates between those workers and taxpayers as if to suggest that federal public servants do not pay their taxes. Is he kidding me?

I will make absolutely no apologies for standing up for decent-paying, family-sustaining jobs in this country, be they in the public or the private sector. Collective bargaining rights are fundamental human rights that every member in the House ought to support.

●(1315)

Mr. Ed Komarnicki (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today Canada has the strongest job growth among the G7 countries in the world.

Our unemployment rate is at its lowest level in four years. It is significantly lower than that of the United States, a phenomenon that has not been seen in nearly three decades. In my riding, unemployment rates are well below 5%, 4%. There is virtually no unemployment.

Meanwhile, we have created over one million net new jobs, nearly 90% of which are full time, and our government continues to make new opportunities for Canadians to find employment.

While other countries continue to struggle with debt that is spiralling out of control, Canada is in the best fiscal position in the G7. Canada still remains on track to return to balanced budgets in 2015-16. The deficit has been reduced significantly, and we are well on track to bringing it to balance.

Both the independent International Monetary Fund and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development are projecting that Canada's growth will be among the strongest in the G7 in the years ahead. Real GDP is significantly above pre-recession levels, the best performance in the G7.

All Canadians want this to continue. They want us to continue to make progress with respect to the economy, thus increasing jobs and prosperity for them and their children.

However, our government has been very clear that we will not raise taxes on Canadians to balance the budget. I know the earlier speaker said that we cannot cut our way to prosperity, but we certainly cannot tax our way to prosperity. That is a fundamental difference between this particular government and the opposition.

Our government has an economic plan that makes sense. As we have repeatedly said, Canada's economy is not immune to the economic challenges beyond our borders. We have been and will continue to be impacted by the ongoing turbulence in the United States and Europe, some of our most important trading partners.

We are moving forward and focusing on the economy, all the while keeping taxes low, which means more money in the pockets of hard-working Canadians. That in turn helps keep our economy strong.

A recent study by KPMG concluded that Canada's total business tax costs—the corporate income tax, capital taxes, sales tax, property taxes, and wage-based taxes—are more than 40% lower than those in the United States. This is what makes us competitive and makes our economy prosper. It continues to grow, and it grows jobs.

In short, our government has created an environment that encourages new investment, growth, and job creation. It is an environment that ensures that Canada has the strongest fiscal position and the lowest business tax costs in the G7.

Let me share some of the highlights of our tax relief initiatives.

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Our government has implemented broad-based tax reductions that support investment and growth and is delivering more than \$60 billion of tax relief to job-creating businesses over 2008-09 and the following five fiscal years.

We have reduced the federal general corporate income tax rate to 15% in 2012 from 21% in 2007 in order to spur investment and productivity. Can members imagine? It went from 21% to 15%.

The federal capital tax was eliminated in 2006, and the corporate surtax was eliminated in 2008 for all corporations. This translates into jobs and an expanded economy.

Even more, we reduced the small business tax rate to 11% in 2008 from 12% in 2007, and subsequently the amount of income eligible for this lower rate was increased to \$500,000 in 2009.

Canada's system of international taxation was strengthened in order to better support cross-border trade and investment and to improve fairness.

All these actions are part of a policy framework that increases the productive capacity of our economy as well as Canadian living standards. Lower general corporate income tax rates and other tax changes have increased the expected rate of return on investment and reduced the cost of capital, giving businesses strong incentives to invest and hire in Canada. This will in turn increase Canada's productive capacity and raise living standards.

This bill is great news for Canadians. Unlike the NDP, which insists on higher taxes, economic action plan 2013 is focused on positive initiatives to support job creation and economic growth while returning to balanced budgets, thus ensuring Canada's economic advantage remains strong today and into the future.

• (1320)

However, the job does not end there. Today, Bill C-4 will implement key measures from economic action plan 2013, as well as certain previously announced tax measures, to help create jobs, stimulate economic growth, and secure Canada's long-term prosperity.

Our government's low-tax plan is helping to guide the Canadian economy along the path of sustainable economic growth. Bill C-4 builds on our successes and maintains our government's focus on the economy. While we believe in the benefits of lower taxes, our government fully understands that sustaining an effective tax system also rests on the foundation of tax fairness. Today I will discuss some of the key measures we are implementing to do everything possible to ensure that Canadians have a fair tax system.

That is why economic action plan 2013 is committed to closing tax loopholes that allow a select few businesses and individuals to avoid paying their fair share of tax. While Canadians work hard and pay their taxes, there are some who choose not to, and we must stop that practice. We must take initiatives to close those loopholes and ensure that the system is fair.

Chartered Accountants of Canada had this to say about economic action plan 2013:

The budget looks to close tax loopholes, address aggressive tax planning, clarify tax rules, reduce international tax avoidance and tax evasion and improve tax

fairness. It also provides the Canada Revenue Agency with new tools to enforce the tax rules.

They continued with the strong backing of our initiatives and said:

We support efforts to maintain the integrity of the tax base....

This is high praise. I am proud of these measures, and I will elaborate on some of them.

Broadening and protecting the tax base supports our government's efforts to return to balanced budgets, responds to provincial governments' concerns about protecting provincial revenues on our shared-tax basis, and helps Canadians have confidence that the tax system is fair.

Ensuring that everyone pays his or her fair share also helps to keep taxes low for Canadian families and businesses, thereby improving incentives to work, save, and invest in Canada.

Since 2006, and including measures proposed in economic action plan 2013, the government has introduced over 75 measures to improve the integrity of the tax system.

Today's legislation takes additional steps in support of this objective, extending the normal assessment period by three years for a taxpayer who has failed to report income from a specified foreign property on his or her annual income tax return and has failed to properly file the foreign income verification statement known as T1135.

It introduces stiff administrative monetary penalties and criminal offences to deter the use, possession, sale, and development of electronic suppression of sales software designed to falsify records for the purpose of tax evasion.

Our systems, with the Internet, computers, and software, have made it possible for people to try to avoid tax. It is almost hard to believe that we would need such specific legislation, but let me read some portions of it.

What we now know as an electronic cash register, or a "device that keep a register or supporting documents through the means of an electronic device or computer system designed to record transaction data or any other electronic point-of-sale system" should be in place. However, here is a definition of electronic suppression of sales devices:

(a) a software program that falsifies the records of electronic cash registers, including transaction data and transaction reports; or (b) a hidden programing option, whether preinstalled or installed at a later time, embedded in the operating system of an electronic cash register or hardwired into the electronic cash register that (i) may be used to create a virtual second till, or (ii) may eliminate or manipulate transaction records, which may or may not be preserved in digital formats, in order to represent...

or misrepresent the actual point-of-transaction sale.

Private Members' Business

•(1325)

This legislation prohibits anyone who knowingly, or under circumstances attributable to neglect, carelessness, or wilful default, to participate, or consent or acquiesce in the use of an electronic suppression of sales device or similar device on pain of penalty. It also talks about possession of those devices and those who make them. There are stiff penalties to ensure these types of devices are not used. That is just one example of closing tax loopholes to ensure revenues are not lost.

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to my colleague's speech. The problem we have on this side is the government refuses to look at the budget as a framework for dealing with the finances of the country. It continually throws in other matters. Therefore, we now have this very obscure process where we cannot get from the government what its direction is in any given way. It throws in other things.

My question is around the fact that the budget would undermine health and safety in the country, particularly in this city and region. Is the member aware that just a couple of years ago we had a horrific accident here? Peter Kennedy, a loyal public servant, died because of lax health and safety provisions. This budget would further undermine those provisions. Is he aware of that? Does he support weakening health and safety provisions? This precinct does not actually have health and safety provisions to start with and he should know that. Is he capable of responding to his constituents to say that he is voting for a weakening of health and safety provisions?

Mr. Ed Komarnicki: Mr. Speaker, certainly there is not a weakening of health and safety provisions. I do not know where the member gets that from. I was involved in human resources and labour. We certainly have invested millions of dollars with respect to health and safety of employees. It is certainly an important factor and something we take very seriously.

Not only that, but with respect to health transfers to the provinces, we have increased those transfers each and every year to record levels, far in excess of what the previous Liberal government did. In fact, what it did was reduce the amount of money transferred to try to balance its budget on the backs of ordinary hard-working Canadians. We have said we will not do that. We will invest in those areas that are important. We will ensure that we reduce taxes and stimulate the economy so there is a good generation of income so we can look after things such as the member mentioned.

Mr. Frank Valeriote (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have travelled through my own riding in Guelph, I have talked to a lot of youth. As we know, there are 224,000 less jobs available to youth now than there were before the recession. They are concerned. We have an unemployment rate for youth at about 17%. That is almost twice the national average for adults. What is worse is that rate is actually more than 25% when we consider the underemployed and those who are not even looking for jobs anymore. They are desperate and they find nothing in this budget that gives them any promise whatsoever.

What does the member opposite have to say about those statistics and what possible hope our youth have if they are to rejoin our employment force?

Mr. Ed Komarnicki: Mr. Speaker, youth unemployment is of course an important factor and one that we take very seriously. If the member would do his research, he would find that Canada has one of the lowest unemployment rates compared to other countries in the world. Given that, we have said that we want to address that particularly and directly. We have taken initiatives to design programs to ensure that those who are underprivileged and those who are in positions where they do not have the education they need, or the job skills. We have invested funds to be sure that they are able to be part of the economy. We specifically targeted aboriginal youth.

We have created over one million net new jobs, nearly 90% full-time, nearly 85% in the private sector, since the global recession in July of 2009. We have the strongest job creating record in the G7. I would ask the member to do some analysis and have a look at where we are today compared to other countries. Compared to the previous Liberal government, we are doing very well. However, as always, more can be done.

•(1330)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): It being 1:30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

INDIAN ACT AMENDMENT AND REPLACEMENT ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-428, An Act to amend the Indian Act (publication of by-laws) and to provide for its replacement, as reported (with amendments) from the committee.

[English]

SPEAKER'S RULING

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): There are three motions in amendment standing on the notice paper for the report stage of Bill C-428. Motions Nos. 1 to 3 will be grouped for debate and voted upon according to the voting pattern available at the table.

[Translation]

I will now put Motions Nos. 1 to 3 to the House.

[English]

MOTIONS IN AMENDMENT

Mr. Rob Clarke (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River, CPC) moved:

Motion No. 2

That Bill C-428, in clause 3, be amended by replacing line 14 on page 2 with the following:

"25, 28, 37, 38, 42, 44, 46, 48 to 51 and 58 to 60 and the"

Motion No. 3

That Bill C-428, in clause 4, be amended by replacing line 20 on page 2 with the following:

"Minister otherwise orders, sections 42 to 52"

Private Members' Business

He said: Mr. Speaker, developing, introducing, and refining Bill C-428, an act to amend the Indian Act and to provide for its replacement, has been a tremendous experience. I thank all of those, colleagues here in the House and first nations across the country, whose input has helped to shape the bill we have before us today.

As I have stated on several occasions already in the House, the rationale behind my introduction of the bill is the generations of first nations' dissatisfaction with the Indian Act, something that I, as a first nations man, know first-hand.

The Indian Act is a paternalistic document that portrays outdated Canadian values and represents a sad and ignorant period in Canadian history.

I first introduced Bill C-428, an act to amend the Indian Act and to provide for its replacement, in order to provoke meaningful conversation about the need to repeal this outdated and archaic act and to create a more modern and less objectionable legislative framework in its place. I think I have done that.

In December 2011, this was not a topic—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Order, please. The hon. member for Nanaimo—Cowichan is rising on a point of order.

* * *

POINTS OF ORDER

SELECTION OF AMENDMENTS

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): A point of clarification, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Speaker could elucidate for us why those amendments were considered in order, because they could have been presented at committee.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): I thank the hon. member for her intervention on this matter. The member will be familiar with the process for selecting amendments at report stage. We will take the member's concern under advisement and perhaps get back to her on the point at a later time.

This is a process that is followed essentially by precedent in consideration of the committee's work and a decision is taken on that. The decision has been taken, as was presented here just before we took up debate on the matter. As the member will know, we have now proposed Motions Nos. 2 and 3, which are now before the House for debate.

We will continue on and get back to the House, as the case may be. The hon. member for Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River.

* * *

●(1335)

INDIAN ACT AMENDMENT AND REPLACEMENT ACT

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-428, An Act to amend the Indian Act (publication of by-laws) and to provide for its replacement, as reported (with amendments) from the committee.

Mr. Rob Clarke (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, all the proposed changes within this bill have been derived from direct feedback from first nations members.

As a first nation citizen living under the Indian Act and as a former RCMP officer enforcing the act, I know first-hand the racist and debilitating nature of the laws contained within it.

Initially, when I first brought forward this legislation, not everyone fully understood the intention behind this bill. However, when people actually saw the changes that I am proposing, these misconceptions were swiftly erased.

Despite only having limited resources available to me as a private member, I am delighted to have had the opportunity to discuss the finer points of the bill with many prominent members, both leaders and community members, of first nations across Canada.

The fact remains that everyone agrees the Indian Act is an archaic and fundamentally bigoted piece of legislation that governs the day-to-day lives of first nations and that it must go. No other Canadian is subject to such an offensive piece of legislation that interferes in their day-to-day lives.

Any concerns that this bill is an attempt to totally eliminate the Indian Act and leave nothing in its stead have long since been laid to rest. However, I believe that the practical and incremental changes proposed in the bill can lead to further meaningful conversation about how the Indian Act could be dismantled and replaced.

It is important to highlight that Bill C-428 includes a mandate to ensure ongoing consultations between first nations and the crown, working together to ultimately repeal and replace the entire Indian Act. Though this piece of legislation does not represent a complete replacement of the Indian Act, I believe it is the first step of meaningful change.

The fact that my private member's bill has generated so much attention is indicative of the ongoing sensitivity of the issues which surround the Indian Act.

During the course of the formulation of this private member's bill I wrote on six separate occasions to more than 600 first nations communities across Canada asking them to share information about my bill with their membership and to provide me with their feedback. The input generated by these letters has been integral to the continuing development of my private member's bill.

Additionally, I have had the pleasure of holding discussions with numerous first nations leaders and activist organizations and groups about the nature of the Indian Act and the changes I am proposing.

It has been my honour to hold information sessions with first nations bands and major organizations in Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario, and Quebec. I have given presentations to student groups, aboriginal professionals, and interested non-aboriginals on the nature of Bill C-428. A YouTube video explaining the bill has been made available to all members of the public. I did two national tele town halls with first nations on this legislation just last spring. Since August 2012 I have been advertising widely on aboriginal radio across the west and also in my riding asking for input on my bill. My Parliament of Canada website hosts a section devoted to the bill and contains a survey seeking input.

All of those actions and initiatives provide a wealth of information sharing, with knowledge and appreciation of viewpoints travelling in both directions.

I am proud to say that I have the support of many first nations members and bands within and outside of my own riding.

I would like to take this opportunity to briefly summarize some areas of this legislation.

The Indian Act has created barriers between first nations and the rest of Canada. These barriers are economic, cultural and societal.

Our government is committed to supporting first nations and to creating the conditions for them to become healthier and more self-sufficient while breaking down these barriers.

One of my goals in the creation of this bill was to remove unused archaic, irrelevant, and offensive sections of the Indian Act, for instance, the section requiring first nations to gain the approval of the minister before enacting bylaws on their own first nations lands.

• (1340)

Bill C-428 would remove this requirement, allowing first nations councils to create and publish their own laws, in much the same way and manner that any other local government is allowed to enact a local law. No other community or level of government in Canada requires the permission of the minister to enact such laws.

These sections are part of a complex legal underbrush that makes the Indian Act an irrelevant and antiquated piece of legislation. Although incremental, the changes I am proposing are concrete actions which would create enduring changes in the lives of first nations citizens. Bill C-428 would also remove references to residential schools from the Indian Act. As a grandson of two residential school survivors, I have seen first-hand the devastating effects that residential schools have had on our people. There is no place in Canadian law in the year 2013 for residential schools. I cannot wait for the references of this shameful period of our nation's history to be erased from the books.

This bill would also ensure consultation on the eventual repeal and replacement of the Indian Act with a more modern and respectful document that would treat first nations governments with mutual respect. By legislating the requirement of the annual report from the minister on the progress made toward repealing and replacing the Indian Act, we would ensure the process is kept on track. This process acknowledges that parts of the Indian Act as it stands have served and can continue to serve well for first nations communities.

To quote the Prime Minister:

The Indian Act cannot be replaced overnight, but through the use of existing tools and the development of new mechanisms, both parties can create the conditions to enable sustainable and successful First Nations.

That is what is at the heart of this private member's bill. We, as parliamentarians and Canadians, simply need to have the courage and political will to take these first incremental steps toward a better relationship between our federal government and Canada's first nations.

As my colleagues should be aware, a number of further improvements to my private member's bill were made at the

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committee stage. For example, due to the change in the sections of the Indian Act dealing with bylaws, we are adjusting the wording of the bill to ensure that first nations communities maintain their right to control alcohol on reserve. In addition, we have made another change that would provide flexibility in the publication of bylaws so that first nations could choose the manner in which they wish to inform their membership and visitors to their communities of the laws they have passed.

In conclusion, I can find no one who would support the continuation of the failed colonial, and fundamentally racist, Indian Act that served as a template for South African apartheid. Apartheid was abolished in South Africa in 1994, and yet the Indian Act, the parent legislation, is still part of Canadian law in 2013.

Bill C-428 would kick-start the process by which we could bring our government's relationship with Canada's first nations out of the 19th century and into the modern era. I would be proud to have a hand in the creation of a better world for first nations through the repeal of this bigoted Indian Act and its replacement with a more modern and respectful document.

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I certainly want to commend the member for bringing forward a piece of legislation that he feels is important to him, but I have to question whether he feels that a private member can supplant the government's duty to consult.

The Supreme Court has reaffirmed the fact that the government's duty and the Crown's duty to consult cannot be delegated to any other organization or authority. Although the member says he has taken the trouble to inform his constituents and others about his intentions, I would argue that does not constitute the legal duty by the Crown to consult. I wonder if he could comment on whether he is leading us to believe that a member can supplant the Crown's duty to consult.

Mr. Rob Clarke: Mr. Speaker, I have listened to my colleague on the other side of the House, and it is the same paternalistic approach that New Democrats are taking to dictate to me, being a first nation and having lived under the Indian Act. I am listening to this individual criticize without having had to experience what effect the Indian Act has on an individual from the time one is born until the time one dies. The decisions are still made by the minister.

Private Members' Business

Having gone through Manitoba, Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia to meet with individuals and ask for their input, I started with a draft back on September 7, 2011. The bottom line was to repeal the Indian Act. However, listening to individuals and first nations across the country is how it arrived at the current stage; that is, to amend the Indian Act, repeal outdated sections, and basically start a new process of consultation that legislates the government to work closely with first nations.

• (1345)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): We had a Friday afternoon bonus question put into the mix this afternoon. We normally do not do questions and comments at report stage of private members' bills, as members will recall.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Nanaimo—Cowichan.

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you for the opportunity to pose a question to the mover of the bill.

I am, of course, rising to speak to Bill C-428.

I want to start with a quote from volume 1 of the report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples with respect to recommending a commitment to ethical principles of relations:

To begin the process, the federal, provincial and territorial governments, on behalf of the people of Canada, and national Aboriginal organizations, on behalf of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada, commit themselves to building a renewed relationship based on the principles of mutual recognition, mutual respect, sharing and mutual responsibility; these principles to form the ethical basis of relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal societies in the future and to be enshrined in a new Royal Proclamation and its companion legislation

This report came forward in 1996 and has largely not been implemented.

I read that piece around ethical relations because it would seem to me that those principles of mutual respect and recognition are important when we reform any legislation that has an impact on first nations.

I want to talk a little bit about the Indian Act itself. As the member rightly pointed out, the Indian Act is a paternalistic piece of legislation.

I want to read a couple of pieces from a document, "Like an Ill-Fitting Boot: Government, Governance and Management Systems in the Contemporary Indian Act".

It says:

Today the Indian Act is the repository of the struggle between Indian peoples and colonial and later Canadian policy-makers for control of Indian peoples' destiny within Canada. The marks of that struggle can be seen in almost every one of its provisions.

It goes on to outline a couple of major problems with the Indian Act. It says:

The Indian Act appears to be a legislative fossil. It reflects administrative and organizational practices that were characteristic of public institutions in the early and mid-twentieth century, but that have been modified and superseded in other governments. The Act relies upon regulation, top-down authorities, fiscal control, and enforcement. Today most Canadian governments and other organizations rely upon collegial decision-making and policy development, policy research, human resource development, management accounting systems, and citizen engagement. The Indian Act does not mention these things, and the basic provisions do not leave much room for them.

The Indian Act has a powerful impact on the quality of democracy in Band governments. Having the force of law and backed by financial power, the Act mandates one particular set of institutions and practices to the exclusion of others. In this way it affects the abilities of First Nations to shape more accountable and democratic governments.

It also says:

Few people are satisfied with the Indian Act, but no one will deny its importance.

This is why it is important to have a very respectful, thoughtful, collaborative process in order to replace the Indian Act.

The author went on to say:

For the individuals to whom it applies, the Act is a basic and specific constitutional document. It defines their rights and entitlements, their citizenship and their relationship to the federal and provincial governments. It provides the mechanisms that include or exclude them from membership in a Band. For First Nations, it creates the framework within which both public and First Nations officials and political leaders must work, profoundly shaping the nations' political and economic life.

That in itself has been a long-standing argument about why governments of various political stripes should not be doing things piecemeal and taking apart the Indian Act. It has major repercussions and implications for first nations' relationships both among the nations themselves and with the government.

Finally, the author said:

It is obvious that the original Indian Act was not created with the self-determination of First Nations communities in mind. Its original purpose was to permit federal officials to control First Nations and to enable social engineering—the coercive transformation of Indigenous societies and governments to bring them into line with the purposes and visions of the Canadian government.

With that kind of background, it becomes absolutely critical when there are proposed changes to the Indian Act that there be a process put in place which is co-created with first nations. On that point, I want to refer to article 19 in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Article 19 says:

States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them.

• (1350)

In that context, with all due respect to the member, he is not the Crown. He is an individual in the House. He does not have the authority or the resources to implement a consultation process. He may well have talked to first nations and other organizations, but that does not meet the test of duty to consult.

With regard to the bill, in April, the committee received a document from Paul Chartrand Consulting. In that document, Mr. Chartrand said:

My first recommendation is a policy that no amendment to the act is to be proposed or introduced in Parliament without first conducting proper consultations with first nations representatives, and that all bills be drafted in consultation with them.

This approach would tend to promote the democratic principle that laws ought not to be passed without the agreement of those who are to bear the burdens or reap the benefits of the legislation. This approach would at least partly remedy the lack of equitable representation and participation of first nations in Canada's Parliament....

In the event that the government struggles with what appropriate consultation would look like, I would like to refer it to its own ministerial representative Wendy Grant-John's report on matrimonial real property. She laid out a process for what consultation could look like. She said:

The Department should develop, as soon as possible, specific policies and procedures relating to consultation in order to ensure that future consultation activities can identify and discharge any legal duty to consult while also fulfilling objectives of good governance and public policy by:

- 1) Ensuring First Nations have relevant information to the issues for decision in a timely manner;
- 2) Providing an opportunity for First Nations to express their concerns and views on potential impacts of the legislative proposal and issues relating to the existence of a duty to consult;
- 3) Listening to, analyzing and seriously considering the representations and concerns of First Nations in the context of relevant legal and policy principles including their relationship to other constitutional and human rights principles;
- 4) Ensuring proper analyses by the Department of Justice of section 35 issues relating to any proposed legislative initiative are thoroughly canvassed before, during and after consultations;
- 5) Seriously considering proposals for mitigating potentially negative impacts on aboriginal and treaty rights or other rights and interests of First Nations and making necessary accommodations by changing the government's proposal
- 6) Establishing, in consultation with First Nations, a protocol for the development of legislative proposals.

We can see time and time again where legislation is brought forward in the House that does not meet those six criteria, very ably outlined by Wendy Grant-John for the then-minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

There are international conventions around proposals for what consultations should look like in a domestic setting. This is from Convention No. 169 from the International Labour Organization, also known as the ILO. They have a specific section on consultation and participation. It said:

The spirit of consultation and participation constitutes the cornerstone of Convention No. 169 on which all its provisions are based. The Convention requires that indigenous and tribal peoples are consulted on issues that affect them. It also requires that these peoples are able to engage in free, prior and informed participation in policy and development processes that affect them.

The principles of consultation and participation in Convention No. 169 relate not only to specific development projects, but also to broader questions of governance, and the participation of indigenous and tribal peoples in public life.

In Article 6, the Convention provides a guideline as to how consultation with indigenous and tribal peoples should be conducted:

Consultation with indigenous peoples should be undertaken through *appropriate procedures*, in *good faith*, and through the *representative institutions* of these peoples;

The peoples involved should have the opportunity to *participate freely at all levels* in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of measures and programmes that affect them directly;

Another important component of the concept of consultation is that of *representativity*. If an appropriate consultation process is not developed with the indigenous and tribal institutions or organizations that are truly representative of the peoples in question, then the resulting consultations would not comply with the requirements of the Convention.

In conclusion, with respect to the member, the process that he has undertaken does not fulfill either domestic or international parameters for duty to consult. I would argue that all members in the House should vote against the bill. The Indian Act changes have far-reaching effects and they must be undertaken in a responsible, respectful manner.

Private Members' Business

●(1355)

POINTS OF ORDER

SELECTION OF AMENDMENTS—SPEAKER'S RULING

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Before we resume debate, I would just like to take a moment to get back to the hon. member for Nanaimo—Cowichan and the House in respect to the point of order she raised earlier this hour.

As I alluded to in the course of my comments at the time, the practice of taking up consideration of selection or non-selection of amendments at report stage is a practice that the Speaker takes under consideration in the normal course and with the precedents of the House.

I would like to draw to the attention of the House a decision from March 21, 2001, by Speaker Milliken, who was Speaker at that time. He concludes, after a considerable preamble on this very point:

Finally, the Chair intends to maintain its current practice of not providing justification for the selection of amendments, or reasons for the non-selection of amendments at the time of a report stage ruling.

Members may have recollected that there have been some exceptional occasions when the Speaker has provided additional explanation in respect of these reasons. I would point out, however, that this only occurs at a time when those circumstances are exceptional.

In this particular case, the selection of report stage amendments was the usual practice, and the consideration was given at that time. I would remind the House that these decisions are indeed final.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

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INDIAN ACT AMENDMENT AND REPLACEMENT ACT

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-428, An Act to amend the Indian Act (publication of by-laws) and to provide for its replacement, as reported (with amendments) from the committee.

Mr. Ted Hsu (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the member for Kingston and the Islands, I am the successor to former Speaker Milliken. It is an interesting coincidence, and perhaps not a coincidence, that he remains so present. I saw him in my riding yesterday. I saw him in the lobby for lunch, and I had just heard about a precedent from one of his rulings. I thought I would take advantage at this point to remind the House of the service Speaker Milliken rendered to this body.

It is a pleasure to rise to speak to Bill C-428. I would like to begin by saying that I believe that the decision of the member for Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River to bring forward this private member's bill was rooted in good intentions.

There is no question that the Indian Act is the embodiment of failed colonial and paternalistic policies, which have denied first nations their rights and their fair share of resources.

Private Members' Business

It has fostered mistrust and has created systemic barriers to the self-determination and success of first nations. However, the elimination of these barriers requires the Government of Canada to engage directly with first nations, on a nation-to-nation basis, and to establish a formal process to replace the Indian Act with new agreements.

This private member's bill, no matter how well-intentioned, is not the way forward. This is what witness after witness made crystal clear during the committee hearings. Ms. Jody Wilson-Raybould, representing the Assembly of First Nations at the aboriginal affairs committee, stated:

...I commend MP Clarke's leadership in bringing forward this bill to further stimulate the conversation about what actually needs to be done to move forward. Unfortunately, Bill C-428 is not the solution. We need strong and appropriate governance, not tinkering with the Indian Act, creating perhaps the illusion of progress.

Michèle Audette, President of the Native Women's Association of Canada, stated at committee:

Yes, we need to get rid of the Indian Act, but not this way, not the way it's proposed.

She went on to say:

I urge you, members of Parliament, to withdraw or to abandon this legislation and to please make sure that we will be part of such changes, as community members, as mothers, and for the rest of women across Canada.

During the Crown-First Nations Gathering, the Prime Minister said that his government would not repeal or unilaterally rewrite the Indian Act. However, in effect, that is exactly what this private member's bill, with the wholehearted support of the government, purports to do.

The member for Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River is proposing to amend numerous sections of the Indian Act without consulting in any meaningful way with first nations across Canada about the possible impacts of those changes or whether these changes reflect the priorities of first nations.

The member for Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River himself, when speaking to the committee, conceded that he, as an individual member of Parliament, has neither the financial nor human capacity to do a proper consultation. He said:

...a private member's bill in the House of Commons does not have the financial or human resources for me to conduct a full-scale consultation....

He went on later to say:

Currently, the federal government has the mandate to do a formal consultation. They have the capacity. They have the budgets. They have the individuals and human resources to do the formal consultation.

Those are the words of the member for Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River.

As was made clear by the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, FSIN, the member for Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River even failed to consult substantively with first nations in his own province before he tabled his bill.

In a public statement last fall, the then FSIN Interim Chief, Bobby Cameron, commented on this legislation saying:

There are too many unanswered questions. The FSIN demands meaningful consultation and accommodation before anything is changed or replaced in the Indian Act.

He went on to state:

The private member's bill is a red herring used to distract from the real issues the Conservative government is not addressing, such as comparable education funding, housing, economic development and health care. Appealing and amending the Indian Act will not address these outstanding Treaty issues.

● (1400)

The result of this complete lack of prior consultation was a profoundly flawed piece of legislation riddled with unintended consequences. Even though the government members enthusiastically supported the bill at second reading, they conceded at committee that it required major work.

For instance, a significant portion of the bill was directed at amending portions of the Indian Act that deal with wills and estates. After extensive expert testimony at committee, it became clear that there were numerous unintended consequences, regarding everything from Indian customary adoptions to how a common-law spouse would be treated. With the agreement of the Conservative majority on the committee, the entire portion of the bill dealing with wills and estates was voted down.

There were also serious problems with the repeal of section 85.1 of the Indian Act, which would have created complications for first nations that wish to maintain bylaws prohibiting or regulating intoxicants. This clause also had to be amended to prevent the potentially devastating impact of restricting first nations communities' ability to declare reserves "dry".

There were many other amendments made at committee to try to limit the potential unintended negative impacts of the original bill, but questions still remain about what still-unknown impacts this tinkering would have. For instance, when the government members and the member for Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River tried to fix some of the unintended consequences of the legislation during clause-by-clause at committee, they unintentionally created further problems.

The bill, as presented now, would make various sections of the Indian Act applicable to designated lands in a way that the member for Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River never intended. I understand this error is the subject of report stage amendments, but this is simply further evidence that trying to tinker in this way with such a profoundly complicated and important piece of legislation as the Indian Act is reckless and sets a very dangerous precedent.

I urge members to heed the warnings of first nations leaders that, regardless of any positive intentions behind this private member's bill, this is not the way to move beyond the outdated and colonial Indian Act.

● (1405)

Mr. Mark Strahl (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure to join in this debate.

Private Members' Business

It is disappointing, but unfortunately not surprising, to see that the opposition is once again standing up for the status quo when it comes to first nations issues. Our government knows that for too many years, 137 years to be exact, first nations communities have been governed by an outdated and archaic Indian Act that has been holding them back from achieving their full potential.

That is why I am proud to speak today in this House in support of this bill brought forward by my colleague, the member for Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River, which seeks to modernize certain outdated sections of the Indian Act that will help to empower first nation communities, take the minister out of the equation, and create the conditions for healthier, more self-sufficient first nations communities.

Our government believes it is time to take action to address and confront the issues contained within the Indian Act.

Our government and our Prime Minister have also been very clear that no grand scheme exists to unilaterally replace the Indian Act. On the contrary, our government remains committed to working with willing first nations to make changes to elements of the Indian Act that are barriers to first nations governance and economic growth.

At the Crown-First Nations Gathering in January 2012, the Prime Minister stated about the Indian Act, “After 136 years, that tree has deep roots, blowing up the stump would just leave a big hole”. Creativity and collaboration, as provided by this bill, would go a long way toward the practical incremental changes that are required.

I want to commend my colleague from Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River for his willingness to bring forward this bill. His personal story as a first nations individual growing up under this act is a compelling one, which has led him to take action. His private member's bill is a positive step in the right direction. It proposes concrete action that would provide greater autonomy to first nations, lessen the role of ministerial involvement in the day-to-day lives of first nations citizens, and give back the responsibility for several key areas, such as bylaw-making powers over the first nations where it rightfully belongs.

This is consistent with our government's own approach to providing first nations with practical, incremental and real alternatives to the Indian Act. It would lead to real results for grassroots first nations people and enable them to achieve greater self-sufficiency and prosperity. For example, this past month I was pleased to attend an event in my home province of British Columbia, with the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, to announce that 18 more first nations, including six from my own riding of Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon, the Cheam, Scowlitz, Soowahlie, Boothroyd, Chawathil and Skuppah, have joined the first nations land management regime.

This regime exempts these first nations from 34 land-related sections of the Indian Act and allows them to develop a land code to manage their own reserve land and resources so they can take greater advantage of economic activities in their communities without having to wade through bureaucratic red tape.

As my hon. colleague has already noted, several technical improvements were made to the bill at the committee stage to address some of the concerns that first nations have raised and to

ensure that first nations are best able to take advantage of these modernized provisions in the Indian Act. For example, section 85.1 of the Indian Act has to do with the ability of first nations to pass their own bylaws related to intoxicants, in other words to create a dry reserve. That was an amendment that was made at committee to ensure that first nations communities would maintain their right to control alcohol on their reserves.

In addition, the committee made another change that would provide first nations with greater flexibility in the publication of bylaws. They would be able to choose the manner in which they inform their community members about changes to their bylaws, either through a first nation's Internet site, the *First Nations Gazette* or a newspaper that has general circulation on the band lands.

Also, the committee heard from a number of witnesses about the complexity of moving forward with clause 7. That had to do with the administration of wills and estates and the need to study this further or risk creating an even more confusing regime than already exists. As a result, the committee agreed to delete this clause during clause-by-clause consideration.

However, there remain two coordinating amendments that must be made to clauses 3 and 4 of the proposed bill in order to move it forward. These motions seek to correct an oversight during clause-by-clause consideration of the bill at committee, following the removal of the wills and estates section of the bill. To not make these amendments would create unnecessary uncertainty and confusion for first nations.

• (1410)

Instead of taking the minister out of the equation, not making these coordinating amendments to clauses 3 and 4 would extend the minister's authority over wills and estates to all those living on designated lands and to all status Indians. This is clearly not the intention of my hon. colleague's bill.

These are all changes that are consistent with the direction that our government has been taking for the past six years. It is one that is focused on bringing forward initiatives that would unlock this economic development potential by removing certain barriers to first nation governance, which currently exist under the Indian Act. Ultimately, I believe that the bill is yet another example of the concrete action our government is taking to empower first nation communities to manage their own affairs and to encourage stronger, more accountable and prosperous first nation communities, where first nations' citizens have access to the same rights as all other Canadians.

Our government is proud to support Bill C-428. I urge all members of the House to help us swiftly pass it into law. First nations have waited long enough for changes to the Indian Act.

Mr. Claude Gravelle (Nickel Belt, NDP): Mr. Speaker, first I would like to clarify something which the previous speaker said, that the opposition did not want to take part in the Indian Act. I want to make it clear that the official opposition wants to get rid of the Indian Act, but we want to do it by consulting with first nations. We do not want to act like the Conservatives and tell the first nations what they want. We want them to tell us what they want. That is something strange for the Conservative Party.

Private Members' Business

I am happy to speak to this legislation concerning amendments to the Indian Act. This bill is important as it deals with deleting sections of the Indian Act on wills and estates, sales of produce, trade with certain people, and the sections on residential schools. It also calls on the government to make an annual report to Parliament on its progress on dismantling the Indian Act.

It is important for other reasons too. I am always happy to have another opportunity to speak about the four first nation communities in Nickel Belt, and specifically a few recent events that relate very much to the matter of consulting with first nation communities, which is an important element of our debate.

Nickel Belt's first nation communities include Nipissing First Nation, Atikameksheng Anishnawbek, which I will speak about later, and also the Wahnapiatae First Nation, which is extensively involved with Glencore Xtrata mining projects. They monitor the environment for this mining company along with the water. They do this because Glencore Xtrata consulted with the first nations. That is very important. The other first nation in my community is the Mattagami First Nation. They work very closely with a company called IAMGOLD. The reason they work very closely with this mining company is that the mining company consulted with the Mattagami First Nation. They work very well together.

If the Conservatives would start consulting with first nations, they would find that first nations are really interested in consulting. Unfortunately, the Conservatives are not.

These first nations make contributions to the social and economic life of our region. Given some of the urgent crisis in conditions in some first nation communities in the county, I want to say that these four communities find themselves in pretty good shape. This is the result of their leadership and community members. It is not to say there are no challenges, but it is to recognize the work that has been done there.

When I see a bill like this one regarding changes being made that so affect the lives of our aboriginal and first nation members, I would want to assume that they have been consulted about the changes, but that would be a bad assumption in this case with this bill. Sadly, it is a bad assumption, given the sorry record of the Conservatives and the past Liberal governments.

We do not support this bill for several reasons, including this glaring lack of consultation. The sponsor did not consult with first nations before presenting his bill. I was in his riding this summer. His constituents are very upset with him because he did not consult with them before he presented this bill.

It may be all well and good to delete some archaic provisions of the Indian Act, such as the sale of produce; however, it is not right to proceed to delete other sections, such as the provisions on wills and estates, which could put first nation citizens living on reserve in legal limbo because there is no guarantee that provincial legislation would appear to protect them.

Equally important, we object to the deletion of the provisions on residential schools. This was supposed to be in government legislation, not hidden in a private member's bill. New Democrats would like to see those provisions dealt with by the minister as

promised to first nations at the first truth and reconciliation national ceremony.

Let me tell members about those recent events in my first nation communities that underline the importance of consultation with them.

● (1415)

Back in 2003, when the commission on boundaries decided it would split the Nipissing First Nation in two, one-third of it coming to Nickel Belt and two-thirds going to the Nipissing riding, it did not consult with the first nation and it made a very bad decision.

Fortunately this last commission will make this decision right. How will they make it right? By joining the community together and by consulting with the first nations to see what they wanted. The Nipissing First Nation members made it clear that they wanted to be together in one riding, and thankfully the commission listened to them.

Nipissing First Nation has also just recently concluded a \$124 million land claim settlement. In the next month, it will be receiving financial compensation for over 100,000 acres that were lost to it due to an inaccurate survey done long ago. I was happy to do my part in getting the payment out to the Nipissing First Nation members, and I congratulate the minister for his role as well.

I mention it because the land claim settlement came about by consultation and listening. This must be at the heart of righting the relationships with our aboriginal brothers and sisters.

My second event to cite is a recent CBC Radio town hall in which I was happy to participate that took place at the Atikameksheng Anishnawbek First Nation. It addressed many pressing national and regional issues concerning them. The town hall was called *Aboriginality: Living Together*. The conversation about Canada's relationship with first nations has reached a critical point, and that relationship is critical to successful communities in northeastern Ontario. I would like to thank Markus Schwabe from CBC for putting this on. It was very informative and very good.

We talked about a lot of issues during that town hall. There was a round table set up and we had Mrs. Naponse at this round table. We had Chief Miller at this round table and we had John Rodriguez, an educator and former mayor, plus we had a Franco-Ontarian artist married to a first nations person.

We talked about a lot of things during this panel discussion, but the thing that impressed me the most was the number of people in that community centre, and the vast majority of them were white people. Every single one of them who got up to speak said that the government should consult with the first nations. That is exactly how the opposition feels.

For many years, first nations have said that the Indian Act is holding back progress. It does govern almost every aspect of life for people living on reserve. In July 2011 at the annual meeting of the Assembly of First Nations, National Chief Shawn Atleo said it was time to set aside the Indian Act and dismantle the Department of Indian Affairs to create two smaller departments, one to administer a government-to-government relationship, and the other to provide services to first nations. He also said that it was a process that must be led by first nations; again, consultations.

New Democrats want to work with first nations to develop modern legislation that helps first nations communities thrive. This process must be led by the first nations and deal with priorities that have been identified, like education for first nations children.

New Democrats do not want to tinker with the Indian Act and make any changes that would have unintended consequences. There needs to be a detailed study of changes that must be made and how that should happen, provincial law not necessarily being applicable on reserve in the case of dissent about property or an estate, as one simple example.

AFN National Chief Shawn Atleo, who had repeatedly called for the abolition of the Indian Act, criticized the unilateral approach taken by the sponsor of this bill when introducing legislation of such significance without the involvement of first nations.

• (1420)

In closing, the results of this unilateral approach are as predictable as they are tragic. The Auditor General says that over the years things have gotten worse and the gap in quality of life is widening. We must have genuine consultation.

Mr. Brad Trost (Saskatoon—Humboldt, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to conclude the debate today.

It is my privilege to conclude debate on this piece of legislation. I have known the hon. member who proposed the legislation since he first ran in the byelection. I had the privilege of campaigning with him as we went from town to town. In fact, in one town there was a five-finger discount done to the gasoline in his truck and we ran out of fuel. We got to talk to some of his constituents at the gas station, instead of at the door, as we tried to make it around. I have known this hon. member since before he got here.

One of the things I have most appreciated about him is his passion for his people, for the people of his constituency, for the people who have been a part of his life. I also appreciate that in the legislation he has taken his real-life personal experiences and is using them to craft the legislation.

We often are called upon to debate legislation in the House that we do not necessarily have a very intimate or personal stake in. However, sometimes we do, and for this member that is one of the reasons he brought the legislation forward. It is one of the reasons why the legislation is of the quality it is and would do the things it sets out, because it comes out of his own real-life experience. For that I want to congratulate him. This is totally and truly a private member's piece of legislation. I know, as we talked about this before he even proposed it to the House. I want to congratulate the member for doing something that is substantive, that would affect the people

Private Members' Business

of his constituency and that would make life better for all Canadians who will be affected by this in one way or another.

As has been noted by other members of the House, virtually every aspect of life on a first nation reserve is controlled by the Indian Act. We in the western world and increasingly the entire world understand that free markets, free enterprise, the right to property, those very basic fundamental things contribute to wealth and well-being. Therefore, it should not be a surprise that when a government, through regulation, legislation and bureaucracy, controls those aspects of peoples' lives, they will not be able to have the prosperity that has been enjoyed by all Canadians.

Therefore, the Indian Act is a barrier to the economic development of first nations, and not just the economic development but the whole development of the broader society, the development of individuals and the development of families. As we have proven in Canada and in other nations around the world, fundamental liberties and principles allow people to grow, prosper and become what they want to be without the overbearing hands of the state.

The private member's bill from the member for Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River would remove segments of the Indian Act that prevent first nations from selling items produced on their own land. Think about this, members who were here through the Wheat Board debate would often find it funny, strange or unusual that farmers could go to jail for selling wheat. Every piece of produce, everything that they grow, they are not free to sell from their own farmland. If people have vegetable farms, wheat farms or if they produce cattle, those farmers are not in complete control of their own property. That seems completely unreasonable to anyone who has been involved in business, anyone who has had a house or anyone else in Canadian society. However, that is actually a part of the Indian Act. This unreasonable statute or regulation needs to be put away and taken care of.

People will note that this element of the Indian Act is not often enforced, but it is still there. As the member pointed out in his speech and as other members stated, there are multiple illustrations of these sorts of archaic items that should never have been there in the first place, not in the past, present or future, but are still in the Indian Act. These archaic clauses in the Indian Act can be enforced. It is an active piece of legislation and it can be used selectively at the discretion of the agents of the minister.

• (1425)

As we all know, legislation that is on the books and is not being enforced should either be enforced or removed from law. It serves no purpose.

In my opinion, and in the opinion of many people in the House and of many persons in the first nations community, we have entered into a new era of co-operation between first nations and the government. The member who proposed this legislation is one of those examples. He comes from a riding that is approximately half first nations in population.

Private Members' Business

First nations people of Canada do not want to be excluded from entering into our modern economy. They do not want to be held back through government legislation. They do not want to be held back from free enterprise, from the ability to make, with their own hands, prosperity with their own property and livelihoods. Prominent chiefs in the first nations communities have expressed their desire to increase their participation in the Canadian economy, and ultimately, in the international economic sphere.

By restricting trade and opportunity for first nations, we are perpetuating an antiquated 19th century mentality. Even in the 19th century, many people understood that this was wrong. Unfortunately, not enough of them stood up to stop this legislation when it was first introduced.

We have an ancient mentality that government knows best. It is a medieval idea that if we have a king who is all knowing and all wise, we cannot permit freedom. It is freedom that ultimately brings prosperity, and it is freedom that has been denied the aboriginal people through large elements of the Indian Act.

Eliminating this law from the books removes the possibility of its injudicious application. The law itself is an example of bigotry. The people who voted for it may not have intended that, but that is ultimately the result in that it exempts one specific ethnic group from the rights all other Canadians enjoy. This is something people need to actually understand.

The previous member for my riding of Saskatoon—Humboldt had a major interest in this issue. He was very good at cursing the darkness without always offering a candle to light the way. He used to criticize and go after the Indian Act, because, he said, it brings special privileges, special rights, and more benefits to the people who are under it. What I always wanted to ask him, but never got around to, was how having more government interference in one's life actually helps. If it was such a benefit and something that was so positive, we would have seen those results. Frankly, as every Canadian knows, we have not.

Being under the Indian Act is not something that has helped our first nations communities develop, be it economically, socially, or culturally. Therefore, the discrimination of this act and the way it prevents people from enjoying their freedom needs to be repealed.

First nations residents are unable to own their own land. This hinders the ability to obtain loans and capital with which to build homes or improve property. As was noted earlier, they cannot sell produce they have grown themselves.

The time to allow first nations members the ability to generate wealth and prosperity by furnishing them with the rights every other Canadian has taken for granted is long past due.

By giving first nations real control over the use of their own lands, we can open the door to economic development and renewal. By paving the way to a more modern Indian Act, we also pave the way to more modern first nations who could fully participate in the Canadian economy without a multitude of crippling restrictions. I close today with these general points.

I wish to thank the member for bringing this issue to the House. I will be supporting it, because it is good for all Canadians, first nations and non-first nations alike.

● (1430)

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The time provided for the consideration of private members' business has now expired, and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

[*English*]

It being 2:30 p.m., the House stands adjourned until Monday, October 28 at 11 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 2:30 p.m.)

APPENDIX

**ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS WITH THEIR
CONSTITUENCIES, PROVINCE OF CONSTITUENCY
AND POLITICAL AFFILIATIONS;
COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE,
THE MINISTRY AND PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY**

CHAIR OCCUPANTS

The Speaker

HON. ANDREW SCHEER

The Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. JOE COMARTIN

The Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. BARRY DEVOLIN

The Assistant Deputy Chair of Committees of the Whole

MR. BRUCE STANTON

BOARD OF INTERNAL ECONOMY

HON. ANDREW SCHEER

MR. NATHAN CULLEN

HON. JOHN DUNCAN

MS. JUDY FOOTE

HON. ROB MERRIFIELD

MS. NYCOLE TURMEL

HON. PETER VAN LOAN

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Second Session—Forty-first Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Ablonczy, Hon. Diane	Calgary—Nose Hill	Alberta	CPC
Adams, Eve, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health	Mississauga—Brampton South	Ontario	CPC
Adler, Mark	York Centre	Ontario	CPC
Aglukkaq, Hon. Leona, Minister of the Environment, Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and Minister for the Arctic Council	Nunavut	Nunavut	CPC
Albas, Dan, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board	Okanagan—Coquihalla	British Columbia	CPC
Albrecht, Harold	Kitchener—Conestoga	Ontario	CPC
Alexander, Hon. Chris, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Ajax—Pickering	Ontario	CPC
Allen, Malcolm	Welland	Ontario	NDP
Allen, Mike	Tobique—Mactaquac	New Brunswick	CPC
Allison, Dean	Niagara West—Glanbrook	Ontario	CPC
Ambler, Stella	Mississauga South	Ontario	CPC
Ambrose, Hon. Rona, Minister of Health	Edmonton—Spruce Grove	Alberta	CPC
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	Alberta	CPC
Anderson, David, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	Saskatchewan	CPC
Andrews, Scott	Avalon	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	Ontario	NDP
Armstrong, Scott, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment and Social Development	Cumberland—Colchester— Musquodoboit Valley	Nova Scotia	CPC
Ashfield, Hon. Keith	Fredericton	New Brunswick	CPC
Ashton, Niki	Churchill	Manitoba	NDP
Aspin, Jay	Nipissing—Timiskaming	Ontario	CPC
Atamanenko, Alex	British Columbia Southern Interior	British Columbia	NDP
Aubin, Robert	Trois-Rivières	Québec	NDP
Ayala, Paulina	Honoré-Mercier	Québec	NDP
Baird, Hon. John, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Ottawa West—Nepean	Ontario	CPC
Bateman, Joyce	Winnipeg South Centre	Manitoba	CPC
Bélanger, Hon. Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Ontario	Lib.
Bellavance, André	Richmond—Arthabaska	Québec	BQ
Bennett, Hon. Carolyn	St. Paul's	Ontario	Lib.
Benoit, Leon	Vegreville—Wainwright	Alberta	CPC
Benskin, Tyrone	Jeanne-Le Ber	Québec	NDP
Bergen, Hon. Candice, Minister of State (Social Development)	Portage—Lisgar	Manitoba	CPC
Bernier, Hon. Maxime, Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism, and Agriculture)	Beauce	Québec	CPC
Bevington, Dennis	Western Arctic	Northwest Territories	NDP
Bezan, James, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Selkirk—Interlake	Manitoba	CPC
Blanchette, Denis	Louis-Hébert	Québec	NDP
Blanchette-Lamothe, Lysane	Pierrefonds—Dollard	Québec	NDP
Blaney, Hon. Steven, Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness	Lévis—Bellechasse	Québec	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Block, Kelly, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar	Saskatchewan	CPC
Boivin, Françoise	Gatineau	Québec	NDP
Borg, Charmaine	Terrebonne—Blainville	Québec	NDP
Boughen, Ray	Palliser	Saskatchewan	CPC
Boulerice, Alexandre	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie	Québec	NDP
Boutin-Sweet, Marjolaine	Hochelaga	Québec	NDP
Brahmi, Tarik	Saint-Jean	Québec	NDP
Braid, Peter, Parliamentary Secretary for Infrastructure and Communities	Kitchener—Waterloo	Ontario	CPC
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	Saskatchewan	CPC
Brison, Hon. Scott	Kings—Hants	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Brosseau, Ruth Ellen	Berthier—Maskinongé	Québec	NDP
Brown, Gordon	Leeds—Grenville	Ontario	CPC
Brown, Lois, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development	Newmarket—Aurora	Ontario	CPC
Brown, Patrick	Barrie	Ontario	CPC
Bruinooge, Rod	Winnipeg South	Manitoba	CPC
Butt, Brad	Mississauga—Streetsville	Ontario	CPC
Byrne, Hon. Gerry	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Calandra, Paul, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs	Oak Ridges—Markham	Ontario	CPC
Calkins, Blaine	Wetaskiwin	Alberta	CPC
Cannan, Hon. Ron	Kelowna—Lake Country	British Columbia	CPC
Carmichael, John	Don Valley West	Ontario	CPC
Caron, Guy	Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques	Québec	NDP
Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Oshawa	Ontario	CPC
Casey, Sean	Charlottetown	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
Cash, Andrew	Davenport	Ontario	NDP
Charlton, Chris	Hamilton Mountain	Ontario	NDP
Chicoine, Sylvain	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant	Québec	NDP
Chisholm, Robert	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	Nova Scotia	NDP
Chisu, Corneliu	Pickering—Scarborough East	Ontario	CPC
Chong, Hon. Michael	Wellington—Halton Hills	Ontario	CPC
Choquette, François	Drummond	Québec	NDP
Chow, Olivia	Trinity—Spadina	Ontario	NDP
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	Ontario	NDP
Clarke, Rob	Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River	Saskatchewan	CPC
Cleary, Ryan	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	Newfoundland and Labrador	NDP
Clement, Hon. Tony, President of the Treasury Board	Parry Sound—Muskoka	Ontario	CPC
Comartin, Joe, The Deputy Speaker	Windsor—Tecumseh	Ontario	NDP
Côté, Raymond	Beauport—Limoilou	Québec	NDP
Cotler, Hon. Irwin	Mount Royal	Québec	Lib.
Crockatt, Joan	Calgary Centre	Alberta	CPC
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	British Columbia	NDP
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	British Columbia	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Daniel, Joe	Don Valley East	Ontario	CPC
Davidson, Patricia	Sarnia—Lambton	Ontario	CPC
Davies, Don	Vancouver Kingsway	British Columbia	NDP
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	British Columbia	NDP
Day, Anne-Marie	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles	Québec	NDP
Dechert, Bob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Mississauga—Erindale	Ontario	CPC
Del Mastro, Dean	Peterborough	Ontario	Cons. Ind.
Devolin, Barry, The Acting Speaker	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	Ontario	CPC
Dewar, Paul	Ottawa Centre	Ontario	NDP
Dion, Hon. Stéphane, Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Québec	Lib.
Dionne Labelle, Pierre	Rivière-du-Nord	Québec	NDP
Donnelly, Fin	New Westminster—Coquitlam	British Columbia	NDP
Doré Lefebvre, Rosane	Alfred-Pellan	Québec	NDP
Dreeshen, Earl	Red Deer	Alberta	CPC
Dubé, Matthew	Chambly—Borduas	Québec	NDP
Duncan, Hon. John, Minister of State and Chief Government Whip	Vancouver Island North	British Columbia	CPC
Duncan, Kirsty	Etobicoke North	Ontario	Lib.
Duncan, Linda	Edmonton—Strathcona	Alberta	NDP
Dusseault, Pierre-Luc	Sherbrooke	Québec	NDP
Dykstra, Rick, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage	St. Catharines	Ontario	CPC
Easter, Hon. Wayne	Malpeque	Prince Edward Island	Lib.
Eyking, Hon. Mark	Sydney—Victoria	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Fantino, Hon. Julian, Minister of Veterans Affairs	Vaughan	Ontario	CPC
Fast, Hon. Ed, Minister of International Trade	Abbotsford	British Columbia	CPC
Findlay, Hon. Kerry-Lynne D., Minister of National Revenue	Delta—Richmond East	British Columbia	CPC
Finley, Hon. Diane, Minister of Public Works and Government Services	Haldimand—Norfolk	Ontario	CPC
Flaherty, Hon. Jim, Minister of Finance	Whitby—Oshawa	Ontario	CPC
Fletcher, Hon. Steven	Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia	Manitoba	CPC
Foote, Judy	Random—Burin—St. George's	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Fortin, Jean-François	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia	Québec	BQ
Freeman, Mylène	Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel	Québec	NDP
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	British Columbia	Lib.
Galipeau, Royal	Ottawa—Orléans	Ontario	CPC
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	Ontario	CPC
Garneau, Marc	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Québec	Lib.
Garrison, Randall	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	British Columbia	NDP
Genest, Réjean	Shefford	Québec	NDP
Genest-Jourdain, Jonathan	Manicouagan	Québec	NDP
Giguère, Alain	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	Québec	NDP
Gill, Parm, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	Brampton—Springdale	Ontario	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Glover, Hon. Shelly, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages.....	Saint Boniface.....	Manitoba.....	CPC
Godin, Yvon.....	Acadie—Bathurst.....	New Brunswick.....	NDP
Goguen, Robert, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	New Brunswick.....	CPC
Goldring, Peter.....	Edmonton East.....	Alberta.....	CPC
Goodale, Hon. Ralph.....	Wascana.....	Saskatchewan.....	Lib.
Goodyear, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario).....	Cambridge.....	Ontario.....	CPC
Gosal, Hon. Bal, Minister of State (Sport).....	Bramalea—Gore—Malton.....	Ontario.....	CPC
Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec.....	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière.....	Québec.....	CPC
Gravelle, Claude.....	Nickel Belt.....	Ontario.....	NDP
Grewal, Nina.....	Fleetwood—Port Kells.....	British Columbia.....	CPC
Groguhé, Sadia.....	Saint-Lambert.....	Québec.....	NDP
Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister.....	Calgary Southwest.....	Alberta.....	CPC
Harris, Dan.....	Scarborough Southwest.....	Ontario.....	NDP
Harris, Jack.....	St. John's East.....	Newfoundland and Labrador.....	NDP
Harris, Richard.....	Cariboo—Prince George.....	British Columbia.....	CPC
Hassainia, Sana.....	Verchères—Les Patriotes.....	Québec.....	NDP
Hawn, Hon. Laurie.....	Edmonton Centre.....	Alberta.....	CPC
Hayes, Bryan.....	Sault Ste. Marie.....	Ontario.....	CPC
Hiebert, Russ.....	South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale.....	British Columbia.....	CPC
Hillyer, Jim.....	Lethbridge.....	Alberta.....	CPC
Hoback, Randy.....	Prince Albert.....	Saskatchewan.....	CPC
Holder, Ed.....	London West.....	Ontario.....	CPC
Hsu, Ted.....	Kingston and the Islands.....	Ontario.....	Lib.
Hughes, Carol.....	Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusksing.....	Ontario.....	NDP
Hyer, Bruce.....	Thunder Bay—Superior North.....	Ontario.....	Ind.
Jacob, Pierre.....	Brome—Missisquoi.....	Québec.....	NDP
James, Roxanne, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness.....	Scarborough Centre.....	Ontario.....	CPC
Jean, Brian.....	Fort McMurray—Athabasca.....	Alberta.....	CPC
Jones, Yvonne.....	Labrador.....	Newfoundland and Labrador.....	Lib.
Julian, Peter.....	Burnaby—New Westminster.....	British Columbia.....	NDP
Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.....	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission.....	British Columbia.....	CPC
Karygiannis, Hon. Jim.....	Scarborough—Agincourt.....	Ontario.....	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue and for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency.....	South Shore—St. Margaret's.....	Nova Scotia.....	CPC
Kellway, Matthew.....	Beaches—East York.....	Ontario.....	NDP
Kenney, Hon. Jason, Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Multiculturalism.....	Calgary Southeast.....	Alberta.....	CPC
Kent, Hon. Peter.....	Thornhill.....	Ontario.....	CPC
Kerr, Greg.....	West Nova.....	Nova Scotia.....	CPC
Komarnicki, Ed.....	Souris—Moose Mountain.....	Saskatchewan.....	CPC
Kramp, Daryl.....	Prince Edward—Hastings.....	Ontario.....	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Lake, Hon. Mike, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry	Edmonton—Mill Woods— Beaumont.....	Alberta	CPC
Lamoureux, Kevin	Winnipeg North	Manitoba	Lib.
Lapointe, François	Montmagny—L'Islet— Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup	Québec	NDP
Larose, Jean-François	Repentigny	Québec	NDP
Latendresse, Alexandrine	Louis-Saint-Laurent.....	Québec	NDP
Lauzon, Guy.....	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengary	Ontario	CPC
Laverdière, Hélène	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	Québec	NDP
Lebel, Hon. Denis, Minister of Infrastructure, Communities and Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of the Economic Devel- opment Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean.....	Québec	CPC
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic	Beauséjour.....	New Brunswick.....	Lib.
LeBlanc, Hélène.....	LaSalle—Émard.....	Québec	NDP
Leef, Ryan	Yukon.....	Yukon	CPC
Leitch, Hon. Kellie, Minister of Labour and Minister of Status of Women	Simcoe—Grey	Ontario	CPC
Lemieux, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture.....	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell .	Ontario	CPC
Leslie, Megan	Halifax	Nova Scotia	NDP
Leung, Chungsen, Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism ...	Willowdale	Ontario	CPC
Liu, Laurin.....	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles.....	Québec	NDP
Lizon, Wladyslaw	Mississauga East—Cooksville .	Ontario	CPC
Lobb, Ben	Huron—Bruce.....	Ontario	CPC
Lukiwski, Tom, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre.....	Saskatchewan	CPC
Lunney, James.....	Nanaimo—Alberni	British Columbia	CPC
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Prince Edward Island....	Lib.
MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Central Nova	Nova Scotia	CPC
MacKenzie, Dave	Oxford	Ontario	CPC
Mai, Hoang	Brossard—La Prairie	Québec	NDP
Marston, Wayne	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek .	Ontario	NDP
Martin, Pat.....	Winnipeg Centre	Manitoba	NDP
Masse, Brian.....	Windsor West	Ontario	NDP
Mathysen, Irene	London—Fanshawe.....	Ontario	NDP
May, Elizabeth	Saanich—Gulf Islands	British Columbia	GP
Mayes, Colin	Okanagan—Shuswap	British Columbia	CPC
McCallum, Hon. John	Markham—Unionville	Ontario	Lib.
McColeman, Phil.....	Brant.....	Ontario	CPC
McGuinty, David.....	Ottawa South.....	Ontario	Lib.
McKay, Hon. John	Scarborough—Guildwood.....	Ontario	Lib.
McLeod, Cathy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and for Western Economic Diversification	Kamloops—Thompson— Cariboo	British Columbia	CPC
Menegakis, Costas, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Richmond Hill	Ontario	CPC
Menzies, Hon. Ted.....	Macleod	Alberta	CPC
Merrifield, Hon. Rob	Yellowhead	Alberta	CPC
Michaud, Élane	Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier.....	Québec	NDP
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound...	Ontario	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Moore, Christine	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	Québec	NDP
Moore, Hon. James, Minister of Industry	Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam	British Columbia	CPC
Moore, Hon. Rob, Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency)	Fundy Royal	New Brunswick	CPC
Morin, Dany	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	Québec	NDP
Morin, Isabelle	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine	Québec	NDP
Morin, Marc-André	Laurentides—Labelle	Québec	NDP
Morin, Marie-Claude	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	Québec	NDP
Mourani, Maria	Ahuntsic	Québec	Ind.
Mulcair, Hon. Thomas, Leader of the Opposition	Outremont	Québec	NDP
Murray, Joyce	Vancouver Quadra	British Columbia	Lib.
Nantel, Pierre	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	Québec	NDP
Nash, Peggy	Parkdale—High Park	Ontario	NDP
Nicholls, Jamie	Vaudreuil—Soulanges	Québec	NDP
Nicholson, Hon. Rob, Minister of National Defence	Niagara Falls	Ontario	CPC
Norlock, Rick	Northumberland—Quinte West	Ontario	CPC
Nunez-Melo, José	Laval	Québec	NDP
Obhrai, Hon. Deepak, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and for International Human Rights	Calgary East	Alberta	CPC
O'Connor, Hon. Gordon	Carleton—Mississippi Mills	Ontario	CPC
Oliver, Hon. Joe, Minister of Natural Resources	Eglinton—Lawrence	Ontario	CPC
O'Neill Gordon, Tilly	Miramichi	New Brunswick	CPC
Opitz, Ted	Etobicoke Centre	Ontario	CPC
O'Toole, Erin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade	Durham	Ontario	CPC
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel	Québec	Lib.
Papillon, Annick	Québec	Québec	NDP
Paradis, Hon. Christian, Minister of International Development and Minister for La Francophonie	Mégantic—L'Érable	Québec	CPC
Patry, Claude	Jonquière—Alma	Québec	BQ
Payne, LaVar	Medicine Hat	Alberta	CPC
Péclet, Ève	La Pointe-de-l'Île	Québec	NDP
Perreault, Manon	Montcalm	Québec	NDP
Pilon, François	Laval—Les Îles	Québec	NDP
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour	Québec	BQ
Poilievre, Hon. Pierre, Minister of State (Democratic Reform)	Nepean—Carleton	Ontario	CPC
Preston, Joe	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Ontario	CPC
Quach, Anne Minh-Thu	Beauharnois—Salaberry	Québec	NDP
Rafferty, John	Thunder Bay—Rainy River	Ontario	NDP
Raitt, Hon. Lisa, Minister of Transport	Halton	Ontario	CPC
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc	Alberta	CPC
Rankin, Murray	Victoria	British Columbia	NDP
Rathgeber, Brent	Edmonton—St. Albert	Alberta	Ind.
Ravignat, Mathieu	Pontiac	Québec	NDP
Raynault, Francine	Joliette	Québec	NDP
Regan, Hon. Geoff	Halifax West	Nova Scotia	Lib.
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	Ontario	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Rempel, Hon. Michelle, Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification)	Calgary Centre-North	Alberta	CPC
Richards, Blake	Wild Rose	Alberta	CPC
Rickford, Hon. Greg, Minister of State (Science and Technology, and Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario)	Kenora	Ontario	CPC
Ritz, Hon. Gerry, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food	Battlefords—Lloydminster	Saskatchewan	CPC
Rousseau, Jean	Compton—Stanstead	Québec	NDP
Saganash, Romeo	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou	Québec	NDP
Sandhu, Jasbir	Surrey North	British Columbia	NDP
Saxton, Andrew, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance	North Vancouver	British Columbia	CPC
Scarpaleggia, Francis	Lac-Saint-Louis	Québec	Lib.
Scheer, Hon. Andrew, Speaker of the House of Commons	Regina—Qu'Appelle	Saskatchewan	CPC
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	Ontario	CPC
Scott, Craig	Toronto—Danforth	Ontario	NDP
Seeback, Kyle	Brampton West	Ontario	CPC
Sellah, Djaouida	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	Québec	NDP
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Ontario	Lib.
Shea, Hon. Gail, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Egmont	Prince Edward Island	CPC
Shipley, Bev	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Ontario	CPC
Shory, Devinder	Calgary Northeast	Alberta	CPC
Simms, Scott	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor	Newfoundland and Labrador	Lib.
Sims, Jinny Jogindera	Newton—North Delta	British Columbia	NDP
Sitsabaiesan, Rathika	Scarborough—Rouge River	Ontario	NDP
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	Manitoba	CPC
Sopuck, Robert	Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette	Manitoba	CPC
Sorenson, Hon. Kevin, Minister of State (Finance)	Crowfoot	Alberta	CPC
Stanton, Bruce, The Acting Speaker	Simcoe North	Ontario	CPC
St-Denis, Lise	Saint-Maurice—Champlain	Québec	Lib.
Stewart, Kennedy	Burnaby—Douglas	British Columbia	NDP
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	Nova Scotia	NDP
Storseth, Brian	Westlock—St. Paul	Alberta	CPC
Strahl, Mark, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	British Columbia	CPC
Sullivan, Mike	York South—Weston	Ontario	NDP
Sweet, David	Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale	Ontario	CPC
Thibeault, Glenn	Sudbury	Ontario	NDP
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	Ontario	CPC
Toet, Lawrence	Elmwood—Transcona	Manitoba	CPC
Toone, Philip	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	Québec	NDP
Tremblay, Jonathan	Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord	Québec	NDP
Trost, Brad	Saskatoon—Humboldt	Saskatchewan	CPC
Trottier, Bernard, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	Ontario	CPC
Trudeau, Justin	Papineau	Québec	Lib.
Truppe, Susan, Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women	London North Centre	Ontario	CPC
Turmel, Nycole	Hull—Aylmer	Québec	NDP

Name of Member	Constituency	Province of Constituency	Political Affiliation
Uppal, Hon. Tim, Minister of State (Multiculturalism)	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	Alberta	CPC
Valcourt, Hon. Bernard, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development	Madawaska—Restigouche	New Brunswick	CPC
Valeriote, Frank	Guelph	Ontario	Lib.
Van Kesteren, Dave	Chatham-Kent—Essex	Ontario	CPC
Van Loan, Hon. Peter, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	York—Simcoe	Ontario	CPC
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin	Saskatchewan	CPC
Wallace, Mike	Burlington	Ontario	CPC
Warawa, Mark	Langley	British Columbia	CPC
Warkentin, Chris	Peace River	Alberta	CPC
Watson, Jeff, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport	Essex	Ontario	CPC
Weston, John	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country	British Columbia	CPC
Weston, Rodney	Saint John	New Brunswick	CPC
Wilks, David	Kootenay—Columbia	British Columbia	CPC
Williamson, John	New Brunswick Southwest	New Brunswick	CPC
Wong, Hon. Alice, Minister of State (Seniors)	Richmond	British Columbia	CPC
Woodworth, Stephen	Kitchener Centre	Ontario	CPC
Yelich, Hon. Lynne, Minister of State (Foreign Affairs and Consular)	Blackstrap	Saskatchewan	CPC
Young, Terence	Oakville	Ontario	CPC
Young, Wai	Vancouver South	British Columbia	CPC
Zimmer, Bob	Prince George—Peace River	British Columbia	CPC
VACANCY	Bourassa	Québec	
VACANCY	Toronto Centre	Ontario	
VACANCY	Brandon—Souris	Manitoba	
VACANCY	Provencher	Manitoba	

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BY PROVINCE

Second Session—Forty-first Parliament

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALBERTA (28)		
Ablonczy, Hon. Diane	Calgary—Nose Hill	CPC
Ambrose, Hon. Rona, Minister of Health	Edmonton—Spruce Grove	CPC
Anders, Rob	Calgary West	CPC
Benoit, Leon	Vegreville—Wainwright	CPC
Calkins, Blaine	Wetaskiwin	CPC
Crockatt, Joan	Calgary Centre	CPC
Dreeshen, Earl	Red Deer	CPC
Duncan, Linda	Edmonton—Strathcona	NDP
Goldring, Peter	Edmonton East	CPC
Harper, Right Hon. Stephen, Prime Minister	Calgary Southwest	CPC
Hawn, Hon. Laurie	Edmonton Centre	CPC
Hillyer, Jim	Lethbridge	CPC
Jean, Brian	Fort McMurray—Athabasca	CPC
Kenney, Hon. Jason, Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Multiculturalism	Calgary Southeast	CPC
Lake, Hon. Mike, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry	Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont	CPC
Menzies, Hon. Ted	Macleod	CPC
Merrifield, Hon. Rob	Yellowhead	CPC
Obhrai, Hon. Deepak, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and for International Human Rights	Calgary East	CPC
Payne, LaVar	Medicine Hat	CPC
Rajotte, James	Edmonton—Leduc	CPC
Rathgeber, Brent	Edmonton—St. Albert	Ind.
Rempel, Hon. Michelle, Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification)	Calgary Centre-North	CPC
Richards, Blake	Wild Rose	CPC
Shory, Devinder	Calgary Northeast	CPC
Sorenson, Hon. Kevin, Minister of State (Finance)	Crowfoot	CPC
Storseth, Brian	Westlock—St. Paul	CPC
Uppal, Hon. Tim, Minister of State (Multiculturalism)	Edmonton—Sherwood Park	CPC
Warkentin, Chris	Peace River	CPC
BRITISH COLUMBIA (36)		
Albas, Dan, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board	Okanagan—Coquihalla	CPC
Atamanenko, Alex	British Columbia Southern Interior	NDP
Cannan, Hon. Ron	Kelowna—Lake Country	CPC
Crowder, Jean	Nanaimo—Cowichan	NDP
Cullen, Nathan	Skeena—Bulkley Valley	NDP
Davies, Don	Vancouver Kingsway	NDP
Davies, Libby	Vancouver East	NDP
Donnelly, Fin	New Westminster—Coquitlam	NDP
Duncan, Hon. John, Minister of State and Chief Government Whip	Vancouver Island North	CPC
Fast, Hon. Ed, Minister of International Trade	Abbotsford	CPC
Findlay, Hon. Kerry-Lynne D., Minister of National Revenue	Delta—Richmond East	CPC
Fry, Hon. Hedy	Vancouver Centre	Lib.

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Garrison, Randall	Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca	NDP
Grewal, Nina	Fleetwood—Port Kells	CPC
Harris, Richard	Cariboo—Prince George	CPC
Hiebert, Russ	South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale	CPC
Julian, Peter	Burnaby—New Westminster	NDP
Kamp, Randy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission	CPC
Lunney, James	Nanaimo—Alberni	CPC
May, Elizabeth	Saanich—Gulf Islands	GP
Mayes, Colin	Okanagan—Shuswap	CPC
McLeod, Cathy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and for Western Economic Diversification	Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo	CPC
Moore, Hon. James, Minister of Industry	Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam	CPC
Murray, Joyce	Vancouver Quadra	Lib.
Rankin, Murray	Victoria	NDP
Sandhu, Jasbir	Surrey North	NDP
Saxton, Andrew, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance	North Vancouver	CPC
Sims, Jinny Jogindera	Newton—North Delta	NDP
Stewart, Kennedy	Burnaby—Douglas	NDP
Strahl, Mark, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development	Chilliwack—Fraser Canyon	CPC
Warawa, Mark	Langley	CPC
Weston, John	West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country	CPC
Wilks, David	Kootenay—Columbia	CPC
Wong, Hon. Alice, Minister of State (Seniors)	Richmond	CPC
Young, Wai	Vancouver South	CPC
Zimmer, Bob	Prince George—Peace River	CPC
MANITOBA (12)		
Ashton, Niki	Churchill	NDP
Bateman, Joyce	Winnipeg South Centre	CPC
Bergen, Hon. Candice, Minister of State (Social Development)	Portage—Lisgar	CPC
Bezan, James, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence	Selkirk—Interlake	CPC
Bruinooge, Rod	Winnipeg South	CPC
Fletcher, Hon. Steven	Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia	CPC
Glover, Hon. Shelly, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages	Saint Boniface	CPC
Lamoureux, Kevin	Winnipeg North	Lib.
Martin, Pat	Winnipeg Centre	NDP
Smith, Joy	Kildonan—St. Paul	CPC
Sopuck, Robert	Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette	CPC
Toet, Lawrence	Elmwood—Transcona	CPC
VACANCY	Brandon—Souris	
VACANCY	Provencher	
NEW BRUNSWICK (10)		
Allen, Mike	Tobique—Mactaquac	CPC
Ashfield, Hon. Keith	Fredericton	CPC
Godin, Yvon	Acadie—Bathurst	NDP
Goguen, Robert, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
LeBlanc, Hon. Dominic	Beauséjour	Lib.
Moore, Hon. Rob, Minister of State (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency)	Fundy Royal	CPC
O'Neill Gordon, Tilly	Miramichi	CPC
Valcourt, Hon. Bernard, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development	Madawaska—Restigouche	CPC
Weston, Rodney	Saint John	CPC
Williamson, John	New Brunswick Southwest	CPC

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR (7)

Andrews, Scott	Avalon	Lib.
Byrne, Hon. Gerry	Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte	Lib.
Cleary, Ryan	St. John's South—Mount Pearl	NDP
Foote, Judy	Random—Burin—St. George's	Lib.
Harris, Jack	St. John's East	NDP
Jones, Yvonne	Labrador	Lib.
Simms, Scott	Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor	Lib.

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (1)

Bevington, Dennis	Western Arctic	NDP
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NOVA SCOTIA (11)

Armstrong, Scott, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment and Social Development	Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley	CPC
Brison, Hon. Scott	Kings—Hants	Lib.
Chisholm, Robert	Dartmouth—Cole Harbour	NDP
Cuzner, Rodger	Cape Breton—Canso	Lib.
Eyking, Hon. Mark	Sydney—Victoria	Lib.
Keddy, Gerald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue and for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency	South Shore—St. Margaret's	CPC
Kerr, Greg	West Nova	CPC
Leslie, Megan	Halifax	NDP
MacKay, Hon. Peter, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada	Central Nova	CPC
Regan, Hon. Geoff	Halifax West	Lib.
Stoffer, Peter	Sackville—Eastern Shore	NDP

NUNAVUT (1)

Aglukkaq, Hon. Leona, Minister of the Environment, Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and Minister for the Arctic Council	Nunavut	CPC
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ONTARIO (105)

Adams, Eve, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health	Mississauga—Brampton South	CPC
Adler, Mark	York Centre	CPC
Albrecht, Harold	Kitchener—Conestoga	CPC
Alexander, Hon. Chris, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Ajax—Pickering	CPC
Allen, Malcolm	Welland	NDP
Allison, Dean	Niagara West—Glanbrook	CPC
Ambler, Stella	Mississauga South	CPC
Angus, Charlie	Timmins—James Bay	NDP
Aspin, Jay	Nipissing—Timiskaming	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Baird, Hon. John, Minister of Foreign Affairs	Ottawa West—Nepean	CPC
Bélanger, Hon. Mauril	Ottawa—Vanier	Lib.
Bennett, Hon. Carolyn	St. Paul's	Lib.
Braid, Peter, Parliamentary Secretary for Infrastructure and Communities	Kitchener—Waterloo	CPC
Brown, Gordon	Leeds—Grenville	CPC
Brown, Lois, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development	Newmarket—Aurora	CPC
Brown, Patrick	Barrie	CPC
Butt, Brad	Mississauga—Streetsville	CPC
Calandra, Paul, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs	Oak Ridges—Markham	CPC
Carmichael, John	Don Valley West	CPC
Carrie, Colin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment	Oshawa	CPC
Cash, Andrew	Davenport	NDP
Charlton, Chris	Hamilton Mountain	NDP
Chisu, Corneliu	Pickering—Scarborough East	CPC
Chong, Hon. Michael	Wellington—Halton Hills	CPC
Chow, Olivia	Trinity—Spadina	NDP
Christopherson, David	Hamilton Centre	NDP
Clement, Hon. Tony, President of the Treasury Board	Parry Sound—Muskoka	CPC
Comartin, Joe, The Deputy Speaker	Windsor—Tecumseh	NDP
Daniel, Joe	Don Valley East	CPC
Davidson, Patricia	Sarnia—Lambton	CPC
Dechert, Bob, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice	Mississauga—Erindale	CPC
Del Mastro, Dean	Peterborough	Cons. Ind.
Devolin, Barry, The Acting Speaker	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	CPC
Dewar, Paul	Ottawa Centre	NDP
Duncan, Kirsty	Etobicoke North	Lib.
Dykstra, Rick, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage	St. Catharines	CPC
Fantino, Hon. Julian, Minister of Veterans Affairs	Vaughan	CPC
Finley, Hon. Diane, Minister of Public Works and Government Services	Haldimand—Norfolk	CPC
Flaherty, Hon. Jim, Minister of Finance	Whitby—Oshawa	CPC
Galipeau, Royal	Ottawa—Orléans	CPC
Gallant, Cheryl	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	CPC
Gill, Parm, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs	Brampton—Springdale	CPC
Goodyear, Hon. Gary, Minister of State (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario)	Cambridge	CPC
Gosal, Hon. Bal, Minister of State (Sport)	Bramalea—Gore—Malton	CPC
Gravelle, Claude	Nickel Belt	NDP
Harris, Dan	Scarborough Southwest	NDP
Hayes, Bryan	Sault Ste. Marie	CPC
Holder, Ed	London West	CPC
Hsu, Ted	Kingston and the Islands	Lib.
Hughes, Carol	Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasing	NDP
Hyer, Bruce	Thunder Bay—Superior North	Ind.
James, Roxanne, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness	Scarborough Centre	CPC
Karygiannis, Hon. Jim	Scarborough—Agincourt	Lib.
Kellway, Matthew	Beaches—East York	NDP
Kent, Hon. Peter	Thornhill	CPC
Kramp, Daryl	Prince Edward—Hastings	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Lauzon, Guy	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	CPC
Leitch, Hon. Kellie, Minister of Labour and Minister of Status of Women	Simcoe—Grey	CPC
Lemieux, Pierre, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	CPC
Leung, Chungsen, Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism	Willowdale	CPC
Lizon, Wladyslaw	Mississauga East—Cooksville	CPC
Lobb, Ben	Huron—Bruce	CPC
MacKenzie, Dave	Oxford	CPC
Marston, Wayne	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek	NDP
Masse, Brian	Windsor West	NDP
Mathyssen, Irene	London—Fanshawe	NDP
McCallum, Hon. John	Markham—Unionville	Lib.
McColeman, Phil	Brant	CPC
McGuinty, David	Ottawa South	Lib.
McKay, Hon. John	Scarborough—Guildwood	Lib.
Menegakis, Costas, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	Richmond Hill	CPC
Miller, Larry	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	CPC
Nash, Peggy	Parkdale—High Park	NDP
Nicholson, Hon. Rob, Minister of National Defence	Niagara Falls	CPC
Norlock, Rick	Northumberland—Quinte West	CPC
O'Connor, Hon. Gordon	Carleton—Mississippi Mills	CPC
Oliver, Hon. Joe, Minister of Natural Resources	Eglinton—Lawrence	CPC
Oritz, Ted	Etobicoke Centre	CPC
O'Toole, Erin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade	Durham	CPC
Poillievre, Hon. Pierre, Minister of State (Democratic Reform)	Nepean—Carleton	CPC
Preston, Joe	Elgin—Middlesex—London	CPC
Rafferty, John	Thunder Bay—Rainy River	NDP
Raitt, Hon. Lisa, Minister of Transport	Halton	CPC
Reid, Scott	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	CPC
Rickford, Hon. Greg, Minister of State (Science and Technology, and Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario)	Kenora	CPC
Schellenberger, Gary	Perth—Wellington	CPC
Scott, Craig	Toronto—Danforth	NDP
Seeback, Kyle	Brampton West	CPC
Sgro, Hon. Judy	York West	Lib.
Shiple, Bev	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	CPC
Sitsabaiesan, Rathika	Scarborough—Rouge River	NDP
Stanton, Bruce, The Acting Speaker	Simcoe North	CPC
Sullivan, Mike	York South—Weston	NDP
Sweet, David	Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale	CPC
Thibeault, Glenn	Sudbury	NDP
Tilson, David	Dufferin—Caledon	CPC
Trottier, Bernard, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	CPC
Truppe, Susan, Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women	London North Centre	CPC
Valeriote, Frank	Guelph	Lib.
Van Kesteren, Dave	Chatham-Kent—Essex	CPC
Van Loan, Hon. Peter, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	York—Simcoe	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Wallace, Mike	Burlington	CPC
Watson, Jeff, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport	Essex	CPC
Woodworth, Stephen	Kitchener Centre	CPC
Young, Terence	Oakville	CPC
VACANCY	Toronto Centre	
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND (4)		
Casey, Sean	Charlottetown	Lib.
Easter, Hon. Wayne	Malpeque	Lib.
MacAulay, Hon. Lawrence	Cardigan	Lib.
Shea, Hon. Gail, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans	Egmont	CPC
QUÉBEC (74)		
Aubin, Robert	Trois-Rivières	NDP
Ayala, Paulina	Honoré-Mercier	NDP
Bellavance, André	Richmond—Arthabaska	BQ
Benskin, Tyrone	Jeanne-Le Ber	NDP
Bernier, Hon. Maxime, Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism, and Agriculture)	Beauce	CPC
Blanchette, Denis	Louis-Hébert	NDP
Blanchette-Lamothe, Lysane	Pierrefonds—Dollard	NDP
Blaney, Hon. Steven, Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness	Lévis—Bellechasse	CPC
Boivin, Françoise	Gatineau	NDP
Borg, Charmaine	Terrebonne—Blainville	NDP
Boulerice, Alexandre	Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie	NDP
Boutin-Sweet, Marjolaine	Hochelaga	NDP
Brahmi, Tarik	Saint-Jean	NDP
Brosseau, Ruth Ellen	Berthier—Maskinongé	NDP
Caron, Guy	Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques	NDP
Chicoine, Sylvain	Châteauguay—Saint-Constant	NDP
Choquette, François	Drummond	NDP
Côté, Raymond	Beauport—Limoilou	NDP
Cotler, Hon. Irwin	Mount Royal	Lib.
Day, Anne-Marie	Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles	NDP
Dion, Hon. Stéphane, Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Saint-Laurent—Cartierville	Lib.
Dionne Labelle, Pierre	Rivière-du-Nord	NDP
Doré Lefebvre, Rosane	Alfred-Pellan	NDP
Dubé, Matthew	Chambly—Borduas	NDP
Dusseault, Pierre-Luc	Sherbrooke	NDP
Fortin, Jean-François	Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia	BQ
Freeman, Mylène	Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel	NDP
Garneau, Marc	Westmount—Ville-Marie	Lib.
Genest, Réjean	Shefford	NDP
Genest-Jourdain, Jonathan	Manicouagan	NDP
Giguère, Alain	Marc-Aurèle-Fortin	NDP
Gourde, Jacques, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec	Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière	CPC

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
Groguhé, Sadia	Saint-Lambert	NDP
Hassainia, Sana	Verchères—Les Patriotes	NDP
Jacob, Pierre	Brome—Missisquoi	NDP
Lapointe, François	Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska— Rivière-du-Loup	NDP
Larose, Jean-François	Repentigny	NDP
Latendresse, Alexandrine	Louis-Saint-Laurent	NDP
Laverdière, Hélène	Laurier—Sainte-Marie	NDP
Label, Hon. Denis, Minister of Infrastructure, Communities and Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec	Roberval—Lac-Saint-Jean	CPC
LeBlanc, Hélène	LaSalle—Émard	NDP
Liu, Laurin	Rivière-des-Mille-Îles	NDP
Mai, Hoang	Brossard—La Prairie	NDP
Michaud, Élane	Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier	NDP
Moore, Christine	Abitibi—Témiscamingue	NDP
Morin, Dany	Chicoutimi—Le Fjord	NDP
Morin, Isabelle	Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine	NDP
Morin, Marc-André	Laurentides—Labelle	NDP
Morin, Marie-Claude	Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot	NDP
Mourani, Maria	Ahuntsic	Ind.
Mulcair, Hon. Thomas, Leader of the Opposition	Outremont	NDP
Nantel, Pierre	Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher	NDP
Nicholls, Jamie	Vaudreuil-Soulanges	NDP
Nunez-Melo, José	Laval	NDP
Pacetti, Massimo	Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel	Lib.
Papillon, Annick	Québec	NDP
Paradis, Hon. Christian, Minister of International Development and Minister for La Francophonie	Mégantic—L'Érable	CPC
Patry, Claude	Jonquière—Alma	BQ
Péclet, Ève	La Pointe-de-l'Île	NDP
Perreault, Manon	Montcalm	NDP
Pilon, François	Laval—Les Îles	NDP
Plamondon, Louis	Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour	BQ
Quach, Anne Minh-Thu	Beauharnois—Salaberry	NDP
Ravignat, Mathieu	Pontiac	NDP
Raynault, Francine	Joliette	NDP
Rousseau, Jean	Compton—Stanstead	NDP
Saganash, Romeo	Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou	NDP
Scarpaleggia, Francis	Lac-Saint-Louis	Lib.
Sellah, Djaouida	Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert	NDP
St-Denis, Lise	Saint-Maurice—Champlain	Lib.
Toone, Philip	Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	NDP
Tremblay, Jonathan	Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute- Côte-Nord	NDP
Trudeau, Justin	Papineau	Lib.
Turmel, Nycole	Hull—Aylmer	NDP
VACANCY	Bourassa	

Name of Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
SASKATCHEWAN (14)		
Anderson, David, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs	Cypress Hills—Grasslands	CPC
Block, Kelly, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources	Saskatoon—Rosetown—Biggar	CPC
Boughen, Ray	Palliser	CPC
Breitkreuz, Garry	Yorkton—Melville	CPC
Clarke, Rob	Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River ..	CPC
Goodale, Hon. Ralph	Wascana	Lib.
Hoback, Randy	Prince Albert	CPC
Komarnicki, Ed	Souris—Moose Mountain	CPC
Lukiwski, Tom, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons	Regina—Lumsden—Lake Centre	CPC
Ritz, Hon. Gerry, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food	Battlefords—Lloydminster	CPC
Scheer, Hon. Andrew, Speaker of the House of Commons	Regina—Qu'Appelle	CPC
Trost, Brad	Saskatoon—Humboldt	CPC
Vellacott, Maurice	Saskatoon—Wanuskewin	CPC
Yelich, Hon. Lynne, Minister of State (Foreign Affairs and Consular)	Blackstrap	CPC
YUKON (1)		
Leef, Ryan	Yukon	CPC

LIST OF STANDING AND SUB-COMMITTEES

(As of October 25, 2013 — 2nd Session, 41st Parliament)

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Dennis Bevington

Vice-Chair:

Ray Boughen
Rob Clarke
Jean Crowder

Jonathan Genest-Jourdain
Jim Hillyer
Carol Hughes

Kyle Seeback
Mark Strahl
Chris Warkentin

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Bob Zimmer

ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PRIVACY AND ETHICS

Chair:

Pat Martin

Vice-Chairs:
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Charmaine Borg
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Mathieu Ravignat

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AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

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Blake Richards
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John McCallum
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Rathika Sitsabaiesan

David Tilson
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ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Lawrence Toet
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