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Monday, June 9, 2014

Speaker: The Honourable Andrew Scheer

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, June 9, 2014

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayers

• (1105)

[English]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Peter Braid (Parliamentary Secretary for Infrastructure and Communities, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I believe that if you seek it, you would find unanimous consent for the following motion. I move:

That, notwithstanding any Standing or Special Order or usual practice of the House, any recorded division demanded, in relation to a debatable motion, during the present sitting, shall be deemed to stand deferred until the conclusion of the proceedings related to the Business of Supply on Tuesday, June 10, 2014.

The Speaker: Does the hon. member have the unanimous consent of the House to propose this motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Speaker: The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

The Speaker: It being 11:05 a.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

CANADA PENSION PLAN

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren (Chatham-Kent—Essex, CPC) moved that Bill C-591, An Act to amend the Canada Pension Plan and the Old Age Security Act (pension and benefits), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present my first private member's bill, Bill C-591, an act to amend the Canada Pension Plan and the Old Age Security Act.

It is an honour to have the opportunity as a member of Parliament, representing my constituents of Chatham-Kent—Essex, to make a positive impact on this great country, helping to make it a better

place for us and our children. Bill C-591 is such an attempt. This bill would close a long-standing loophole that enables someone in Canada today, convicted of killing their spouse or their parent, from receiving their victim's CPP benefit or CPP orphan benefit.

This bill is consistent with a long-standing common law principle, known as *ex turpi causa*, that criminals should not benefit from their crimes. This bill would restore fairness to the victims and their families by ensuring that those convicted of first- and second-degree murder would not be entitled to their victims' benefits.

The bill would apply to those convicted of first- and second-degree murder, which by definition is murder involving deliberate acts with intent to kill. The bill would not include those charged with manslaughter, since manslaughter, by definition, is death resulting from unintentional actions, such as accidents, provocation, or history of abuse. I will address this issue later in my speech.

A conviction of first- and second-degree murder must be within the meaning of section 231 of the Criminal Code of Canada or its equivalent in a foreign country, provided that the minister is satisfied that the procedures were fair and unbiased.

One cannot imagine the horror of having a loved one murdered, yet every year in Canada we read of tragic cases where someone loses their life by an act of murder. Sadly, this is done, at times, at the hands of a family member.

In an article posted in *The Sun* on Saturday, December 21, 2013, the headline reads, "Murder cases close to home — 2013 sees deadly rise in family related slayings in Calgary".

Of the tragedy in our first nations communities faced by our aboriginal women, the Native Women's Association of Canada reports in their fact sheet of missing and murdered aboriginal women and girls that of the murder cases in the NWAC's database where someone has been charged, 23% are committed by a current or former partner of the victim.

John F. Conway writes in *The Canadian Family in Crisis*, fifth edition, "About 40% of homicides in Canada involve victims and suspects in a domestic relationship..."

These are shocking statistics. I am not suggesting that all of these tragic events would be affected by my bill but what I am saying is, today, in Canada, approximately 30 cases a year involving murder of a spouse, common-law partner, or child could be affected by this legislation.

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How terrible a thing to suffer the horror of family violence, how much more the horror of murder, but to have the added pain of witnessing someone profit from their crime, a clear violation to the long-standing common law principle of *ex turpi causa*, by way of collecting the victim's survivor benefit, is not fair to the families of the murder victim, and it is an injustice that cannot be allowed to happen.

I will first define who would not be eligible by providing an explanation of the CPP death benefit package, followed by the procedure to be put in place, the role of the minister, consideration of appeals, burial payments, explanation of first- and second-degree murder, and then a wrap-up.

First, I will talk about those to whom the bill is targeted by way of examination of CPP death benefits and OAS survivor benefits.

The Canadian Pension Plan is a social insurance plan that provides contributors and their families with a modest income replacement upon retirement, disability, or death of a contributor. It is this last provision, death of a contributor that is the essence of Bill C-591. At the death of CPP recipient, the survivors are eligible for these benefits: the monthly survivor pension paid to the spouse or common-law partner; the monthly orphan's benefit for dependent children; and a one-time lump sum death benefit.

● (1110)

As well, under the old age security program, the annual allowance for survivors, ALWS, is provided to low-income survivors aged 60-64 who meet the residence requirements and have not entered a new relationship.

These are the benefits that are provided through the Canada pension plan and old age security to the survivor of someone who is receiving CPP or contributing to CPP upon death.

The bill would make changes to the act that defines these benefits so that no one who has been convicted of first- or second-degree murder and who would normally be entitled to receive the survivor benefits would ever collect the victim's pension or survivor benefits.

Allow me to define the role of the minister. When the minister is informed and satisfied that an individual has been convicted of first- or second-degree murder, the payment would immediately cease. In cases of death benefits paid, when CPP monthly survivor pension, monthly orphan benefit, or one-time lump sum, the individual convicted would be determined never to have been eligible for the benefit and as such it would be considered an overpayment. All or any CPP and/or OAS benefit payment would be deemed repayable.

However, what if the disentitled individual were found innocent upon appeal or is subject to a new trial? If the disentitled individual appealed the conviction or were granted a new trial, the decision to cancel the benefit as a result of the original conviction would remain in effect pending the final outcome of the judicial process. If the individual were subsequently convicted of a lesser crime or acquitted, the benefit would be reinstated upon the department being notified. The individual would be entitled to payments dating back to the first day of eligibility.

The CPP would not be amended for orphans under the age of 18. In Canada, children under age 18 are considered minors and as such

those charged with care and custody of a minor would receive the CPP orphan's benefit.

However, the orphan's benefit that normally is paid directly to someone between the ages of 18 and 25 who retain their eligibility by attending school would not be available to a child who has been convicted of murdering a parent when he or she turns 18. This approach recognizes the guardian's expenses undertaken to care for the child and the fact that the guardian, in some cases the surviving spouse, has not committed the crime.

Let me now address the death benefit. As stated, the CPP would be amended to ensure that any individual convicted of murdering his or her spouse would not be eligible to collect the CPP death benefit. However, the death benefit would continue to be paid to the estate of the deceased to help with the funeral costs or if there were no estate, the person who paid for the funeral costs might be eligible to receive the costs.

While the legislation would not permit the death benefit to go to the murderer, even if she or he paid these expenses, it is important to note that the funeral expenses would already have been paid by the time the person was convicted of murder. If the murderer received the death benefit before being convicted, he or she would lose eligibility for the death benefit and would have to reimburse the department at that point.

Next, let me explain why the bill would only apply to first- and second-degree murder. As stated earlier, the amendments made by Bill C-591 are based on a common-law principle that individuals should not benefit from their crimes. This principle of *ex turpi causa* clearly applies to conviction of first- and second-degree murder. The principle does not apply as clearly or uniformly to cases of manslaughter and other offences since they do not necessarily involve the intent to kill and can involve abuse, provocation, or accident. Courts have said that the principle of *ex turpi causa* should not be applied automatically to manslaughter and other offences involving responsibility for a death without examining the specific circumstances of each case.

Further to the role of the minister, it would be impossible for the minister to proactively identify murderers nor would it be feasible to implement a tracking system due to major obstacles such as provincial and territorial privacy laws. Creating the legal obligation for the minister to proactively detect who is subject to this provision would set an obligation upon the minister that is impossible to fulfill.

Private Members' Business

•(1115)

Therefore, there must be engagement with victims organizations to increase awareness of these amendments. This can be done by calling the department, by writing, or by visiting a Service Canada office. The department can then verify ineligibility due to murder by first and second degree through a copy of an official document confirming the conviction.

As stated, it is estimated that approximately 30 individuals per year would be affected by this legislative amendment. Of those, roughly half would apply for CPP survivors' benefits, roughly one-third would be OAS allowance recipients, and less than 10% would relate to CPP orphan benefits.

Familial homicides are not all committed by spouses, children, or common-law partners, and not all cases are charged with murder, convicted, nor have all victims sufficiently contributed to the CPP or possible recipients of the allowance for survivors.

The intent of the legislation would not be to punish families. The focus would be on preventing murderers from benefiting from their crimes. An individual convicted of murdering his or her spouse would be ineligible for survivor pension. However, if there are children, the orphans' benefit would still be applied.

The proposed approach is feasible, cost-effective, and consistent with privacy laws. It respects areas of provincial and territorial jurisdiction, ensuring that the minister would be able to fulfill obligations.

In closing, nothing can take away the pain and suffering experienced by the survivors of a murder victim. No law can ever bring back those whose lives have been taken by such a cruel act of violence.

However, this bill would restore fairness to victims and their families. This bill would ensure that those convicted of first and second degree murder would not be entitled to their victims' benefits. None of us wants to see those who suffer the loss of a loved one suffer the added insult of seeing the one responsible for their death by first or second degree murder collecting the victim's benefits as well.

I hope that the bill is supported by all members of this House and sees swift passage after a thorough debate.

Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking my colleague from Chatham-Kent—Essex for his contribution with this private member's bill. It closes an obvious loophole that I am sure will be closed with the support of all, if not most, members.

Mr. Speaker, my question through you to the member is relating to his decision in the bill to exclude manslaughter from the ambit of what I think he is very properly trying to do with respect to the Canada pension plan and the old age security benefits.

Section 232 of Criminal Code says:

(1) Culpable homicide that otherwise would be murder may be reduced to manslaughter if the person who committed it did so in the heat of passion caused by sudden provocation.

It seems to me, without evidence before me to substantiate that, much of the spousal homicides that occur would be either the subject of manslaughter, or perhaps a plea bargain, where a first or second degree murder charge is reduced to manslaughter.

I ask the hon. member whether he would consider an amendment at the committee stage to address, in some way, the underinclusive nature of his bill.

•(1120)

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren: Mr. Speaker, the question of manslaughter is indeed an area that has been discussed. I understand it was presented in a similar bill by the member for Hamilton Mountain.

I feel that the legislation would have more strength if we restrict it to first and second degree murder. As I stated in my speech, the courts have said that in the cases of manslaughter, this would possibly cause problems and could be thrown out of court. What I am trying to do today is to present a bill that is solid, that would be able to make passage.

However, as the member said, the bill will go before committee, and these are the things that we need to discuss further.

I thank the member for his statements. I thank him for his kind words. I look forward to the passage of the bill. I am also very thankful to hear that the members opposite also support this as something that needs to be done.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that there is a great deal of merit in the bill, and we will be supporting it. However, if I was going to stand up on OAS and our pension program, the CPP, my first inclination would be to talk about the government's actions with respect to increasing the age of retirement from 65 to 67, or the guaranteed income supplements. Canadians believe strongly and passionately about our pension programs.

Having said that, I will resist asking a question on that. Rather, I would ask the member if he could give any indication as to the number of individuals who today would be a benefactor of any form of Canada pensions through the current system. He mentioned that it has been about 30 a year in recent years. Does he have any sense as to the number of people in our institutions today who have committed that type of crime and who are receiving the types of benefits that this bill is designed to prevent in the future?

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member across the way for keeping this discussion on the bill. I recognize the temptation. I appreciate his question. It is a good question.

Due to privacy laws, the exact number is impossible to know. We have suggested, and I have suggested in my bill, that we put a program in place where the minister can inform the public where there are cases that this is taking place. It would be retroactive, in which cases they would then cease.

As to the number, the member is right, as I stated in my speech, I spoke about approximately 30 people who could be affected. It would not apply to all of those. However, as to the number who would cease to receive the benefit, if the minister is notified, it would be all of them.

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Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as I foreshadowed in my question for the hon. member for Chatham-Kent—Essex, New Democrats say categorically that we as the official opposition will be supporting this bill. This is a bill that closes a very obvious loophole, but for reasons that I will describe, in my judgment it does not go far enough.

This bill is remarkably similar to legislation initiated and introduced in 2011, over three years ago, by my colleague, the member for Hamilton Mountain. New Democrats are pleased to see that the Conservatives are finally recognizing the need to address this issue and to close such an obvious loophole. An unfortunate failure of the current Canada pension plan legislation is that survivors' pension death benefits or orphans' benefits may be made payable to those convicted of murdering their spouse or parent. I am sure that to 100% of Canadians that will sound bizarre in the extreme. That it has taken a private member's bill and the government three years to respond to the private member's bill of my colleague from Hamilton Mountain should seem equally strange to Canadians.

When the member for Hamilton Mountain introduced a similar bill, she was responding to this letter from a constituent, which stated:

I have a relative who killed his wife, served very little time for manslaughter, and is (and has been) collecting CPP survivor benefits for over 10 years. Since 1-2 women per week die at the hands of their partners, how many more men are collecting this? How is this legal?

That is an excellent question, but, as we will see, as in many cases of this kind, the constituent was talking about manslaughter, not simply first or second degree murder, which is the sole ambit of the private member's bill before us today.

A few days ago, on CBC TV, in my part of the world, British Columbia, the following was said:

A North Delta woman, whose father killed her mother, wants the federal government to plug a loophole that allowed him to collect pension survivor benefits for 28 years until his death.

Susan Fetterkind's mother Vivienne was stabbed multiple times by her estranged husband.... [He] collected Canada Pension Plan benefits until he died last year.

She went on to say:

The government is enabling killers to profit from murdering their spouse. You're not supposed to be able to profit from murdering somebody.

That is so obviously true. Once again, the largest proportion of family-related homicides are spousal murders, and of those, a great number result in a plea bargain and a reduced conviction of manslaughter. Ms. Fetterkind is hoping that this Parliament, aware of this initiative before us today, will embrace not just first and degree murder, but also manslaughter, which I will talk about in a moment. Correcting this error and ending the ability of those convicted of murdering their spouses or parents to collect survivor or orphan benefits is obviously something that the official opposition will strongly support. That is, of course, why New Democrats introduced legislation long ago.

As my colleague from Winnipeg North alluded to a moment ago, it is quite surprising that this initiative is taking the form of a private member's bill. I say that for two reasons. The Canada pension plan and old age security are the subjects of enormous debate right now in Canada. The need for income retirement security has never been

greater, yet the government is not addressing that. All it has done on OAS is to increase the age of collection until 67, and refused to act in a comprehensive way on CPP. Therefore, it is surprising that this is not part of a comprehensive reform that is so desperately required in both of those contexts.

However, equally surprising is that this is a private member's bill. The government routinely introduces—I do not know how many times now—omnibus budget bills, what we call “everything but the kitchen sink legislation”, of which this could readily be a part, yet it is now in the form of a private member's bill. Having said all of that, I do not want the form to triumph over the substance. The substance is critical and long overdue, although it is rather strange that it is taking the form of a private member's bill.

● (1125)

In June 2011, the member of Parliament for Hamilton Mountain reintroduced Bill C-206, an act to amend the Canada pension plan in relation to pension and benefits. It would have amended the Canada pension plan to prohibit the payment of survivors pension, orphans benefits, or death benefits to a survivor, child, or orphan of a deceased contributor if the survivor, child, or orphan had been convicted of the murder or manslaughter of the deceased contributor. That bill quite categorically embraced the category of manslaughter, unlike the bill before us today.

As my colleague from Chatham-Kent—Essex pointed out, many would assume that the long-established principle in law would be that no one should be able to benefit from a crime and that this principle would also be enshrined in the eligibility criteria for government benefit programs, but that was not the case for CPP benefits and old age security benefits. This loophole is obvious and needs to be closed, and that is why the legislation was introduced before.

In response to what my colleague said about manslaughter, while I appreciate that he wants to keep the bill clear and easy to put into legislation, I would urge him to consider including manslaughter in the bill when it goes to committee, for a couple of important reasons.

I do not believe there is any reason a court could not, as part of the sentencing on manslaughter, take a look at the circumstances. Among the things the judge could look at is whether, in his or her judgment, CPP and OAS benefits ought to be denied to the survivor, the person who committed the murder or manslaughter, when convicted. It could readily be part of a court order. There would be no privacy concerns whatsoever, as the statement would be made in open court.

I confess I do not have statistics for it, except the experience of all criminal lawyers as they plead their client down from murder to manslaughter, but if I am right that it will be a larger category, it seems ridiculous that we would not include those convicted of manslaughter within the ambit of this legislation. In other words, to put it baldly, if a person is convicted of murder, they cannot collect these benefits, but if they manage to get plea-bargained down to manslaughter, that is just fine.

I do not believe Canadians would accept that. I do not believe the two people whose direct experience I cited earlier would accept it, because in both cases their father was convicted not of murder but of manslaughter. We are not doing the right thing by Canadians if we limit ourselves to that. Most crimes of passion would be manslaughter, not premeditated murder, so it seems to me that we are missing the boat in a massive way if we do not close that loophole as well.

I commend my colleague for bringing this measure forward to embrace the category of murder, but to not embrace manslaughter seems rather ridiculous, given that culpable spousal or partner homicide is most likely to result in manslaughter, not murder. If I am wrong on my statistics, I of course will stand to be corrected, but I believe that to be the case, just based on common sense and experience in the courts.

I think that is the only thing that would be in the way of our providing unanimous and immediate support for this measure. We should decide to make it more inclusive than it is.

In terms of validators for a position that we are taking, needless to say, it is common sense. If we asked Canadians how they would feel about someone collecting these benefits if they have been convicted of spousal homicide, obviously clearly they would agree with the bill. The Woman Abuse Working Group's action committee supported Bill C-206 and commended the member for Hamilton Mountain for bringing it forward, and I am sure that women's groups would also accept this measure as well.

In conclusion, I commend the member for bringing the bill forward. It is an overdue initiative. I just hope that at committee stage, we will be able to persuade the hon. member and the government to expand it to find a creative way to include manslaughter within the ambit of this important initiative.

• (1130)

Hon. John McCallum (Markham—Unionville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Party is pleased to support this legislation. Logic and natural justice seem to make it clear that an individual should not benefit from a crime, particularly when that crime is murder. The murder of a spouse, the murder of anyone, is obviously an extremely serious crime, so we do not want the system to be such that an individual who murders his or her spouse would benefit through the collection of any kind of government benefits. This legislation would stop that from happening for both Canadian pension plan benefits and old age security benefits.

We are told by the Library of Parliament that it may happen to be a policy of the government, which is not law. I am not sure if that is correct, but whether or not it is correct, it is a principle that is worth enshrining in law so that there is absolutely no doubt that it is the law

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of the land. We in the Liberal Party have no hesitation whatsoever in offering our support to the bill.

Right at the core of the bill is old age security, and old age security is an important issue for Canadians in a number of areas. To deprive an individual of the OAS benefits of his or her murdered spouse is critical, important, and positive, but that might affect up to four dozen people, whereas the raising of the age for OAS from 65 to 67 must affect hundreds of thousands of people. Given the centrality of OAS in this particular private member's bill, it is worth spending a little time talking about OAS in the context of what affects thousands of Canadians.

• (1135)

[*Translation*]

The Liberal Party is opposed to the government's plan to increase the age of eligibility for old age security from 65 to 67. We oppose it for two reasons. First, contrary to what the government is saying, all of the experts are telling us that the current system is actually viable.

[*English*]

The government says that the system is not sustainable because of our aging population, but the chief actuary, the Parliamentary Budget Officer, and other worthy and qualified bodies and individuals say that it is. When asked to choose between the statement of the government on sustainability and the statement of these experts, I will go with the experts.

My second point is that even if we deny what the experts say and argue that the current system is unsustainable, there are different ways to make it sustainable. One is to increase the age from 65 to 67, which the government is proposing, but that is the most mean-spirited method. It would really hit the most vulnerable. If we really believe it is unsustainable, which I do not, another way would be to reduce the income level—

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I want to thank the Liberal Party for its support of the bill, but the member should focus on the bill itself. The current subject that he is debating is really not a part of the bill. I would ask the member to focus on the important dialogue of discussing the bill.

The Deputy Speaker: Does the hon. member for Markham—Unionville want to respond?

Hon. John McCallum: Mr. Speaker, I indicated the wholehearted support of the Liberal Party for the bill. I also said OAS is central to the bill. Having indicated my support, I thought it was perhaps in order for me to discuss another aspect of OAS. This aspect of the OAS, which I was in the middle of discussing, has an important impact on hundreds of thousands of Canadians, so I did think it was germane to the debate.

The Deputy Speaker: I think the point of order on relevance is appropriate here. I have to say to the member for Markham—Unionville that I am having some difficulty seeing the connection. Even recognizing how broadly we have interpreted the range of relevance, I am having some difficulty in this particular case. Perhaps I could invite the member to bring his comments back to the bill before us.

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Hon. John McCallum: Mr. Speaker, perhaps you will allow me a minute to complete my thought and then I will return to the bill.

I was in the process of saying that if the government thinks the OAS is unsustainable, instead of raising the age from 65 to 67, it could reduce the income level at which people receive it. This second way would be hitting Canadians who are better off. However, the way the government has chosen do it hits the worst-off Canadians, particularly those on disability and those who have had worked in hard physical labour and are incapable of working, for physical reasons, beyond the age of 65, and they would also would lose their GIS.

I think I have addressed that point as much as I am allowed to in the context of this debate. I will now return to the private member's bill that has been proposed.

• (1140)

[*Translation*]

I can only reiterate that the Liberal Party, for all the reasons laid out by the member sponsoring this bill, agrees with the principle and the details of the bill. I do not think it is a partisan issue. It has already received support from all of the parties. I believe that the NDP even introduced a similar bill in the past. I believe that all of the members will support this bill, and that is why the Liberal Party will be supporting it.

[*English*]

Mr. Scott Armstrong (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment and Social Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to Bill C-591. I would like to first congratulate the hard-working member for Chatham-Kent—Essex for introducing this terrific bill. I hope that all parties will support the bill to amend the Canada Pension Plan and the Old Age Security Act to deny CPP survivor benefits and the OAS allowance to anyone convicted of murdering a spouse, common law partner, or parent.

As the member for Chatham-Kent—Essex has pointed out, no one wants to see criminals rewarded for their crimes. Certainly no one who pays taxes or who personally contributes to an insurance plan wants to see murderers receive a benefit for killing someone. Our government always puts victims first and has a strong record of bringing back fairness to the criminal justice system. I agree, and the government agrees with the member's bill, and I will be pleased to support the bill when it comes up for a vote. We will be making some technical amendments at committee. However, we believe that the crux of the bill meets the challenge.

I hope we will work with the opposition to see the bill pass quickly so that the human resources committee can study it this fall. As we have heard, there is all-party support for this legislation.

Let me describe the benefits we are talking about. When a contributor to the Canada pension plan dies, his or her surviving spouse, common law partner, and dependent children are entitled to certain benefits. Specifically, these benefits are the monthly survivor's pension plan paid to the spouse or common law partner, the monthly surviving child benefit for dependent children up to the age of 25, if they are full-time students, and a lump sum death benefit usually paid to the contributor's estate.

For a spouse, common law partner, or child to be eligible for CPP survivor benefits, the deceased contributor must have made significant contributions to the Canada pension plan. In the case of old age security, the surviving spouse or common law partner is entitled to the allowance for the survivor if the survivor is aged 60 to 64, has a low income, and has not started living with another partner.

The Department of Employment and Social Development already has administrative procedures, based on common law principles, that prohibit a spouse, common law partner, or child from receiving survivor benefits if the department is informed that the person has been convicted of the murder of an individual and is the survivor and consequently the primary beneficiary. The problem is that there is no provision in the law to prevent these provisions from actually being paid. What C-591 would do is give clear authority, raise the visibility, and increase transparency to ensure that no one could benefit financially from murdering a spouse.

The member for Chatham-Kent—Essex will be requesting that the Minister of Employment and Social Development write to the provinces and territories to raise awareness of this bill and new legislation so that no one convicted of murder would be benefiting from the crime. We believe that the member's approach is the right approach, and we will be pleased to support it.

Thankfully, death at the hands of family members is not all that common in Canada, and the convicted murderers are not always eligible for these benefits anyway. However, over the last decade, an average of 48 people a year have been charged with spousal murder. Most of these were young men charged with killing their wives or female partners.

Each year between 2003 to 2012, an average of 21 individuals in all age categories were accused of killing a parent or step-parent. Among them were approximately five or six persons accused who were between the ages of 18 and 25. Only three of the accused were under the age of 18. Age 25 is the upper limit for eligibility for a child survivor benefit under the Canada pension plan.

That is why it is so important that Parliament pass the bill, because if even one person can benefit financially from killing a spouse, this is one too many.

The member is correct to proceed carefully with C-591, because it must be both fair to victims and fair to due process. First, this legislation would apply only to people who have been convicted of murder rather than to those who have been charged with murder. It is a basic principle of common law that a person accused of a crime is considered innocent until proven guilty. If the minister learns of a conviction, however, the individual would not only be disqualified from receiving survivor benefits but would also be required to pay back any survivor benefits he or she might already have received. This legislation would be retroactive.

• (1145)

If, however, such individuals eventually had their convictions reversed on appeal, their benefits would then, of course, be reinstated. This is the right approach, the fair approach, and the reasonable approach.

This law would not apply to minor children who have murdered a parent. The surviving child benefit is received not by the child but by that child's parent or guardian on the child's behalf to help cover the costs of caring for that child. We do not want to demand repayment of those children's benefits from a grieving widow whose child has been convicted of murdering her spouse.

What if the murderer was between the ages of 18 and 25 and a full-time student who would normally be eligible for the child benefit following the death of his or her parent? In such a case, the individual would be treated as an adult and would be rendered ineligible for these payments.

I would like to point out that this law would not prevent CPP death benefits from going to the estate of the murdered person. However, it would prevent the death benefit from going directly to the spouse or adult child convicted of the murder.

The government expects that victims organizations and family members would notify Employment and Social Development Canada in the event of these kinds of cases to help ensure that murderers would not benefit from their crimes. To help facilitate this, the government would engage directly with victims advocacy groups and stakeholder groups so that they could easily notify the department when someone was convicted of the murder of someone whose death could otherwise entitle them to a CPP or OAS benefit. In fact, the bill would increase the visibility of the issue, and we expect that it would increase notifications from individuals and groups.

I would like to commend the member for Chatham-Kent—Essex for introducing this bill and for all the hard work he continues to do in representing victims across Canada. This proposed legislation would restore fairness to victims and their families. Therefore, I highly encourage my fellow members to join with us, support this bill, and support it in passing quickly.

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am rising to speak to Bill C-591, an act to amend the Canada pension plan and the old age security act. As was pointed out by the member for Victoria, the NDP will be supporting this piece of legislation.

I want to note that this bill seeks to end CPP survivor benefits for convicted murderers. The bill is remarkably similar to legislation introduced by the New Democrat MP for Hamilton Mountain. Because we have already had a history of introducing this legislation, we will support this bill.

It is unfortunate, and I suspect that many Canadians did not realize it until the matter came up for debate before the House, that part of the failure of the current Canada pension plan legislation is that the survivor's pension death benefit or orphan's benefit may be made payable to those convicted of murdering a spouse or parent. I will talk specifically about a story that was on the CBC recently, but I first want to put some numbers on the record.

Over the past decade, more than half of the spouses accused of homicide had a history of family violence involving the victim. That is, 65% of spouses accused of homicide had a history of violence regarding the victim. According to police-reported data in 2011, there were 81 female victims of intimate partner homicide in Canada

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versus 13 male victims. Finally, women are far more likely to be the victims of spousal homicide. This legislation removes the possibility that a spouse could receive a benefit following a conviction for murder.

In our own province of British Columbia, there was a recent story in that respect. The title is "Spousal killers shouldn't get survivor benefits". This was with respect to the victim's daughter. This story appeared on June 7 of this year. A woman named Susan Fetterkind wants the government to plug benefit loopholes in spousal murder cases. The story states:

A North Delta woman, whose father killed her mother, wants the federal government to plug a loophole that allowed him to collect pension survivor benefits for 28 years until his death.

I cannot imagine what it was like for the children. This was an example of a known history of violence. The husband was estranged at the time he murdered his former partner. Although we commend the member opposite for bringing this bill forward, as Susan mentioned in the article the bill does not go far enough. She said:

His bill mentions first and second degree murder but it doesn't mention manslaughter. My father did a plea bargain and he was convicted of manslaughter.

That is a good case in point. This man collected survivor benefits for 28 years. He was convicted of manslaughter because of the plea bargaining that is part of our system, so this bill would not have dealt with that issue.

I also want to acknowledge that the member said that at committee stage, amendments could be entertained. The member for Victoria has ably outlined the concerns with respect to the manslaughter provision.

Because of the fact that we are talking about survivor benefits, and largely we are talking about intimate partner violence, one of the things we need to do as a country is tackle some of the issues that leave women so vulnerable that these kinds of things can happen.

In 2009, West Coast LEAF, which is the women's Legal Education and Action Fund, produced a report on CEDAW, which is the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. It relates directly to some of the issues in this bill, because we would not need to talk about this if we actually protected women from being subject to violence from partners or other family members. LEAF produced a report card and gave grades to particular initiatives governments had undertaken. This is not a partisan issue. The fact of the matter is that this is where Canada is at this stage, through a series of governments.

It talked about two things. The first was with respect to missing and murdered aboriginal women and girls. They gave an F grade.

Many of us in this House are very familiar with the Robert Pickton murders in British Columbia. He was arrested and charged with the murder of 26 of these women in 2002, which drew a national outcry.

● (1150)

The report continues:

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—the systemic problems in the investigative process, or lack thereof, have not yet been addressed by the authorities, and the sustained and widespread calls for an inquiry into the missing and murdered women have thus far been ignored. In addition, increased investment in social services, including improved access to secure housing, may help reduce rates violence by protecting vulnerable women, such as those working in the sex trade.

This is an example of the fact that women are subject to violence. These are the kind of situations we see with the CPP survivor benefits.

Violence against women and girls received a grade C. It said that the CEDAW committee had noted that gender-based violence was a form of discrimination that seriously inhibited women's ability to enjoy equal rights and freedoms.

In 2008, the committee stated:

—remains concerned that domestic violence continues to be a significant problem.

The Committee was particularly concerned about a number of elements of the social services' and justice system's response to violence against women, including: the use of diversion and mediation in situations involving domestic violence; the practice of "dual charging"; an insufficient number of shelters for victims of violence; and the failure of courts to take domestic violence into account in custody and access determinations.

Despite past progress on this issue, the widespread nature of violence against women and recent regressive policy changes make this issue one of the most persistent barrier to women's equality in B. C. These are B.C. provincial government policies.

Further, evidence indicates that violence against women and children increases during times of economic crisis, calling for increased services rather than funding cuts.

Later on, they reiterate the issue around retrogressive social policies and say that decreased spending for services, such as social assistance, housing, child care and legal aid decreases women's independence, and consequently their ability to leave abusive relationships. Inaccessible and inadequate social services particularly impact the freedom of immigrant women who are sponsored by their abusive spouses.

First, when we have a justice system, as the member from Victoria rightly pointed out, that provides for plea bargaining, allows a spouse who has been convicted of murdering his spouse to then end up with a manslaughter charge and, as would be covered under this bill, that manslaughter charge would result in survivor benefits.

Second, we need to ensure that women are protected so they do not end up becoming the victims of spousal homicide.

Whether it is investments in shelters or legal systems that allow the families of the victim to ensure they have adequate legal representation when it comes to justice matters, these are all really important aspects.

Again, I commend the member for raising the bill before the House. I know the New Democrats will be supporting the bill. I look forward to a full discussion at committee, so perhaps some amendments can be made to deal with the manslaughter aspect of the bill.

• (1155)

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and for Western Economic Diversification, CPC): Mr.

Speaker, I am delighted to stand to speak to the private member's bill from my colleague from Chatham-Kent—Essex. It is always a treat when we get to bring forward private members' bills and introduce them in the House. I congratulate him on having his first one here today.

The bill he has put forward is important and excellent. It sounds like all sides of the House will support the bill, so I congratulate him on that.

I would like to focus on a few of the changes the bill would bring.

For the first part, the bill aligns with the commitments the government made in the 2013 Speech from the Throne, which focuses on victims of crime and to strengthen our justice system.

The bill would also ensure that victims' rights would be placed ahead of those of convicted murderers. The bill is based on the well-established common-law principle that an individual should not benefit from his or her crime.

By legislating the principle that an individual shall not benefit from his or her crimes by becoming eligible for CPP or OAS benefits as a result of committing murder, Parliament would provide clear legal authority to prevent murderers from receiving pensions.

The CPP benefits we are talking about are the monthly survivor pension paid to the spouse or common-law partner or the deceased contributor, the monthly children's benefit for dependent children up to the age of 18 or to the age of 25, if they are full-time students, and a lump sum death benefit usually paid to the contributor's estate.

For a common-law child to be eligible for the Canada pension plan survivor benefit, the deceased contributor must have made sufficient contributions to the Canada pension plan to generate such a benefit. The bill would also apply to the OAS program allowance for the survivor provided to low-income survivors aged 60-64.

Here is again how the bill would work. If the survivor of the deceased individual would normally be eligible to receive them, survivor benefits could initially be paid to an individual charged with murdering a spouse, common-law partner or parent. This eligibility would immediately be revoked when Employment and Social Development Canada was informed that the claimant survivor had been convicted of murdering the person in whose name the benefit would be paid. At this point, the claimant would be determined to have never been eligible for the benefit.

An overpayment would then be established for all CPP or OAS benefits the individual received as the result of the death and steps would be taken immediately to recover the overpayment.

In cases where the person would be convicted of murder but was subsequently found to be not guilty, for example as a result of an appeal, then the person would be entitled to the full benefit once the Department of Employment and Social Development was notified. This would include payments retroactive to the first day of eligibility resulting from the death of a spouse, common-law partner or parent.

With respect to the CPP, in cases where a person under the age of 18 is convicted of murdering a parent, the surviving child benefit can be paid until the child reaches the age of 18. That is because when a child is under 18, the children's benefit is not paid to the child, but to the parent or guardian to help with the costs of caring for the child.

We do not want to create a scenario where the surviving parent of the child convicted of murdering the other parent is forced to repay the children's benefits they receive. This would be punishing a victim who had committed no crime.

The Canada pension plan would be amended to ensure that under no circumstances could individuals known by the minister to have been convicted of murdering their spouse, common-law partner or parent be eligible for the CPP death benefit resulting from that death. This does not affect the estate of the person who has been murdered. The Canada pension plan death benefit could still be paid to the estate of the deceased.

Again, the bill is entirely consistent with, among others, the policy of the United States Social Security Administration, which makes individuals convicted of felonious and intentional homicide in the death of an insured wage earner ineligible for survivor benefits.

● (1200)

The United Kingdom also has legislation to prevent an individual who has unlawfully killed a spouse or partner to receive benefits resulting from the death.

To better enforce these new legislative provisions, the government would engage directly with victims, advocacy and stakeholder groups so they could easily notify the department when someone had been convicted of murder and the death of the victim would normally entitle the convicted person to the benefit. These amendments underscore and emphasize our government's commitment to maintaining a key principle of justice, namely, that a person convicted of a crime should not profit from that crime. It has been made crystal clear that the murderer of a spouse, partner or parent will not benefit from a crime by gaining CPP or old age security benefits.

It is clear that our Conservative government continues to stand up for the rights of victims and that Canadians can count on us to deliver results. I would also like to note, as I said at the start, we have heard from the New Democrats, the Liberals and the member who introduced the private member's bill that this is an important, common-sense piece of legislation that all members of the House can get behind. I truly think that most Canadians, if they knew that someone could murder a spouse or a wife and be eligible for government survivor benefits, they would be absolutely appalled.

What we have is legislation that is inherently sensible. I am appreciative that all members in the House will support it. It is the right thing to do and it sounds like we do have support from all members of the House.

Again, for the member for Chatham-Kent—Essex, congratulations on important legislation, and we look forward to moving it through the process and seeing this into law.

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[Translation]

The Deputy Speaker: 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.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

STRENGTHENING CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP ACT

BILL C-24—TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC) moved:

That, in relation to Bill C-24, An Act to amend the Citizenship Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, not more than five further hours shall be allotted to the consideration at report stage of the bill and five hours shall be allotted to the consideration at third reading stage of the said bill; and

that, at the expiry of the five hours provided for the consideration at report stage and the five hours provided for the consideration at third reading stage of the said bill, any proceedings before the House shall be interrupted, if required for the purpose of this order, and in turn every question necessary for the disposal of the said stages of the bill then under consideration shall be put forthwith and successively, without further debate or amendment.

● (1205)

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this is another sad day in the history of our Parliament. Unfortunately, this is the 71st time the government has used time allocation to shut down debate on an issue.

A few weeks ago, the Conservatives broke the corrupt Liberals' sorry record for the number of time allocations during a single Parliament, a record that the Conservatives always used to condemn. They always used to say that this was no place for time allocation motions. Now, with their 71st, they have left the Liberals' record far behind. The Conservatives are worse than the Liberals, and that is not very impressive.

[English]

The headline this weekend in the *Vancouver Sun* was, “[Prime Minister's] Abuse of Power Comes Daily”. It talked about the culture of secrecy, partisanship, and contempt for due process that runs rampant in the current government. This is particularly the case with Bill C-24.

Bill C-24 is controversial. It has had opposition from across this country. The Conservatives used closure to try to ram it through, but they said in committee that they would actually consider amendments. However, the bill comes back from committee, not only without being amended, but even more appalling, this Conservative majority did not allow any witnesses to consider the bill. That is the real reason they are using closure.

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It is an embarrassing bill, one that is not going to stand up in court, and it is igniting a lot of opposition across the country. Instead of having a proper parliamentary debate, instead of allowing witnesses to speak on the bill and have Canadian groups in who are actually concerned about the bill, the Conservatives have shut that process down: no amendments and not a single witness. Is that not the real reason the Conservatives are bringing in closure? Is it because they know that witnesses speaking to the bill will criticize it?

Of course, if there are amendments that could be brought in, all they could do is improve upon a bill that has a bad principle and a bad direction. However, is that not the real reason the Conservatives are bringing in closure today? They want to shut down debate before the public becomes aware of what they have done with the bill.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is a great day for Canadian citizens who have been calling for these changes for years—decades even. This is also a great day for future citizens.

The last time there was a massive overhaul of the Citizenship Act was in 1977, and happily, that era is in the past. The measures in our bill are popular across the country, especially with people who are looking forward to receiving the gift of citizenship and the privileges and responsibilities that go with it.

● (1210)

[*English*]

Yes, this bill is needed. It is needed by those whose applications are in process. It is needed by the record number of immigrants in this country today who are applying for citizenship once they meet the requirements and who are driving our naturalization up from where it already is, the highest in the world, to be even higher with each succeeding year.

Yes, we as a government are taking action to make sure these measures come into force sooner rather than later on the basis of a very full debate. It is just plain wrong for the opposition House leader to say that there has been no discussion in committee. On the contrary, there was 12 hours of study in committee, led by my colleague, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, and with discussion led by a number of very credible and competent witnesses on all sides of the issue. However, none of that study has changed the fact that across the length and breadth of this country, these measures are popular because Canadians attach value to their citizenship as never before, and they want to see that value fully reflected in legislation.

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan (Scarborough—Rouge River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, what the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration is saying is quite surprising. I am a member of the citizenship and immigration committee. However, at committee, the bill was not studied. There were zero witnesses that the committee heard after the bill was sent from this House to the committee. Maybe the minister is confused with the pre-study on the subject matter of the bill that we did, which was also under time allocation. We were very limited as to the number of witnesses we were able to hear from.

The UNHCR and Amnesty International, to name a couple, were organizations that wanted to make a presentation and appear as

witnesses before the citizenship and immigration committee, but were not allowed. It was because the government's decision was that it was not going to hear any witnesses at the citizenship and immigration committee.

My first question for the minister is this: why is he misleading this House and Canadians who are watching by saying that?

Second, the minister said that the bill has support and approval from Canadians across the country. We know that is not true either, because there are many online resident-generated petitions with more than 30,000 signatures. That does not mean that there is broad support for the bill.

I want to know why the government, now for the 70th time, is moving time allocation, curtailing debate in this House, and not letting the voices of Canadians be heard in this House.

Hon. Chris Alexander: Mr. Speaker, there you have it. The government House leader says there has been no study and now the member for Scarborough—Rouge River says there was a pre-study. Once again, the New Democrats are all over the map. Once again, they are the ones confusing an otherwise attentive Canadian audience, which wants the measures in this bill enacted.

We not only studied this bill, we did it in advance of report stage and referral to committee to make sure that all those who had perspectives on this bill, and it is an important one, had the opportunity to express them, and we have heard those views. We heard them in committee, and we saw them in newspapers and media across the country and in correspondence and feedback to our offices and MPs. Let me emphasize that the response has been overwhelmingly positive.

What has not been well received and what reflected a very low quality of work were the amendments proposed by the NDP and Liberals in committee. We were unable to adopt any of them because, to be perfectly honest, they were not up to spec. They did not improve the bill. They would not have made it faster for Canadians to attain citizenship, to which they have a right when they meet the requirements. They would not have reinforced the pride that Canadians take in their citizenship or reinforced the value that so many across this country are talking about. They would have watered down the penalties for disloyalty that we are absolutely adamant be in this bill, because there are limits to the forms of behaviour that are acceptable from Canadian citizens if they are going to retain citizenship when they are dual nationals.

● (1215)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe (Pierrefonds—Dollard, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is hard to know where to start when we hear that kind of thing from the minister. Honestly,

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Let us begin with the accelerated citizenship process. The Conservatives have performed very poorly on this issue. They have let citizenship application processing times more than double in the past few years. They are just now reacting, and they are doing a poor job of it. We are not convinced that anything in this bill will result in adequate and essential measures to reduce waiting times for those who are entitled to citizenship and get mired in an administrative morass.

Speaking of helping people who deserve it get citizenship, this morning alone, I received a number of calls from people across the country who are concerned and angry because in a few days, weeks or months, they will have met the time requirement for filing a citizenship application. They have planned their lives around that and carefully calculate every day that counts toward being able to file their citizenship application as soon as possible. Today, the minister is telling them that despite their expectations and dreams, the waiting period is being extended. That is very disrespectful. On behalf of all of them today, I just want to say how unacceptable it is to rush the debate like this. For one thing, it penalizes many people who were counting on filing their citizenship application shortly. It also flies in the face of all the normal House procedures.

This bill was first introduced on February 6. The second hour of second reading did not happen until May 29. For three months, the minister dilly-dallied instead of bringing this bill back to the House. We were not able to debate it, and at the last minute, the minister is bringing the bill back and forcing it down our throats without accepting any real debate. This is unacceptable.

Hon. Chris Alexander: Mr. Speaker, with all due respect to my hon. colleague, she is simply wrong about what she just said. We are speeding up processing times.

It is the NDP that is against processing pending applications more quickly. If the NDP had it their way, debate on this bill, the debate would go on until the end of this session or even until fall. Maybe in 2015, or later, we might have results for those who are patiently waiting for faster processing times.

This government will never accept that kind of approach. We have accepted 1.4 million new citizens. We are proud of new Canadians' commitment to their citizenship. There are certainly some backlogs, but thanks to the measures in this bill we will be able to process files much more quickly. Backlogs will be less of a problem for those who apply for citizenship once this newly reformed legislation comes into effect, and processing times will be much quicker.

I see no reason for the people calling my hon. colleague to be concerned.

[*English*]

Mr. Andrew Cash (Davenport, NDP): Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons the minister wants to close the debate on the bill is because he keeps making stuff up and does not want the scrutiny of Parliament to uncover the fantasy-based facts that he continues to underlie his reasons for the bill.

The bill would increase wait times. It would make citizenship harder to acquire for those who are waiting right now. There are already over 300,000 people waiting, their applications pending. The bill would make it harder. It would make it harder for children and

seniors to acquire citizenship because they would have to undergo rigorous language tests. It would extend the wait times, which are already over eight years. It would give the minister unprecedented powers.

Are these the reasons why the current government wants to shut debate, because it does not want Canadians to really understand the fundamental ways in which the government would change the rules for citizenship, which are the cornerstone of who we are as a country?

• (1220)

Hon. Chris Alexander: Mr. Speaker, make it harder to become a citizen? Waiting times of eight years?

With statements like these from the opposition benches, it is no wonder that some Canadians are confused. They are receiving false information from some in this House. That really is unfortunate, given the importance of the bill.

Here are the facts.

Yes, there are over 300,000 applicants in the system. Yes, waiting times for new applications, as things stand now, are two to three years.

However, with the measures in the bill, which the NDP would see us postpone, delay, et cetera, those waiting times would come down later this year, plummet in 2015, and be under one year by the beginning of 2016.

Moreover, yes, we are extending the knowledge requirement, the language requirement, to a slightly larger age spectrum, down to high school age and up to late working age, the eve of the normal legal age of retirement in this country, 64 years.

However, every time we strengthen the requirements of citizenship, we find it becomes more popular. We find more people apply. We find the naturalization rate goes up.

Therefore, we would not be making it harder to become a citizen of this country. We would actually be making it more meaningful. We would be doing something that Canadians have responded to extremely positively with every form we have brought in. We expect the same positive response this time.

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to listen to the minister. First, what we are doing in this half-hour period is actually talking about parliamentary process. What we are talking about is not the merits of the bill, but parliamentary process, in terms of shutting down debate around a very important matter before this House.

I have to comment on a couple of things that the minister raised. First, he accused the NDP of not wanting to deal with the significant delays in citizenship and immigration. He is well aware that our constituency offices spend a significant amount of our time dealing with the unconscionable delays with regard to citizenship and immigration. It is ludicrous to hear the minister say that we support keeping those delays in place.

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We do support legislation that is thoughtful, that takes into account the concerns of Canadian citizens, and that looks at due process. The minister is saying that everybody is happy about this legislation. I should perhaps send him three documents. The Canadian Bar Association, the B.C. Civil Liberties Association, and a number of prominent scholars and academics, just to name a few, have done a detailed analysis of this legislation and have raised significant concerns.

I ask the minister, why is it that he supports shutting down a democratic process, a democratic debate, that would allow us to have a full review of this piece of legislation in the appropriate kind of process? Why is he shutting down that opportunity?

Hon. Chris Alexander: Mr. Speaker, why did the NDP, on February 27, in the person of my colleague, the immigration critic for the NDP, move to end debate on Bill C-24, to discontinue debate at that early stage? Was that a positive co-operative expression of faith in the democratic process? We do not think so, nor did we think so in the three days of debate allocated to second reading. We heard the same speech time and time again from the NDP, citing the same inaccurate information, often from the B.C. Civil Liberties Association or a small section of the Canadian Bar Association. They do not speak for Canadians across the board. They do not even speak for lawyers across the board. That is what we have heard from the much broader feedback that we have had, from a much broader group of people.

I spoke to people last week who signed the petition, which contains thousands of names, as many online petitions do. After a five-minute discussion, they said they would be taking their names off the petition. They had not understood what they were actually expressing their opposition to. They had not understood the benefits of the bill. They had not understood how processing would become faster. They had not understood how the value of Canadian citizenship would be strengthened by a four-year residency requirement. It would ensure that we are not moving in the direction, as Richard Gwyn regretted some years ago, of turning Canadian citizenship into “the unbearable lightness of being Canadian”.

We want people to have a substantial understanding of this country, its laws, its traditions, its system of government. That is what the “Discover Canada” guide does; that is what our reforms today have done; that is what the bill will do, and that is why it is popular with Canadians.

• (1225)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the minister is failing to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. When he says that all members have had the opportunity to speak to this bill, that is not exactly true. We give speeches here in the House as a way to connect with our constituents about bills. That is one way that we can let our constituents know what is going on.

The real reason for the debate that is happening right now is that once again, the Conservatives are limiting the time members have to explain things to their constituents in simple terms, so that they in turn can express their opinions on the subject.

A Togolese resident of my riding is facing deportation on June 19. The parliamentary process is not working. The minister received a letter in this regard. Perhaps there will be a question about this in the House, or perhaps not, but the process is not working. The bill in question is going to once again delay the process and drag it out.

This situation is a terrible shame. The last thing I want to say is that it is important that we be able to have a say and help the government make better laws. The Conservatives' habit of always limiting time for debate is shameful.

Hon. Chris Alexander: Mr. Speaker, fortunately, we have not yet had the opportunity to hear every member of the NDP repeat the same speech.

However, many of them have said the same thing, and it is doing them more harm than good. Canadians have heard them and are now saying to themselves that the NDP has nothing substantial to say about this bill.

If we read the debates about the Citizenship Act from 1946 or 1914, no member of the House repeated himself or said the same thing. Generally speaking, members act responsibly in the House. They try to avoid wasting the House's time and to bring forward new perspectives and add to the debate. However, that is not what the NDP is doing.

The NDP wanted to put an end to this debate and postpone the reform of our Citizenship Act until the end of February. We are moving forward because the process is working fairly well. Over 100,000 Canadians have already received their citizenship this year, and the measures set out in this bill will ensure that the number of successful citizenship applicants continues to rise.

[*English*]

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will start by saying “71”. That is the number of times that the government has brought in closure on debate in the House. It is a record, by the way. I am sure by the end of the day, it will be 72, and if not today, it will be tomorrow.

The minister said that the NDP is saying the same thing over and over again. The NDP has a lot to say on this legislation because it is important legislation. It is more a matter of him not liking what we have to say and that he would like to dismiss it.

He also said that the system is working very well. I can understand that. From his point of view, the system is working very well when the government controls it 100% and can basically bypass the legislative process in the House.

I do need to point out that no witnesses were heard when the bill was at committee. The government says that pre-consultation was done. The fact is that we abide by due process at committee, hearing parliamentary witnesses at committee. That is an integral part of the parliamentary process. Quite frankly, I am shocked and disturbed that the minister is not taking responsibility and does not see the error in trying to bypass a legitimate process at committee. There is no excuse for it.

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Of course, it is the government's prerogative if it wants to hold pre-consultations. However so many bills, whether it is Bill C-23 or this legislation, are being rammed through the House without due process, and that negates the very reason we are here. We were elected to hold the government to account, to examine legislation, and the committee process is an important part of that.

Again, we are having another vote on a closure motion, a censure on debate, on an important bill. How can the minister defend that? How can he defend bypassing an important stage at committee?

•(1230)

Hon. Chris Alexander: Mr. Speaker, the member is wrong. There were 25 witnesses who were heard in committee on the bill. It is a bill that was absolutely made public and available to all members of the citizenship and immigration committee. It was pre-studied. It was studied in clause by clause. It was pre-studied because we considered it important to have that debate in committee as early as possible.

How can members opposite claim that no witnesses were heard? How are those 25 people who made the trip to Ottawa, who prepared for their testimony, going to react to being told by the NDP that they did not exist?

The NDP has repeated itself. Those members have gone around in circles. We have heard the same speech many times, not just on this subject, but on many subjects. That lessens the effectiveness of this place. That bothers Canadians. They want us to add value every time we stand up in the House of Commons to discuss legislation. They do not want stonewalling, by any political party. We have a strong mandate to govern, and we have a strong mandate to bring this legislation up to date. The bill has not been reformed in 37 years. The NDP would have us go years more, perhaps another decade, before any updates are made, with all of the terrible consequences we know that would bring.

The real issue, and it is passing strange that the NDP has not raised it this afternoon, is that we and the NDP have a fundamental difference of opinion about the one issue that some in the bar association and in the BC Civil Liberties Association have raised. The NDP is also of that view. Those members think that terrorists, spies, and traitors, even if they are dual nationals, should stay—

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

The hon. member for Nickel Belt.

Mr. Claude Gravelle (Nickel Belt, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the minister is wrong again. At committee, there were no witnesses called—

Mr. Peter Julian: That is a fact.

Mr. Claude Gravelle: Mr. Speaker, that is a fact, and maybe the minister can stand up and apologize for misleading Canadians.

I have been on several committees since I have been here. When a committee is studying a project or a bill, we bring in witnesses. The Conservatives will bring in witnesses who are tilted to their way of thinking. However, they could not bring in any to discuss Bill C-24 because they could not find any Conservative witnesses who shared their way of thinking.

Will the minister now stand up and apologize to Canadians for misleading them and trying to make them believe that there were witnesses at committee when there were not?

Hon. Chris Alexander: Mr. Speaker, it is very unfortunate to see the member opposite putting himself in this position. He is not a member of the committee. Obviously, his colleagues on the NDP side have misled him about what the committee actually did.

The committee pre-studied the bill. It heard 25 witnesses with views from across the spectrum, on all sides of the bill. It was a useful study. It contributed to our understanding and Canadians' understanding of the bill.

The New Democrats are the ones who should apologize. Citizenship in this country involves an oath of allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada. It involves loyalty to our institutions, to our political system, and to all of the benefits that citizenship brings us.

That is one of the important points in this bill, which may be the only substantial point that the NDP has returned to time and time again. That is why we think that dual nationals who have committed acts of terrorism, espionage, or treason should no longer enjoy citizenship. They have forfeited and violated their allegiance to this country. The NDP differs with us on that, and it is offside with most Canadians in that same respect.

This bill would speed up processing. It would underline and deepen the value of Canadian citizenship, as never before. It would reward those who serve Canada at home and abroad, and it would send the clear message that gross acts of disloyalty, when they are committed by dual nationals, would lead to revocation of citizenship.

These are all measures that are hugely popular with the citizens of this country, and we look forward to celebrating them with Canadians on July 1.

•(1235)

The Deputy Speaker: The time has expired for questions and comments.

[*Translation*]

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Deputy Speaker: Call in the members.

Government Orders

● (1315)

[English]

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 169)

YEAS

Members

Adams	Adler
Albas	Albrecht
Alexander	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Ambler	Ambrose
Anderson	Armstrong
Ashfield	Aspin
Bateman	Bergen
Bernier	Bezan
Blaney	Block
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Brown (Barrie)	Butt
Calandra	Calkins
Cannan	Carmichael
Carrie	Chisu
Chong	Clarke
Crockatt	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Devolin	Dreeshen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dykstra
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Galipeau
Gallant	Gill
Goguen	Goldring
Goodyear	Gosal
Gourde	Grewal
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn
Hayes	Hiebert
Hillyer	Hoback
Holder	James
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)	Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)	Kerr
Komarnicki	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lauzon	Lebel
Lemieux	Leung
Lizon	Lobb
Lukiwski	Lunney
MacKenzie	Maguire
Mayes	McLeod
Menegakis	Merrifield
Miller	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Nicholson
Norlock	Obhrai
Oliver	O'Neill Gordon
Opitz	O'Toole
Paradis	Payne
Poilievre	Preston
Raitt	Rajotte
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Saxton
Schellenberger	Seeback
Shea	Shipley
Shory	Smith
Sopuck	Sorenson
Stanton	Storseth
Strahl	Sweet
Tilson	Toet
Trottier	Truppe
Uppal	Valcourt
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Wallace	Warawa
Warkentin	Watson
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)	
Weston (Saint John)	
Wilks	Williamson
Wong	Woodworth
Yelich	Young (Oakville)
Young (Vancouver South)	Zimmer — 134

NAYS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Atamanenko
Aubin	Bélangier
Blanchette	Blanchette-Lamothe
Boivin	Borg
Boulerice	Boutin-Sweet
Brison	Brousseau
Caron	Casey
Cash	Chicoine
Chisholm	Cleary
Côté	Cotler
Crowder	Cullen
Cuzner	Day
Dewar	Dion
Dionne Labelle	Doré Lefebvre
Dubourg	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)	Dusseau
Easter	Eyking
Fortin	Freeland
Garneau	Genest
Genest-Jourdain	Giguère
Goodale	Gravelle
Grogulé	Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Harris (St. John's East)	Hughes
Hyer	Jones
Julian	Kellway
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Latendresse	Laverdière
LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)	Leslie
Liu	MacAulay
Mai	Marston
Masse	Mathysen
May	McCallum
McGuinty	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
Michaud	Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)	Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)	Murray
Nantel	Nash
Nicholls	Nunez-Melo
Papillon	Péclét
Pilon	Quach
Rafferty	Rankin
Ravignat	Raynault
Regan	Rousseau
Saganash	Scarpaleggia
Scott	Sellah
Sgro	Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind- sor)
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sitsabaiesan
St-Denis	Thibeault
Toone	Tremblay
Turmel	Valeriote — 102

Nil

PAIRED

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

REPORT STAGE

The House resumed from June 6 consideration of Bill C-24, An Act to amend the Citizenship Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, as reported (with amendment) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, thank you for the chance to speak one final time on Bill C-24, a bill respecting the strengthening of Canadian citizenship. This is a challenge that has been before the House in one way or another for well over a century, since Confederation, as we have sought to understand and reinforce the value of the rights and privileges as well as the responsibilities and duties that we have as Canadian citizens.

Government Orders

It is important to realize that the bill has received wide-ranging debate, both in the House and across Canada, in committee and in this Chamber. We disagree perhaps with New Democrats on the nature of that debate. They have forgotten about the pre-study of the bill in committee; we have not. Earlier today in debate they declined to acknowledge that 25 very solid witnesses appeared before committee on the bill. We listened to their testimony with attention and found it extremely valuable.

There is a more fundamental issue, and this debate has revealed the fundamental difference of opinion between the NDP and ourselves on the bill. It revolves around the issue of revocation.

The NDP is silent on the issue of revocation of citizenship when it is fraudulently obtained. That is a power that we as a government already have under the current act. It is a long-standing power that has existed in one form or another through generations in the various versions of legislation governing Canadian citizenship. It is required, because as we in the House and all Canadians know, there was a phenomenon of abuse, particularly after 1977 with the Trudeau reforms to citizenship, of this highly prized program. People received the status of permanent residency but then actually failed to be physically present in our country. Instead, they paid lawyers and consultants to pretend they were here.

We have made great strides in understanding this issue. In collaboration with the RCMP, thousands of cases are being investigated, and they have led to dozens of revocations, as is proper in the minds of Canadians, who, as we all know, rightly have a low tolerance for abuse, for short-circuiting the system, and for rule-breaking of this kind, particularly when it relates to an issue as serious as citizenship.

Then there is the issue of revocation for gross acts of disloyalty to Canada. We on this side think that dual nationals who commit an act of treason or espionage or who are members of a terrorist group serving inside or outside our country have morally forfeited the right to be Canadian citizens. We think that moral forfeiture to the right to Canadian citizenship should be reflected in legislation. We should have the power, as a government and as a country, to revoke the citizenship of those who have taken up arms against the Canadian Forces or sold state secrets.

These are not widespread phenomena in Canada, fortunately. The loyalty of the overwhelming majority of Canadians is not in question. However, that same overwhelming majority understands that citizenship brings with it the concept of allegiance to a crown, to laws, to a political system, a democracy that has rules. When someone literally sells state secrets to a foreign power, betrays our country in fundamental ways, or takes up arms in a terrorist organization or in some other organized force against Canada and against international order, in the case of terrorism there should be a power to revoke citizenship when we are not making citizens stateless. That is a responsibility we take extremely seriously.

• (1320)

The bill would not create new classes, in isolated cases or larger numbers, of stateless persons, but it would give us a right that every other NATO ally, with the exception of Portugal, already has, which is to revoke citizenship for gross acts of disloyalty. This is a fundamental difference we have with the NDP and the Liberals, who

do not seem to acknowledge that this power is relevant and that it should be reflected in the modernization of our Citizenship Act, which Bill C-24 would bring.

Second, we have a difference of opinion with a couple of stakeholders, notably, a few in the Canadian Bar Association, who have declared the bill unconstitutional. They do not listen to lawyers from the Department of Justice. They do not listen to lawyers across the country who are specialists in citizenship and immigration and see this bill as valuable, legitimate and entirely constitutional. They think that by asking permanent residents if they have the intent to reside in Canada as they begin the process of accumulating their residence in Canada to qualify for citizenship, is an unconstitutional request. We beg to differ.

If people are resident in Canada for three out of four years under the current law and four out of six years under the new law, they clearly have had the intent to reside in Canada. People do not take up residence in a country by accident, and it is entirely legitimate not only to ensure that there is physical presence for the requisite number of years but that people who are aspiring to attain citizenship have the intent to reside. If their intentions change, so be it. They may qualify for citizenship over a longer period, or their plans may change and they may go to live in another country, take up a job opportunity or follow family circumstances to another part of the world. They will not meet the residency requirements and they will not become eligible for Canadian citizenship. However, we are going to ask, and it is absolutely reasonable to ask, those heading toward the prized goal of Canadian citizenship if they intend to reside here.

Apart from those two criticisms, we have not heard much. There are isolated pockets of opposition to the bill, many of them badly informed, unfortunately, I think often by members opposite who have mischaracterized some of its provisions. There was an online poll, as I was saying in an earlier debate. Some of those who unwittingly signed were under a complete misapprehension of what the bill actually contained. If we on this side of the House had the opportunity to meet with these people, communicate with them directly, as we do in correspondence and emails every day, those misunderstandings would not have gone as far as they did.

The bulk of the reaction we have had from across the country, from the north and south, from the east and west, and everywhere in between goes along the following lines. I will quote Nick Noorani, managing partner of Prepare for Canada, who stated:

I congratulate the government on its changes [to the] Citizenship Act that combat residency fraud and ensure new Canadians have a stronger connection to Canada. With the changes announced today, processing times will be improved and new Canadians will be ready to fully participate in Canadian life.

Martin Collacott of the Centre for Immigration Policy Reform, a former Canadian ambassador, stated:

The government's new citizenship legislation addresses a host of long overdue issues relating to the acquisition of citizenship. Its provisions, such as strengthening residency requirements for applicants, will increase the value and meaning of Canadian citizenship...

Gillian Smith, executive director and CEO of the Institute for Canadian Citizenship, stated:

Government Orders

Our organization works extensively with Canada's newest citizens who tell us that measures taken to foster their attachment and connection to Canada have a positive effect on their successful integration. New citizens' sense of belonging comes in large measure from experiencing Canada first-hand—its people, nature, culture and heritage.

There are others, such as Sheryl Saperia on the need to send that clear message of deterrence to those who might contemplate terrorist acts and Bill Janzen, a consultant in the Central Mennonite Committee, who applauded us for the work to address the long overdue issue of lost Canadians.

There is a lot here. There is real value in this bill, such as faster processing, increased value for Canadian citizenship, honouring those serve and deterring disloyalty.

One hundred years ago, debate concluded in the House on the Naturalization Act, which is one of the forebears of this bill. Mr. Diefenbaker said the following on the last day of that debate, which took only one month:

● (1325)

If ever there was a time when we should assert and practise what our citizenship means, it is now....It is our duty and responsibility as Canadian citizens to maintain those principles and traditions which mean so much to us and to guard against infringement of the great principles of freedom; for...the hallmarks of liberty can be erased as a result of the acts of a zealous person who is misdirected, no less than by one who destroys those principles with evil intent. We will give a great citizenship to Canadians hereafter.

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan (Scarborough—Rouge River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am thoroughly confused by the minister's speech. He says that Canadians are misguided. He says that the Canadian Bar Association does not know how to interpret laws and that it is a group of lawyers that is phony and does not know what it is doing.

When I listened, I did not hear him talk about UNICEF. It wrote a brief and sent it to the committee when we did the pre-study. It said that the bill was making so many changes that it was going to make Canada in contravention of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Lawyer after lawyer, committee organization after organization have said that the bill is not good completely as it is and have suggested many recommendations.

Why did the minister's parliamentary secretary, under his guidance I am assuming, not allow a single amendment to the bill that was proposed by any of the opposition parties? Why did the government did not listen to the experts who made suggestions? Why did it not propose a single amendment and did not accept a single one of the amendments that were put forward by any of the opposition parties?

● (1330)

Hon. Chris Alexander: Mr. Speaker, the reason that the NDP amendments were not accepted was because they were not very good. They would have watered down the provisions of the bill. They would have left us with an inferior processing model for citizenship. They would have left us with backlogs and long processing times.

Most crucially, they would have failed to address the issue of those who violated their allegiance to Canada, but somehow in the view of the NDP currently could continue along with their Canadian citizenship. We do not think that should be the case in future for dual nationals. That is why we have a fundamental difference of opinion with the NDP members who have no trouble defending these spies,

traitors and terrorists and their right to continue to be Canadian citizens even after committing such gross acts of disloyalty.

There are serious improvements in the bill. They go in the same direction as that debate 100 years ago on the Naturalization Act, which happened in only one month. No one on the opposition benches repeated themselves in that debate. The quote I just gave from Mr. Diefenbaker was from the 1946 debate on the Citizenship Act. That too was a fast debate on a historic bill, with rich contributions from all sides of the House. We have not seen that from the NDP in this debate.

Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I also want to pick up on the minister's gratuitous remarks about the Canadian Bar Association. I do not know whether that is because the minister is not a member of the Canadian Bar Association. I do not know why he would want to cast aspersions on the hundreds of thousands of lawyers.

However, I want to remind him that under section 4.1 of the Department of Justice Act, the Minister of Justice is compelled for every bill introduced in or presented to the House of Commons by a minister of the crown, that would be that minister, in order to ascertain whether any of the provisions thereof are inconsistent with the purposes and provisions of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The minister, in conjunction with the Minister of Justice, shall report any inconsistency to the House of Commons at the first convenient opportunity. In other words, the bill has to be constitutional.

Could the minister please stand and table the legal opinions rendered by the Department of Justice lawyers, which actually prove the bill is in fact charter compliant and constitutional?

Hon. Chris Alexander: Mr. Speaker, the bill in our view and those of the government's lawyers is constitutional. The risk of a constitutional challenge to any of its provisions is low. We on this side simply do not think that the small group of lawyers, which expressed itself in radical terms on the bill, speak for the hundreds of thousands of lawyers across the country. We do not think most of those lawyers are aware of what was said in their name.

We also think it is the right of Parliament to legislate on citizenship to circumscribe the conditions under which revocation can take place. We think the provisions of the bill with regard to revocation are legitimate.

Does the Liberal Party agree with these provisions? Because in 1947, when Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King brought the first citizenship bill forward, there were revocation provisions for treason, for other serious acts of disloyalty to Canada. What has happened to the Liberal Party of Canada on these and so many other issues?

Government Orders

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan (Scarborough—Rouge River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I again speak to this bill as a member of the citizenship and immigration committee who sat there every day for at least six hours a week during the pre-study of the content and subject matter of the bill. Witness after witness, including expert testimony, said time and again that the clauses in the bill were either in contravention of the charter, un-Canadian, in contravention of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, treated different types of Canadians unfairly, such as naturalized Canadians versus born-in-Canada Canadians, and did not value their pre-PR time spent in our country. During our committee study, I polled every witness with whom I had a chance to speak. Every one of them said that the clauses about not valuing the pre-PR time people had spent in Canada should be removed and amended.

In the minister's answer to my previous question with respect to his speech, he made it clear that he did not value what any of the opposition members had to say or any of the amendments that the opposition had put forward. He also did not value the people who were putting time into our country and spending time learning what it was to be a Canadian and living the life of a Canadian.

For example, international students who live in Canada for four years, who go to school with our children, who become their best friends, who party with them, who build strong relationships with our Canadian students and who volunteer in our communities learn what life is like as a Canadian.

However, Bill C-24 states that those people and the time they have spent in our country have no value, that they are not learning what it is to be Canadian. It is easier for those who come to our country as landed immigrants and get their PR the day they arrive than it is for international students who spend four years learning what it is to be a Canadian and living like a Canadian. According to the bill, the time those students have spent in our country has absolutely zero value toward being a Canadian.

I want to talk about some of the amendments the NDP put forward, which the minister said made no sense and were of no value. I forgot the exact adjective he used, but he basically said that they had no value to add. I will not talk about all of the amendments. I want to go through some of the ones we put forward at the committee stage and we were unable to speak to any witnesses.

First was with respect to counting the value of PRs working abroad toward their citizenship application. That was with respect to permanent residents who were temporarily outside of the country for professional reasons. It could be somebody working on a United Nations project in any country around the world. We know that local businesses have operations outside of the country and their employees may have to travel for work. The government has said that even though those people might be living, working and paying taxes in our country, those days they spend working outside of Canada and bringing economic value and thrust to our country has no value. That is what the government said when it refused to accept one of the NDP's amendments.

Another amendment we put forward was to reverse the age changes the government made for language and knowledge requirements. Currently, the law states that 18 to 54 year olds need to pass the language and knowledge requirement tests. What the

government members put forward was to increase the maximum age to 65 and lower the minimum age to 14. That means that children who are 14 to 18 are now being treated the same as the adults. I spoke earlier about UNICEF Canada submitting a brief to the committee. It spoke to how that was in contravention of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

● (1335)

I will read a small portion from the actual brief UNICEF Canada sent to committee. It states:

In relation to the acquisition of citizenship, a number of Convention articles are engaged, including: definition of the child (including age) (article 1); equality and non-discrimination (article 2); the best interests of the child (article 3); family integrity (article 5); survival and development (article 6); birth registration, nationality and protection from statelessness (article 7); family relations (article 8); protection from arbitrary separation from parents (article 9); and, family reunification (article 10).

For those members in the Conservative Party who do not understand what I am saying, I have just finished saying that I am reading, from the brief from UNICEF Canada, which articles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child would be breached by the bill.

UNICEF Canada made it very clear that a child-rights-based approach to citizenship requires that we continue ensuring that we are not in contravention of the rights of the child. The language and knowledge requirements testing would be, actually. To quote UNICEF again:

Bill C-24 proposes to amend subsection 5(2) of the Citizenship Act to expand the age requirements of applicants to 14 to 64 (currently 18 to 54) to successfully complete both the language and knowledge requirements. The proposed amendments would effectively put the onus on children aged 14 to 18 to successfully pass both language and knowledge requirements, without additional supports, in order to become a Canadian citizen.

That is telling us that the current government wants to treat children as it does adults, as equivalent to adults.

The NDP proposed two amendments to ensure that these children would not be treated as adults. Another amendment we put forward was to not increase the age from 55 to 65 at the top end of the bracket, because we know that many studies have shown that for older people in the community, it is actually harder to acquire a new language and to pass these knowledge tests in this new language they may be acquiring.

The government members opposed both of those amendments and did not pass them.

Another amendment the NDP put forward would have allowed an opportunity for the applicant to make a submission before a citizenship judge. This is about the minister increasing discretion for himself or herself and future ministers. There would be increased discretion for a minister, yet the applicant would not even have an opportunity to make a submission before a citizenship judge. The NDP put forward an amendment to try to make it more of a fair process so that applicants would actually have an opportunity to appear before a citizenship judge and make a submission themselves.

Government Orders

Another amendment was actually recommended by the Canadian Bar Association. We know how the minister feels about that association and its validity, but I value what the Canadian Bar Association had to say. It specified that this amendment would specify that law students must be articling and offering advice while actually supervised by a member of the law society. The current law does not actually require that. We tried to make it so that law students who were helping out would actually be supervised by a member of the law society. This is another thing that apparently the government members do not seem to value.

One last piece is about the revocation of citizenship, which the current minister likes, and how it would create two tiers of Canadian citizenship for those born here and those naturalized here. This is basically saying that the government, or the minister, would have the opportunity to deport people and strip them of their Canadian citizenship just because they are dual nationals. This would also mean that Canadian-born citizens who have Chinese, U.S., British, or Italian parents, for example, would have their citizenship revoked—

• (1340)

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Questions and comments.

The hon. member for Mississauga East—Cooksville.

Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon (Mississauga East—Cooksville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, with respect to the last point the member opposite touched upon, dual citizenship, there are not two tiers of citizenship. There is one Canadian citizenship. Dual citizenship is the choice of the person. If a child is born here and the parents choose two citizenships for that child, they have to be ready to accept the implications that come with it. There are not two citizenships. People do not have to have two citizenships. Whether they are naturalized or they are born here, they can have one. They could choose Canadian only, and they would not have any problems.

• (1345)

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan: Mr. Speaker, I find it funny that the member does not realize that there are many countries in the world where one cannot deny one's citizenship. For example, Canadians who may have been born in Canada or are naturalized Canadians and are of the Jewish faith have the right to return to Israel and claim their Israeli citizenship.

Bill C-24 says that for those who are dual nationals, or if the minister has reason to believe that they have a claim to another nationality, hence the example of a Jewish Canadian who potentially could have a claim to another nationality, the minister could, on his own volition, choose to revoke their citizenship. That is creating two tiers citizenship.

Those who do not have that option could not have their citizenship revoked because it would create a situation of statelessness. However, those who could be dual nationals or potentially have a claim to another citizenship could have their citizenship revoked. That would mean that there would be those who are full citizens and those who are kind of citizens. That is two tiers of citizenship.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when Jean Chrétien was the prime minister of Canada, we had citizenship processed in under a year. Under the current government, we have seen the processing of citizenship for those who qualify and meet the criteria taking 28 months, or almost two and a half years. Now the Conservatives are bringing in legislation to reduce the waiting period for citizenship by changing the process itself.

Does the member not believe, as the Liberal Party believes, that if the government made it a higher priority to process citizenship, it should have been able to do that without the proposed legislation and that there is no reason to have people in Canada waiting in excess of 12 months to qualify for citizenship? It is about making sure that the proper resources are in place.

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan: Mr. Speaker, absolutely, the Conservative government could have come up with many other avenues to reduce the backlog that exists in the citizenship queue right now. It is choosing, rather, to make it far more difficult for people to qualify to become citizens of this country. For example, there are proposed changes to the intent-to-reside provision. It would double fees for an application of citizenship from \$200 to \$400, and it would make it more difficult with the age requirements.

I could keep going, but I want to quote from a brief we received from the Metro Toronto Chinese and Southeast Asian Legal Clinic, which said:

What Bill C-24 really does, however, is as follows:

It reduces backlogs by turning down more applications and making sure fewer and fewer permanent residents will become citizens.

It diminishes the value of Canadian citizenship both by making immigrants wait much longer to become citizens, and by creating a two-tier citizenship—by distinguishing between people who have dual citizenship...

This is something I have already talked about. It continues with:

It violates Canadian values of democracy and the principle of the Rule of Law by giving new and sweeping power to the Minister to revoke citizenship while simultaneously reducing judicial oversight of the Minister's exercise of power.

What I just read were from the briefs of three different organizations sent in to the committee on how the bill would increase the minister's discretion and ability to revoke citizenship. The bill would change the value of Canadian citizenship and make it so much harder for people to actually become Canadian citizens, when so many want to.

Mr. Andrew Cash (Davenport, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise in this place on behalf of the good people of Davenport in the great city of Toronto to speak to Bill C-24. It is of vital interest to the people in my community of Davenport, in fact to people right across the greater Toronto area, because over half the people in the GTA were born outside of Canada, so any changes to our citizenship and immigration rules, laws, or structures are of vital interest to the people I represent.

What we have here is a gross failure on the part of the government to address the fundamental issue facing so many of our immigrant families in Canada, and that is the failure of the government, in this legislation and in other pieces of legislation it has brought forward, to deal with the growing wait times, not just for citizenship but for family reunification. The bill does not address those issues. In fact, it makes those issues worse.

Statements by Members

Right now we have about 360,000 people waiting for their citizenship applications to be processed. What we would have liked to have seen is the government expedite this, bring this issue forward, in a way that would actually get some resolution for so many families who are in sort of suspended animation. They are doing the work. In every other way they are Canadian citizens, except that they have not had their applications processed. They are waiting and waiting.

The bill also underlines a strategy the government employs time and time again, and that is to pick the outlier problem and use it as the justification for massive changes that would maybe appease some of its base but that would not address the fundamental issues immigrants in Canada face today.

I would like to bring the attention of the House to the issue of fraud in the system. We have over 300,000 applicants for citizenship right now. The other day the minister admitted that only 3,000 of those over 300,000 are being investigated by the RCMP for potential fraud. Fewer than 1% are being investigated, and we do not know what those investigations will glean. Of that fewer than 1%, they may find some fraud. I am not saying that there is not some, but the government and the minister are using this fraction of abuse in the system as a rationale for sweeping changes, changes that would, as they do so often on the government side, amass more power in the hands of the minister, power that would allow the minister to retroactively change someone's citizenship status.

If the Conservatives had listened to stakeholder groups, they would have heard quite resoundingly the deep concern of Canadians, immigrants, and the organizations that support and advocate on behalf of both refugees and newcomers to Canada.

I would like to also underline the fact that the government has changed the language test requirements. It has made it now the rule that anyone between the ages of 14 and 64 needs to undergo a rigorous language test. The minister has never once revealed any data that would back up any reasons for the changes he has made. He says that young people would score great on this test, and it would be great. We know that.

● (1350)

However, he has never brought forward any study that shows that this is indeed the case. The minister has never answered the question regarding what would happen if the child does not pass the language test, but the adult does. What happens then? I believe that one of the reasons that the government moved time allocation on the debate is because it does not want to answer the tough questions that are being raised on this bill. The questions just keep coming.

Today, there are families in my riding who have been waiting eight to nine years for grandparents and parents to come to Canada, and for the government to fulfill the promises that it made to newcomers when they first came that they could bring their parents or grandparents with them. What we have now is a government that says it going to fix the wait times for citizenship by making it much harder. In other words, the government would make the process and the system longer.

Some of it seems to make absolutely no sense. If the government wanted to ensure that those who were seeking Canadian citizenship

would forge a real attachment to Canada, why on Earth would it then disqualify all of the time that a person has spent here as a non-permanent resident from their application?

That makes no sense. It sends a huge message to people. It tells them not to attach to us because we are not going to attach to them right now. That is fundamentally the wrong way to go, and it was not the case here in Canada until now, when the government politicized this debate.

The extended times required to stay in Canada are also an issue for many immigrants. In case the government has not realized, Canadians travel abroad for work all the time. We are in a globalized economy. We have Canadians working in the United States and we have Canadians working all across Europe and Asia, looking for opportunities. When they arise, Canadian citizens can take those opportunities, but the changes that are in this bill would make it more difficult for permanent residents who are waiting for citizenship. Indeed, after they are granted citizenship, it would make it harder for them to take the opportunities that are there in the global economy.

This seems incredibly unfair, and it brings up the point that my colleague from Scarborough—Rouge River made earlier about the creation of two-tiered citizenship. Making it more difficult for new citizens to take those opportunities elsewhere in the economy is also a way of creating a two-tiered system of citizenship in this country.

People should not be surprised that this is the direction that the government has gone in. After all, when we are giving a message to immigrant families that their grandparents and parents are not as important to Canadians as Canadian-born grandparents and parents, of course, we have a two-tiered system.

We have always had families at the basis of our immigration system. The government, through its policies, whether on refugees or immigration, has moved Canada away from family values. It has seen families being torn apart. Quite frankly, we have to build an immigration that has, at its core and as its central function, the goal of keeping families together and a part of the Canadian community. The New Democrats on this side are committed to that.

● (1355)

The Deputy Speaker: That brings the debate to an end at this time. The member will have five minutes for questions and comments when we resume debate.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

● (1400)

[*Translation*]

LAC-MÉGANTIC

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is always an honour for me to rise in the House.

Today almost one year has passed since the Lac-Mégantic disaster. On July 6, 2013, a train without a conductor crashed into the little town of Lac-Mégantic.

Statements by Members

[English]

I mention it today because 6,000 people of that community in a class action suit are seeking permission this very day to pursue justice through the court in Sherbrooke, Quebec, before the Quebec Superior Court.

Our thoughts and prayers are with all of those who survived that disaster. We have taken action in this place to ensure it will not happen again.

I send my best wishes to the attorneys for the petitioners, Mr. Joel Rochon, Mr. Jeff Orenstein, and Mr. Daniel Larochelle.

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NAVY LEAGUE OF CANADA

Mr. Rick Norlock (Northumberland—Quinte West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Northumberland—Quinte West is proud to support a growing and well-served local branch of the Navy League of Canada. The Navy League of Canada Northumberland Branch is dedicated to sponsoring two corps, the 116 Royal Canadian Sea Cadet Corps Skeena and the 194 Navy League Cadet Corps Northumberland.

Just this past Sunday, the 194 Navy League Cadet Corps held its annual inspection. Sixteen navy league cadets aged 9 to 13 participated in the 11th annual review and demonstrated skills learned through their training year. The cadets proudly demonstrated their skill and enthusiasm for a group of over 50 parents, guests, and visitors. I am pleased to see the ongoing tradition of the Navy League of Canada, which celebrates excellence and high standards and promotes valuable leadership skills. The Northumberland Branch states that every cadet officer and instructor who has graduated from this program has contributed something special to the community.

Congratulations to all the cadets of 194 Navy League Cadet Corps for another successful annual inspection.

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[Translation]

49TH QUEBEC GAMES

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there are only about 50 days left before the 49th Quebec Games start in Longueuil. This is a special time that is bringing the entire south shore together. I am extremely proud to share this moment in the House today. I even decided to volunteer for the tourism brigade for the duration of the games. I booked a week off to be sure that I would not miss any of the celebrations. This is a rare opportunity to meet thousands of visitors and young athletes who will be discovering the top-notch competition venues, a welcoming and friendly community and some amazing tourism opportunities. Longueuil will shine this summer; I am sure of it.

I invite my neighbours to rise to the challenge with me and volunteer their time from August 1 to 9, 2014. I also invite my colleagues to come visit us in Longueuil at Place des Jeux in Parc St. Mark—the place to be for sports and culture in Quebec in 2014.

[English]

70TH ANNIVERSARY OF D-DAY

Mr. Larry Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I had the honour of travelling to Juno Beach, France, this past weekend for the commemoration of the 70th anniversary of D-Day to recognize the sacrifices made by Canadian soldiers in the Battle of Normandy. I was pleased to be joined by two schools from my riding, OSCVI and Grey Highlands Secondary School. I was honoured to meet veterans of the D-Day invasion who travelled to France to honour their fallen comrades.

On June 6, 1944 Allied troops stormed the beaches of Normandy to open up the way to Germany from the west. Against all odds, Canadian troops prevailed. The victory came at a great cost, as 340 Canadians made the ultimate sacrifice. We must never forget the great sacrifice made by Canadian soldiers on D-Day. While fighting would rage on in the days and months following the invasion, the Canadian victory on D-Day would pave the way for the end of the war. As General Dwight Eisenhower stated just hours before the invasion, “The free men of the world are marching together to victory.”

We will remember them.

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KENSINGTON CENTENNIAL

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate one of the gems of P.E.I., the town of Kensington. While 2014 is the 150th anniversary of the Charlottetown Conference, it also marks the centennial of the Town of Kensington, incorporated in 1914.

Kensington grew up around the intersection of five roads taking people through Kensington to and from Charlottetown, Kelvin Grove, Travellers Rest, Summerside, Malpeque, Irishtown, New London, and Cavendish. It still is known for its railway station, which served as a centre of the island's agricultural market in central P.E.I., now added as a stop along the Confederation bike trail. Those who pass through Kensington always note its charm and friendliness, and some even wind up staying.

While the big celebrations were on the weekend of May 23 with fireworks, a concert, a parade, and a celebratory dinner, Kensington also shows that small town hospitality the whole year through. For business or pleasure, Kensington is a must stop in 2014.

On behalf of the House, I offer my congratulations to the town of Kensington, its council, and its citizens.

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● (1405)

HOUSTON ASTROS

Mr. Ben Lobb (Huron—Bruce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a big congratulation goes out to Brock Dykxhoorn this weekend. He is a mountain of a man at 19 years old, 6 foot 8 inches, 240 pounds, who throws over 90 miles an hour. He was drafted in the first pick of the sixth round by the Houston Astros this weekend.

*Statements by Members***SHOOTINGS IN MONCTON**

Congratulations to Brock. He grew up in Goderich, Ontario. He played for the Team Canada under-18 team, and pitched in Florida and the Dominican Republic. He won a silver medal in Seoul, Korea, where he won two games. Brock pitched this year at Central Arizona Community College and last year at West Virginia University. He is one of the very first players to be drafted from Huron—Bruce to the major leagues. He throws 90 miles an hour and has great control.

We should all watch for him. Even though some members like to wear their Blue Jays hats in the House of Commons, we can throw one on for Brock Dykxhoorn. Congratulations to Brock.

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[Translation]

MATHILDE BLAIS

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to dedicate my statement to the memory of 33-year-old Mathilde Blais, who died a month ago under the Saint-Denis/Des Carrières overpass. You go under this overpass just as you come into Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie. I happened to be there yesterday with my family, and there are still memorials marking this woman's tragic death.

Mathilde Blais died after being hit by a truck. She was on her way to her job as a speech therapist in a school. She was a vibrant woman whom the children loved. Her death rocked the cycling community. It was a reminder of how dangerous it can be when bicycles, cars and trucks share the road. The boroughs of Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie and Plateau-Mont-Royal have made bold commitments to make streets safer for cyclists. I want to commend them for that.

As an MP and a cyclist, I am committed to encouraging active transportation and ensuring that it is better integrated into our road networks.

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[English]

CANADA FROM SPACE MAPS

Mr. Joe Daniel (Don Valley East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, thanks to the extraordinary success of Commander Chris Hadfield's mission aboard the International Space Station last year and to Canadian inventions like the Canadarm and Dextre, students across this country have come to understand that Canada has an extremely proud history of accomplishment in space.

A key pillar of the space policy framework is “inspiring Canadians”, which is why, today, our government unveiled the Canada from space giant floor map. This map was created from 121 images of Canada shot by our country's own RADARSAT-2 satellite.

The Canada from space maps and teaching tools will be available to schools across the country, and will give students the chance to be inspired about Canada's role in space and to understand the role space plays in their everyday lives. These maps will help to inspire young Canadians to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and math, so that we can continue to learn, explore, and push the boundaries of human ingenuity.

Mr. David Wilks (Kootenay—Columbia, CPC): Mr. Speaker, tomorrow police officers from across North America will gather in Moncton, New Brunswick, to say their good-byes to three fallen members of the RCMP, good-byes that are being said way too early in life, goodbyes that cannot be explained. The police community is tight-knit, and when something like this happens, it stirs strong emotions in each and every one of us. The day will be filled with many tears. As a retired member of the RCMP, it stirs up memories that I will never forget.

To the families of Constable Fabrice Georges Gevaudan, Constable Douglas James Larche, and Constable David Ross, we will always be with them. Canadians will hold them in their thoughts and prayers in the days, weeks, and months to come. God bless each and every one of them.

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●(1410)

DINSTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the work of Michael Kirby, who is here today to receive the annual Distinguished Service Award from the Canadian Association of Parliamentarians for his contributions to the field of mental health.

Mr. Kirby was the first chair of the Mental Health Commission of Canada, which created the national standard for psychological health and safety in the workplace, something we hope will be implemented soon within the public service. The Mental Health Commission's other groundbreaking project, At Home/Chez Soi, has also provided important approaches to housing and mental health.

Mr. Kirby's recent campaign, titled “Right by you”, focuses on the necessity for more mental health services for young people. With Canada's youth suicide rate at the highest of any industrialized country, it is more important than ever to address this growing crisis in our country.

We extend our congratulations to Mr. Kirby for his exemplary work in the field of mental health and for bringing attention to an illness that is too frequently ignored while there is still much that needs to be done.

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ARMENIAN YOUTH FEDERATION

Mr. Rick Dykstra (St. Catharines, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on the weekend, on Saturday evening, I had the opportunity to attend the Armenian Youth Federation's 80th anniversary. The federation itself focuses on education, on its social awareness, athleticism, and cultural awareness. While Boston may have been the first Armenian Youth Federation to open in North America, in 1933, St. Catharines was the first location of a youth federation here in Canada.

Statements by Members

This weekend we celebrated at the Armenian Community Centre in St. Catharines, a facility that was rebuilt and rejuvenated by the help of the federal government. There was a large group there. The participants enjoyed themselves as adults looking back on when they were part of the youth movement. The Armenian youth are strong here in Canada, proud of their heritage and proud that they are Canadians in our country. We had a great evening.

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*[Translation]***GRADUATION CEREMONY IN BROSSARD—LA PRAIRIE**

Mr. Hoang Mai (Brossard—La Prairie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, on Friday, I once again had the honour of attending the graduation ceremony at Antoine-Brossard High School and Lucille-Teasdale International School.

It was an emotional evening, particularly when the diplomas were handed out and people watched the best-of video montage. It was touching to see how proud the students were of their accomplishments.

I was so impressed with their academic perseverance, their achievements in sport and art, and their community involvement as volunteers.

I would like to thank one teacher in particular, Éric Chassé, for supporting the students who took part in the “Create your Canada” contest, as well as all of the students who worked hard and participated in the contest. Congratulations to the winners, Raphaël Humpries, Victor Ivanov and Aryn Saad.

Lastly, I would like to congratulate all those who will soon complete another school year. That is really something to be proud of.

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*[English]***TRADE WITH CHINA**

Mr. Daryl Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings, CPC): Mr. Speaker, China is one of Canada's key trading partners, and the Chinese market is highly valued to our agricultural industry. Under our Minister of Agriculture's leadership, China has moved from being our fourth-largest export market to our second. In 2012, Canadian exports to China reached \$5 billion.

Here are some of the government's accomplishments in working closely with China. We have expanded our access for Canadian pork. We have reopened access, thus enabling Canadian beef to be served in China for the first time in almost a decade. We have developed new opportunities in China, for up to \$500 million in sales for pulse crops. We have secured additional capacity for export of canola to China, a market worth over \$1.9 billion.

With our minister, our government has always appreciated the great relationship we have been able to build with our hon. counterparts in China. Be assured that our government will continue to strengthen trade, to increase Canadian exports, and to certainly protect all Canadians doing business abroad.

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Cardigan, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate former Liberal senator Michael Kirby, who this afternoon is receiving the Distinguished Service Award from the Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians.

Mr. Kirby has had a distinguished career as a businessman, a public servant, a Liberal senator, and a strong advocate for mental health. As chair of the Senate social affairs committee, Mr. Kirby issued the first national report on mental health. One of the recommendations was for the creation of the Mental Health Commission of Canada, and in recognition of his leadership, Mr. Kirby was asked to be the first chair. Mr. Kirby is a tireless advocate who is dedicated to improving mental health care in Canada.

This award is a well-deserved recognition for someone who represents the best of Canadian public service.

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● (1415)

70TH ANNIVERSARY OF D-DAY

Mr. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last week I was honoured to be one of the parliamentarians to accompany nearly 100 Canadian veterans as we returned to France for the 70th commemoration of the landings of D-Day and the wider Battle of Normandy. Over 14,000 Canadians served, and 5,000 paid the ultimate sacrifice.

We visited hallowed ground like Juno Beach and the Abbaye D'Ardenne. I was inspired by the veterans I met, including Thomas Wheler, an RCAF Spitfire pilot, who spent part of the war as a prisoner of war, and Francis Goodon, an aboriginal veteran from Manitoba, who travelled to France with his son, also a veteran. He served in the Winnipeg Rifles and landed literally metres from where the Juno Beach Centre now stands.

I was also happy to see hundreds of Canadian youth from across our country on Juno Beach for the 70th anniversary, including high schools like Clarington Central Secondary School and Clarke High School in my riding. That way, we showed that Canadian youth will indeed hold the torch high.

Lest we forget.

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*[Translation]***PRIVACY**

Mr. Mathieu Ravnat (Pontiac, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the past six months have shown what little regard the Conservatives have for privacy. They lost thousands of dollars and then refused to properly manage the fallout of that situation.

For the position of privacy commissioner, the Conservatives chose someone who just weeks earlier was advising spy agencies. Seriously, Mr. Speaker.

Under the guise of addressing cyberbullying, the Conservatives wrote legislation to make it easier to collect and share personal information without a warrant. Their governmental agencies request and receive private information from telecommunications companies as they wish. What is more, we just found out that they lost 2,000 census forms.

The only information they truly protect is the information people are trying to get through the Access to Information Act. In those cases, the Conservatives prefer redactions to transparency.

Canadians realize that they cannot trust the Conservatives to protect their privacy. While the Liberals are asleep at the wheel, only the NDP is keeping an eye on the situation and ensuring that Canadians' privacy is protected.

* * *

[English]

CANADA-AUSTRALIA RELATIONS

Mr. Joe Preston (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today we have the honour to welcome Prime Minister Abbott to Ottawa. His visit represents an opportunity for our two countries to deepen and strengthen our bilateral relations. Canada and Australia have long stood shoulder to shoulder on a range of global issues. We do so today on issues such as Ukraine, the Middle East, and the engagement of the Asia-Pacific region. Our co-operation is also extended to international fora, such as the United Nations, the Commonwealth, the World Trade Organization, and the G20, which will be hosted by Australia this year.

I would also like to commend Prime Minister Abbott's decision to repeal Australia's carbon tax, a tax that would raise the price of everyday goods and services, such as groceries, electricity, and gas. Our two countries will continue to work together to advance the principles of freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the government has a report that recommends sole-sourcing the purchase of 65 F-35 jets. That seems like déjà vu. In 2012, the Auditor General's damning report derailed this same procurement process.

Instead of once again hiding information, will the minister promise to table this report before the House adjourns? Also, can she tell us why the Conservatives are still refusing to move forward with a call for tenders?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, CPC): Mr. Speaker, no decision has been made concerning the replacement of the fleet of CF-18 fighter jets. A panel has reviewed the analyses carried out by the Canadian Forces, which were conducted in an efficient and very transparent manner.

Oral Questions

● (1420)

[English]

Once we have made a decision, then we will make an announcement.

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are refusing to come clean with the public, while they are also selectively leaking details of the upcoming report on F-35s, but Canadians are not fooled. Conservatives refuse to even confirm when the report will be tabled. They refuse to confirm whether there will be a competition or if there are guarantees of Canadian jobs. In short, the Conservatives are doing what they have done all along: grossly mismanaging the F-35s.

We have leaks from industry. We have leaks from government. If the report is good enough to leak, why will they not table it in the House today?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I have said before, as part of our seven-point plan, the RCAF prepared an extensive analysis of the requirements of the options available. An impartial and independent panel of experts, outside true experts, have been reviewing those reports. Ministers are now reviewing those reports to make sure that all of the analysis is indeed impartial and rigorous. Once a decision is made, we will be announcing that and releasing the reports.

* * *

JUSTICE

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, no one would confuse that for an actual answer to my question.

Moving on to another issue where Conservatives have been putting politics ahead of competence, people are realizing that the Conservative government's new legislation on sex workers is deeply flawed and is likely unconstitutional. Instead of reducing the risk that women face, the bill risks entrenching extremely problematic aspects of the old legislation.

Will the government do the sensible thing and submit this to the Supreme Court?

Mr. Bob Dechert (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would remind the member that it is for the government to propose legislation, and it is for Parliament and all of its members to debate that legislation. Perhaps they do not want to.

The Supreme Court's decision in Bedford was clear, raising concerns about the security and safety of women who find themselves in this inherently dangerous line of work. That decision has informed our bill. It protects the victims of prostitution by criminalizing the pimps and johns who fuel the demand for this dangerous activity, while putting in place measures that protect our communities, our children, and other vulnerable Canadians.

Oral Questions

Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is the minister's job to make sure that the laws that he files in the House are charter compliant and constitutional.

[*Translation*]

The Supreme Court was clear in its unanimous ruling. The prostitution laws are unconstitutional because they endanger the safety and lives of those who are in this line of work.

The government's response must respect the charter and the court's decision. Many experts have raised serious concerns about the constitutionality of Bill C-36.

If the minister thinks that his law will stand up in court, why does he not make his legal opinions public?

[*English*]

Mr. Bob Dechert (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as the member knows, Bill C-36 is our government's response to the Bedford decision. In our view, it meets every test of the Supreme Court decision and will be upheld by the Supreme Court in accordance with Bedford. It is the role of the government to propose legislation, and it is the job of all parliamentarians to debate that legislation. We are looking forward to the debate here in Parliament later this week.

Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP): Mr. Speaker, their track record in front of the Supreme Court is pretty pathetic so far.

[*Translation*]

In an interview this weekend with *MacLean's* magazine, the Minister of Justice was unable to say whether prostitutes would be able to legally offer their services if this bill is passed. His law is so confusing that he himself does not even understand the ins and outs of it. This is a rather amateur response to a Supreme Court ruling.

How many legal opinions does the minister have? Do any of them question the constitutionality of the bill?

[*English*]

Mr. Bob Dechert (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-36, like all legislation, is reviewed by Department of Justice officials in terms of its constitutionality. The bill certainly does meet the requirements of the Constitution and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Members will have an opportunity to debate the bill in the House later this week and later at the justice committee. It will become apparent to them that the bill addresses all of the issues raised by the Supreme Court and provides for those involved in sex work to do it safely.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last week began with Canadian economic growth sputtering down to a meagre 1.2%. At mid-week we heard of another trade deficit, this one of \$640 million. Then, at week's end, the latest job numbers showed 29,000 full-time jobs lost and new jobs being only part-time.

Canada urgently needs a growth agenda. The government could start by rolling back some of the \$5.4 billion in higher EI premiums that the Conservatives themselves have imposed. Will they do that obvious thing?

• (1425)

Hon. Joe Oliver (Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government is on track to achieve a budgetary surplus. We have created more than one million jobs. Our debt is half that of the average of the G7, and we will continue to responsibly advocate for tax cuts for Canadian families and for hard-working Canadian workers. We will also be responsible, as we have promised, to freeze EI payments.

* * *

INFRASTRUCTURE

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that means no relief from higher Conservative payroll taxes.

What about infrastructure? It is the most cost-effective way to drive jobs, growth, and productivity. For the next five years, the Building Canada fund has been eviscerated and 70% of all new Building Canada funding is delayed until after 2019. This year is already two months into the construction season, and applications still are not available. Municipalities now have to compete with universities for the same pool of Building Canada funds. Why has this program been cut, delayed, convoluted, and compromised?

Hon. Denis Lebel (Minister of Infrastructure, Communities and Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have taken the temporary program of the former government and made the gas tax fund permanent. We have made it permanent and we have doubled it. We have indexed it, and the municipalities already know that \$32 billion is available for the next 10 years. The member does not speak about this part of the program.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Stéphane Dion (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are talking about this year. The minister can talk about the next 10 years all he wants, but our economy is struggling now and we need to create jobs.

On June 1, 2013, when the minister announced the new Building Canada fund, he said, and I quote, "We will not miss a construction season."

Here we are one year later in the middle of construction season. How many contribution agreements has the minister signed? None, zero, *aucun, nada*, not a one. Municipalities and construction workers are still waiting. Can the minister explain to them why he broke his promise?

Oral Questions

Hon. Denis Lebel (Minister of Infrastructure, Communities and Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have not broken anything.

I do not know whether the member travels by car much or whether he has seen how much construction is already happening on our roads. There is still \$6 billion from the old program being used this year. The excise tax on gasoline is available. We are already open for doing business with the provinces. He is also forgetting that there are jurisdictions to contend with when the provincial and federal governments work together. We are here to support the program and we will deliver.

* * *

[English]

PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it has been almost eight years since the December 2006 memorandum of understanding on the F-35 that put Canada on track to sole-source the F-35 with no competition. It has been more than two years since the Conservatives' seven-point plan designed to paper over the loss of public trust, but after all this consternation and delay, it seems the government is poised to go ahead with a sole-sourced purchase with no guarantee for jobs and, again, no competition.

Is the government planning to go back to square one with the same flawed decision?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is just plain nonsense. We have put a pause on while we executed a seven-point plan to do an analysis of the options available to replace the outdated F-18s to make sure our men and women in uniform get the equipment they need to do the job we ask of them.

The net result has been a series of reports that were prepared by the RCAF and vetted by a committee of independent experts, who examined them to make sure any decision we make is based on impartial and fair information.

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, sounds like déjà vu all over again to me.

The minister might not comment here, but Conservative staff seem quite willing to brief anybody else on the supposed content of this report. Another report released today documents the problems that the single-engine F-35 faces in Canada. The perils of operating a single-engine aircraft in Canada's north are well known.

Will the government take this into account, or is it hell-bent on continuing to ignore the problems and Canada's needs and move ahead on a sole-sourced procurement?

• (1430)

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member should not believe everything he reads in the newspapers, especially when the source of some of that information is rather dubious. In fact, some of it even comes from well-known ex-NDP candidates. That is their claim to expertise on this issue.

We go for the facts. We are doing an impartial evaluation of the reports and the analysis done by the RCAF to make sure the decision we make is indeed based on fact and will provide the best equipment for men and women in uniform.

[Translation]

Ms. Éleine Michaud (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in 2012, the Auditor General sharply criticized the government's lack of transparency with regard to the F-35 procurement program. Parliament was not given any information about the cost, the risks associated with Lockheed Martin's aircraft, or even the projected industrial benefits for Canadian companies. Basically, we were asked to give Lockheed Martin billions of dollars without knowing what we would be getting in return.

Why are the Conservatives refusing to table in the House the F-35 report they have in their possession?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I just said, no decision has been made about replacing the CF-18 fleet.

A group of experts has read the report and the analyses prepared by the Canadian Forces about all of the replacement options to ensure that the analyses are impartial and transparent.

When the ministers make a decision, it will be announced, and the information will be distributed.

Ms. Éleine Michaud (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, NDP): Mr. Speaker, that is just as ridiculous the second time around as it was the first. The F-35 program has been through so many ups and downs that we cannot believe the government is about to make the same mistakes and sign the same blank cheque for Lockheed Martin.

Before the Auditor General dealt a death blow to the previous untendered procurement program, the Conservatives were secretive about everything. They were not even able to provide the real acquisition cost of each jet. As it turns out, their accounting has become even more creative.

Do they really think they can still buy 65 F-35s for \$9 billion?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our goal is to provide the Canadian Forces with the equipment they need to do their job. That is why we have asked the Canadian Forces for reports and analyses concerning replacement of the CF-18 fleet.

Once the ministers have read and analyzed the reports and recommendations, they will make a decision. Then we will announce the decision and release the reports.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives' refusal to launch a bidding process and make Lockheed Martin guarantee industrial spinoffs will do nothing to improve the employment situation.

Oral Questions

On Friday, we learned that the unemployment rate has ballooned to 7% and that 60,000 full-time jobs have disappeared over the past two years. I should also point out that it is the public sector, which the Conservatives have been attacking relentlessly, that has saved the Canadian economy from disaster.

When will the Conservatives take employment seriously?

[English]

Hon. Joe Oliver (Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I have said many times, our government has achieved more in terms of job creation than other G7 countries. We lost 600,000 jobs, compared to eight million in the United States; we have recovered that and added more than 400,000 more, to a net total of more than one million.

We are doing better than most other countries. We are very proud of that performance, which is based on the sound fiscal policies of this government.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, what the minister does not mention in his facts is that the Canadian population grew by 1.6 million people over that same amount of time. Conservative economic policies are not even keeping pace with population growth, and they boast about it.

The reality check for this out-of-touch minister is that 7% are unemployed again in Canada. Almost 40% of those unemployed have given up looking for work altogether, and for young people the recession has never ended: unemployment rates remain the same.

Can the Conservative minister offer just one new concrete idea for those unemployed Canadians on how things are going to get better?

• (1435)

Hon. Joe Oliver (Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, once again, the member opposite is misinformed. One of the reasons the unemployment rate went from 6.9% to 7% was that more people were entering into looking for jobs. It is the exact opposite of what the member opposite asserted.

The fact is that we have an excellent job record. Individual months will vary, but the trend is clear. We are on the road to achieving our budgetary surplus. Our forecast for increased growth is continuing, and employment will continue to increase.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, according to the finance minister, a higher unemployment rate is better for Canada's economy and losing 60,000 full-time jobs in just the last 60 days is somehow good news for Canadians.

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce said that 95% of all jobs created last year were part-time jobs. Billions were given away by the government in corporate taxes without any strings attached or any known jobs created.

If the minister is out of ideas, how about a commitment to reversing his decision to kill the one program that actually worked? Will he commit today to reverse his bad call on killing the small business hiring tax credit, yes or no?

Hon. Joe Oliver (Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is rich for the NDP to be criticizing our government's record on job creation. New Democrats voted against every job-creating measure that our government has put forward, including freezing EI rates,

providing certainty and flexibility to employers and employees, tax cuts for manufacturers to purchase new equipment and expand their operations, and \$70 billion in stable and predictable job-creating infrastructure.

The NDP would instead introduce crippling new taxes on Canadian businesses and put a carbon tax on everything.

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FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the NDP would like to commend Australia for ratifying the UN Arms Trade Treaty last week. Once enforced, the treaty will curb the illegal trade of arms. It will save lives.

Only 10 more countries must ratify it before it becomes international law, but, sadly, Canada is refusing to even sign it. Will the Prime Minister follow the lead of the Prime Minister of Australia, Mr. Abbott? Will Canada actually sign and ratify the Arms Trade Treaty?

Hon. Deepak Obhrai (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and for International Human Rights, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada already has one of the strongest export controls in the world. The ATT actually brings these countries to our export control standards.

It is important that such treaties not affect lawful and responsible firearm owners or discourage the transfer of firearms for recreational uses, such as sport shooting and hunting.

We will consult and we will act accordingly.

[Translation]

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we are starting to get fed up with the bogus excuses we keep hearing on this.

The arms trade treaty will have no repercussions on gun owners in Canada. In fact, even the United States has signed the treaty. Once in place, the treaty will help save the lives of some of the most vulnerable people in the world.

When will the Conservatives follow Australia's example? When will they finally sign and ratify this treaty?

[English]

Hon. Deepak Obhrai (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and for International Human Rights, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I have just stated, Canada already has one of the strongest export controls in the world. This treaty actually brings countries up to our control standards.

As I stated, we will consult, and when it is appropriate, we will make the decision.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT

Hon. John McCallum (Markham—Unionville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government is doing far too little to enforce the rules of the temporary foreign worker program. There are only four companies on its blacklist, and none of those four is related to a case of abuse. What is more, the minister rejected the suggestion of his counterpart in Alberta to include the provinces in enforcing the rules.

Given the seriousness of the abuse problem, why are the Conservatives doing nothing?

[English]

Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Multiculturalism, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member has it entirely backward. It was the Liberals that did nothing. They had no penalties. They had no blacklist. They had no enforcement. They created the general lower-skilled stream. This government created the blacklist.

He is absolutely wrong, and I will give him the example of the Boathouse Restaurant in Fenelon Falls, Ontario, which was put on the blacklist because of an RCMP investigation into human trafficking and abuse of workers. It is on the blacklist because of that, and I just approved more non-compliant companies to be put on the blacklist last week.

In terms of the provinces, I have written to them repeatedly to ask that they share information with us about abusive employers.

• (1440)

Hon. John McCallum (Markham—Unionville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, under the Liberals, you might remember there was no crisis.

Last week in western Canada I heard evidence of rampant abuse of temporary foreign workers. I heard that some resource companies were saving millions by demanding horrendous working hours with unacceptable lodging. I heard that unscrupulous immigration consultants in the trucking industry were selling labour market opinions and allowing gross exploitation of workers, luring them with false promises of permanent residence. All of this is illegal.

Why does the minister not lift a finger to address the incidents?

Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Multiculturalism, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it would take a Liberal to understand abuse. After all, it was the Liberal government that created the stripper program. This is not just some kind of a talking point; this is a reality. The Liberals actually systematically issued, every year, hundreds of work permits for typically easily exploited women from developing countries to come to Canada in an industry with close linkages very frequently to organized crime. When there was a public outcry about it, the Liberals defended the program. That is the Liberal track record. It is indefensible.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Party stands firm in opposing the northern gateway pipeline. Rather than listen to the millions of British Columbians who were concerned about the risks of this project, the Prime Minister

threatened and bullied them and then weakened environmental laws to clear the way.

Last week the minister said that the project would only be approved if it was safe for the environment, but hundreds of scientists said that it was not safe, not on land and not on sea. Will the minister finally accept the science and reject this project?

Mrs. Kelly Block (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the joint review panel has submitted its report with 200 more conditions. Projects, as we have said, will only be approved if they are safe for Canadians and safe for the environment. We are carefully reviewing this report and a decision will be forthcoming.

* * *

[Translation]

PRIVACY

Ms. Charmaine Borg (Terrebonne—Blainville, NDP): Mr. Speaker, with each passing day we have another reason for not trusting Conservatives to protect Canadians' personal information.

Today, *La Presse* revealed that more than 2,000 census forms were lost. Canadians provided this information believing that the government would safeguard it. Even though this happened in 2011, they still do not know where this information has gone.

What is the government doing to protect the victims from identity theft in light of this new loss of personal information?

Hon. James Moore (Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague knows very well that Bill S-4, which is before Parliament, protects the interests of Canadians online.

[English]

I know my colleague has seen the bill because the member herself said about Bill S-4, "I welcome the proposals in this bill. This bill contains very positive developments for the privacy rights of Canadians."

Bill S-4, the digital privacy act, was supported by Privacy Commissioner Chantal Bernier. It is supported by Canadians all across the country who recognize the need to protect Canadians' privacy rights online. The member herself spoke favourably of the bill. I am disappointed to see her change of heart.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate with answers like that it is clear the government does not take the fact that it is losing the personal information of Canadians seriously. It lost the tax records of Canadians. It lost the financial records of half a million graduates. Now it has lost thousands of census data on individual Canadians.

Oral Questions

No wonder the Prime Minister hand-picked a government insider, a man who has made his career at defending controversial government choices, as his Privacy Commissioner. Canadians need someone who will stand up for them.

Therefore, I will ask a simple question. What steps will the Conservatives take to reach out to these Canadians whose information has been lost to ensure they will not become victims of identity theft or fraud?

• (1445)

Hon. James Moore (Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have empowered the Privacy Commissioner and the Privacy Commissioner's office. As I said, we have gone further in Bill S-4.

The ethic behind the member's question is frankly a sound one. That is why we have acted as a government and moved forward both in the Copyright Modernization Act and in this Parliament with Bill S-4.

The Privacy Commissioner has welcomed these changes. Because we recognize that as Canadians are migrating their businesses and their personal lives online, we want to ensure that Canadians are protected online and that the Privacy Commissioner's office is empowered to investigate abuses of Canadian citizens online. That is why we are taking action.

* * *

[Translation]

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau: Mr. Speaker, according to the government's figures, the current grain transportation crisis is costing farmers \$8 billion. The Conservatives' inaction has therefore resulted in significant losses for farmers, despite the repeated warnings that were issued about this problem last fall.

Today, the government's long-awaited bill is being criticized because it does not address the issue of transportation corridors, even though the NDP suggested in the past that this problem needed to be corrected.

How much more will farmers have to pay before the government takes action?

[English]

Mr. Pierre Lemieux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Agriculture showed tremendous leadership by tabling Bill C-30, the Fair Rail for Grain Farmers Act, to solve the serious grain transportation problems that were present in Canada. The bill was well received across Canada by stakeholders and right here in the House. It was a bill that was clear and unequivocal and it set ambitious but realistic goals.

The latest figures show that our government's efforts to get grain moving are working.

Mr. Malcolm Allen (Welland, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the minister actually failed for months and farmers lost millions because of that failure.

New documents released through access to information show that Conservatives ignored the grain transport warnings. They knew

before, yet did not act. A railway company president actually wrote to the minister and said that there was a looming grain transportation crunch on the horizon and that he needed to do something. They ignored that too.

However, the minister responded in the House of Commons with his self-promotion and platitudes and ignored the warning. Will the minister now admit that his failure to heed warnings contributed to billions of dollars that farmers have lost in this particular year?

Mr. Pierre Lemieux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us look at Bill C-30. It was introduced into the House on an urgent basis and passed by the House on an urgent basis. It increases supply chain transparency, it strengthens contractual mechanisms between producers and shippers and it helps to ensure that the entire grain handling and transportation system is working at its capacity. It obligates the rail companies to move one million metric tonnes of grain a week.

This system is working and it is serving our western Canadian grain farmers.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. David Wilks (Kootenay—Columbia, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians from coast to coast are mourning the loss of three RCMP members who were taken from us far too soon at the hands of a ruthless killer. All eyes have been glued to the tragedy in Moncton as it unfolded, showcasing the bravery and great work of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police officers.

Could the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice please update the House on the government's reaction to the horrific events in Moncton?

Mr. Robert Goguen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Kootenay—Columbia for his previous service as a member of Canada's very own RCMP.

[Translation]

Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of RCMP Constables Fabrice Gevaudan, David Ross and Douglas Larche, who gave their lives to protect Canadians.

[English]

As the member of Parliament for Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe, I feel the relief, like other citizens, that finally this horrific accused has been brought to justice and will face the full brunt of the law.

Battling against danger and imminent odds and pure evil, we saw the old adage that the RCMP always gets its man held true again. Thanks to the great actions of the RCMP, we remain Moncton strong.

Oral Questions

•(1450)

[*Translation*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I did not think it was possible, but the Conservatives' legendary incompetence when it comes to protecting the environment has just reached new heights.

This morning we learned that the Conservatives' response plan in the event of an oil spill relies on using chemicals banned by Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

The Conservatives are about to green-light the northern gateway pipeline project, and their response plan in the event of an oil spill is to use chemicals that their own government has banned.

Will the Conservatives finally admit that they are in no way prepared to move forward with this project?

[*English*]

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Transport, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in 2013, the ministers announced that we would be moving ahead with the world-class tanker safety program. Indeed, we struck a panel. That panel came up with recommendations. We just recently announced our response to the recommendations.

One of the key recommendations was the notion that one size does not fit all for response plans across the country. That is why we are putting different areas for different response plans and allowing for those response plans to include the use of chemical disbursements. However, here is the kicker: it is where it is a net benefit for the environment, and that is the means by which we will be allowing this to happen.

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is not a question of if northern gateway will lead to a massive oil spill on the west coast. It is a question of when. Even the B.C. government has said that a comprehensive oil spill response plan is needed before it will approve a pipeline permit.

The Conservatives have no coherent oil spill response plan. How can the government expect Canadians to trust it or its project if the Conservatives cannot even come up with a basic plan?

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Transport, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is categorically false. There are response plans in our country and many people take part in them, like the great Coast Guard Auxiliary, which worked very hard on both of our coasts in this matter.

There is always room for improvement. That is exactly what we are doing. We are ensuring that the areas are ready for a response, that they have all the tools they need. We want to ensure three pillars: that we prevent oil spills from happening; that we respond to them very well if in case they do happen; and, at the day, that polluters will pay.

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, lack of preparation for an oil spill is just one of the ways the Conservatives have mismanaged this pipeline. Their lack of genuine consultation continues to cause them problems.

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip was clear this weekend. If the Conservatives continue to plough ahead, they will once again find themselves in court.

Will the Conservatives stop putting their oil lobbyist friends ahead of British Columbians and will they reject this proposal?

Mrs. Kelly Block (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I said, our government will thoroughly review the joint panel report and will continue to consult with aboriginal communities prior to making any decision.

We are proud of the action we have taken to ensure Canada has a world-class regulatory framework and the means for the safest form of transportation of our energy products.

Again, we have been clear. Projects will only proceed if they are safe for Canadians and safe for the environment.

Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, to sum up, hundreds of scientists are calling on the Conservatives to reject—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Victoria has the floor and members need to come to order.

The hon. member for Victoria.

Mr. Murray Rankin: Mr. Speaker, hundreds of scientists are calling on the Conservative government to reject the joint review panel report on gateway. First nation groups across the province are saying that more consultations are required. Most British Columbians, two-thirds, and most municipalities oppose this project. Now we learn the Conservatives do not even have a response plan for an oil spill.

Obviously, this project must be rejected. What more will it take for the Conservatives to finally do the right thing?

Mrs. Kelly Block (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have been clear. Projects will only proceed if they are safe for Canadians and safe for the environment. We are proud of the action we have taken to ensure Canada has a world-class regulatory framework. We will continue to consult with aboriginal communities prior to making any decision on this project.

Our government is currently reviewing the independent joint review panel report and will continue to consult prior to making decisions.

•(1455)

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know the minister has trouble answering questions on the fly, but now she has had the entire weekend to think about my question from last week.

Oral Questions

The Prime Minister must be embarrassed by President Obama's initiative—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, please. This is certainly taking up a lot of time from today's question period. I am going to ask members to ensure we do not run out of time and maybe miss some questions, and if they would quickly come to order and let the hon. member for Scarborough—Guildwood finishing asking his.

Hon. John McKay: Mr. Speaker, I know the minister must be embarrassed by President Obama's initiative to deal with the largest emitter. We know the minister has no such plan, now or in the future.

When was the last time the minister met with the oil and gas industry, or will we get the same old cue card from last week?

Mr. Colin Carrie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, the Liberals are really messed up on the environmental file. We actually welcome the move from the U.S.

We took action on this sector two years ago, which means our regulations will come into effect sooner and our regulations are stricter. We also estimate that we will achieve a 46% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in the coal sector by 2030 compared with 30% in the U.S.

We also have one of the cleanest electricity systems in the world, with 77% of our electricity supply emitting no greenhouse gas emissions, compared with 33% in the U.S.

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, different day, same cue card.

Recently, the government announced a national conservation plan, but like most Conservative gifts, this one has a catch. Rather than making the Canada government initiatives readily available to all Canadians, one has to go to the Conservative website, and if one hits the “donate now” button, one will have to release one's personal information.

Well, my name is John Doe and I am from Scarborough—Guildwood, and I would like to know how the minister expects to fund this conservation plan, since she cannot fund her own Conservative plan.

Mr. Colin Carrie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the premise of that question is ridiculous. Canadians across the country have applauded the announcement we made to launch the national conservation plan. It promotes our government's strong legacy of conservation work and includes new investments to secure ecologically sensitive lands and conserve marine and coastal areas. It helps to connect Canadians to nature in urban areas.

This was a commitment we made in the 2013 Speech from the Throne, and I am proud to be part of a government that keeps its promises and listens to Canadians.

[*Translation*]

CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Ms. Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe (Pierrefonds—Dollard, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadian refugee settlement groups are calling on the Conservative government to do its part in response to the humanitarian crisis we are seeing in Syria as a result of the civil war. The settlement groups, under the leadership of the Canadian Immigrant Settlement Sector Alliance, wrote to the minister last week to confirm that they have the infrastructure and staff needed to welcome 10,000 Syrian refugees. They are calling for immediate action.

When will the government respond to the call of the United Nations, which is trying to relocate 100,000 Syrian refugees?

Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are very proud of the response of the Government of Canada and Canada as a whole to the crisis in Syria. We are the fourth-largest financial donor, and Canada has already offered protection to more than 1,100 Syrians. We are especially proud of Quebec's contribution. Private sponsorship in Quebec has been particularly strong. Further to the visit of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, with whom we discussed—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Davenport.

[*English*]

Mr. Andrew Cash (Davenport, NDP): Mr. Speaker, according to the UN, over 2.8 million Syrians are seeking refugee protection. The Canadian Immigration Settlement Sector Alliance has called on the government to take in more refugees. It says that Canada is uniquely positioned to do more and to accept more.

Now, the minister has so far dragged his feet, but he has the opportunity to finally listen to experts, acknowledge that he has mishandled refugee protection, and agree to reassess Canada's role in Syrian aid.

• (1500)

Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians who have been following this crisis know that Canada has been at the forefront of the international response. We are the fourth-largest donor to the humanitarian response and other forms of response to meet the needs of those 2.7 million refugees.

We are deeply concerned that this is the largest refugee crisis the world is now facing. That is why Canada has already offered protection to over 1,100 Syrians through our asylum system and our refugee resettlement programs.

Further to the very productive recent visit of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and dignitaries, we plan to do more. Canada continues to resettle one in ten refugees worldwide.

*Oral Questions***VETERANS AFFAIRS**

Mr. Ted Opitz (Etobicoke Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on Friday, June 6, Canadians paused to mark the 70th anniversary of D-Day and the Battle of Normandy. As a nation, we honoured those Canadians who bravely landed on the heavily defended shores of Normandy, and with great vision and perseverance, forever changed the course of history.

Could the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs inform this House on how our government remembered this very important date?

Mr. Parm Gill (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was honoured to return to the shores of France alongside our Prime Minister, Minister of Veterans Affairs, Minister of National Defence, and other parliamentarians to express our endless gratitude and to pledge that we will never forget those who served.

It was a great privilege and humbling experience to stand alongside almost 100 veterans of D-Day and the Battle of Normandy on Juno Beach to honour those who served and to remember all those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Lest we forget.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Downsview Park is 77,572 acres of green space, boasting a lake, 60,000 trees, and walking paths, all between Keele, Sheppard, and Allen roads and Wilson Avenue. Put another way, Downsview Park is a one-of-a-kind jewel within Toronto. Despite this, I rise to sound the alarm on what appears to be a Canada Lands Company plan to transform Canada's largest urban park into a paradise for developers.

Will the minister, today, commit that Downsview will remain green, and that the government will preserve Downsview Park green for our children and our grandchildren?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government recognizes and values Downsview Park as an important community asset within the GTA. As we have indicated many times, there is no plan and no intention to sell the parkland at Downsview Park. We are going to keep that and make sure that it is available for the residents of the area.

* * *

[Translation]

TOURISM

Ms. Annick Papillon (Québec, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this week is Tourism Week in Canada.

Unfortunately, instead of investing in promoting Canadian tourism, the minister would rather brag about cutting 20% of the Canadian Tourism Commission's budget, and the results are disastrous. The tourism industry is struggling to cope with the consequences of those cuts and the botched EI reform.

During Tourism Week, will the minister fix his mistakes and invest in the tourism industry, which creates jobs across the country?

Hon. Maxime Bernier (Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism, and Agriculture), CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question. I have been wanting to rise in the House to answer questions about the tourism industry for a long time now.

There is so much good news in Canada's tourism industry that the member has forgotten it. The annual Rendez-vous Canada event was held in Vancouver two weeks ago, and all the players in our tourism industry were in attendance. Tourism in Canada is alive and well and is an engine of economic growth for many small businesses in this industry. The government will continue to support them.

* * *

[English]

DEMOCRATIC REFORM

Mr. Blake Richards (Wild Rose, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the *Toronto Star* has wrongly reported that the fair elections act will allow people to vote by having someone vouch for who they are. This is clearly a factual error, because the fair elections act ends identity vouching altogether.

Can the Minister of State for Democratic Reform remind the House of the new requirement that every voter present a physical piece of ID before voting?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of State (Democratic Reform), CPC): Mr. Speaker, the *Toronto Star's* factual error was in stating that voters can, "...continue to prove their identity through the vouching system at the ballot box". That is a clear factual error. In the next election, it will be impossible to have someone identify anyone through a form of vouching. Anyone who shows up without a physical piece of ID will not be permitted to vote.

The good news is that Canadians overwhelmingly support our decision to require ID: 89% of Canadians believe that voters should have ID when they vote. We agree with them. It is fair. That is the fair elections act.

* * *

●(1505)

[Translation]

PRIVACY

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Beauharnois—Salaberry, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Industry's telecommunications bill will simply make it easier for companies and the government to intrude into the lives of ordinary people.

Just imagine: companies will be allowed to share their clients' personal information with other organizations without a warrant and without having to inform the individual in question.

Why are the Conservatives giving telecommunications companies carte blanche when it comes to surveillance? Why are they not protecting Canadians' personal information?

Government Orders

Hon. James Moore (Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is simply not the case. We are talking about Bill S-4.

[*English*]

Again, if my colleague is opposed to the bill, she ought to tell her colleague who is responsible for telecommunications policy, her colleague from Terrebonne—Blainville, who said, “We have been pushing for these measures and I am happy to see them introduced.... Overall, these are good first steps.”

That was the NDP position when we tabled the bill, because the digital privacy act does exactly, in substance, what the NDP asks for us to do rhetorically, which is to protect the privacy of Canadians online and protect their transactions, so that when their information is violated or if their information has been stolen, they are immediately notified, and if they are not, there is punishment. The Privacy Commissioner is empowered.

Bill S-4 goes a great way to protect Canadians online, and the NDP should know that.

* * *

[*Translation*]

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Jean-François Fortin (Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Mr. Speaker, for more than a year Service Canada has been picking on the workers at the Eastern Quebec Seafoods plant in Matane.

After abruptly ending an agreement that had been in effect since 1996, a known and approved agreement, Ottawa is now treating these employees like fraudsters and has asked them to repay thousands of dollars in legitimate benefits. In a display of extreme obstinacy, the Employment Insurance Commission wants to appeal the decision of the Social Security Tribunal, which just ruled in favour of the workers.

What is the government waiting for to intervene and ensure that this harassment of workers who have acted in good faith stops once and for all?

Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Multiculturalism, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am not familiar with this particular file, but I will look into it and provide the honourable member with the facts.

Mr. Jean-François Fortin (Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the workers at the Eastern Quebec Seafoods plant deserve better than platitudes from the minister. They deserve that the government stop treating them with disdain. They have already had to defend themselves once against Service Canada's unreasonable demands, and they won their case before the Employment Insurance Board of Referees. They then had to defend themselves a second time on the same matter, and they just won their case before the Social Security Tribunal.

How many more times will the honest workers of Matane have to defend themselves against Service Canada's bad faith before the minister takes real action and stops Service Canada from harassing them?

Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Multiculturalism, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the professional public servants at Service Canada are not acting in bad faith. They are acting in good faith. The rules are there to support unemployed workers who have lost their job through no fault of their own. Clearly, cases can be appealed before the Social Security Tribunal.

However, I will look into this particular case and share my findings with the hon. member.

* * *

[*English*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Bruce Hyer (Thunder Bay—Superior North, GP): Mr. Speaker, two of Canada's greatest challenges are rising CO₂ and growing poverty. The Conservative government has not addressed either one.

Proposed by the Citizens Climate Lobby, carbon fee and dividend would address both by setting a fee on carbon to curb our petrol addictions and putting that money straight back into the pockets of each and every Canadian.

Will the Minister of Finance please consider carbon fee and dividend?

Mr. Colin Carrie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to say that our approach is working. Thanks to our actions, carbon emissions will go down close to 130 megatonnes from what they would have been under the Liberals.

What do the other parties want? They want a \$20-billion carbon tax. Let us look at what this would do to hard-working Canadian families. This would be a tax on electricity, transportation, heating for their homes, clothes, groceries, and the list goes on. Canadians do not want more taxes. They do not want a \$20-billion carbon tax.

We are going to continue with our approach.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

● (1510)

[*English*]

ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN 2014 ACT, NO. 1

The House resumed from June 5 consideration of Bill C-31, An Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 11, 2014 and other measures, as reported (with amendment) from the committee.

The Speaker: Pursuant to an order made on Tuesday, May 27, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded divisions on the motions at report stage of Bill C-31.

Call in the members.

● (1525)

[*And the bells having rung:*]

The Speaker: The question is on Motion No. 1. A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 2, 3, and 6.

• (1530)

(The House divided on the Motion No. 1, which was negated on the following division:)

(Division No. 170)

YEAS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Angus
Ashton	Atamanenko
Aubin	Benskin
Blanchette	Blanchette-Lamothe
Boivin	Borg
Boulerice	Boutin-Sweet
Brahmi	Brousseau
Caron	Cash
Chicoine	Chisholm
Choquette	Christopherson
Cleary	Comartin
Côté	Crowder
Cullen	Davies (Vancouver East)
Day	Dewar
Dionne Labelle	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Dusseauult	Freeman
Genest	Genest-Jourdain
Giguère	Gravelle
Grogoué	Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Harris (St. John's East)	Hughes
Jacob	Julian
Kellway	Lapointe
Larose	Latendresse
Laverdière	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)
Leslie	Liu
Mai	Marston
Masse	Mathysen
May	Michaud
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)	Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)	Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)	Nantel
Nash	Nicholls
Nunez-Melo	Papillon
Péclet	Pilon
Plamondon	Quach
Rafferty	Rankin
Ravignat	Raynault
Rousseau	Saganash
Scott	Sellah
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sitsabaiesan
Thibeault	Toone
Tremblay	Turmel — 86

NAYS

Members

Abлонczy	Adler
Albas	Albrecht
Alexander	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Ambler	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson
Andrews	Armstrong
Ashfield	Aspin
Baird	Bateman
Bélanger	Bennett
Benoit	Bergen
Bernier	Bezan
Blaney	Block
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brisson
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Brown (Barrie)	Bruinooge
Butt	Calandra
Calkins	Cannan
Carmichael	Carrie
Casey	Chisu
Chong	Clarke

Government Orders

Cotler	Crockatt
Cuzner	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Devolin	Dion
Dreeshen	Dubourg
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dykstra	Easter
Eyking	Falk
Fast	Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)
Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Fletcher
Freeland	Galipeau
Gallant	Garneau
Gill	Goguen
Goldring	Goodale
Goodyear	Gosal
Gourde	Grewal
Harper	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hawn	Hayes
Hiebert	Hillyer
Hoback	Holder
Hyer	James
Jones	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lamoureux
Lauson	Lebel
Lemieux	Leung
Lizon	Lobb
Lukiwski	Lunney
MacAulay	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Maguire
Mayes	McCallum
McColeman	McGuinty
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	McLeod
Menegakis	Merrifield
Miller	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Murray
Nicholson	Norlock
Obhrai	O'Connor
Oliver	O'Neill Gordon
Opitz	O'Toole
Paradis	Payne
Poilievre	Preston
Raitt	Rajotte
Rathgeber	Regan
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Saxton
Scarpaleggia	Schellenberger
Seeback	Sgro
Shea	Shipley
Shory (sor)	Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind-
Smith	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
St-Denis	Storseth
Strahl	Sweet
Tilson	Toet
Trottier	Trudeau
Truppe	Uppal
Valcourt	Valeriotte
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vellacott	Wallace
Warawa	Warkentin
Watson	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to
Sky Country)	Wilks
Weston (Saint John)	Wong
Williamson	Yelich
Woodworth	Young (Vancouver South)
Young (Oakville)	
Zimmer — 177	

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare Motion No. 1 defeated.

[*Translation*]

I therefore declare Motions Nos. 2, 3 and 6 defeated.

[*English*]

The question is on Motion No. 4.

Government Orders

[Translation]

A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 10 to 12.

• (1540)

(The House divided on Motion No. 4, which was negatived on the following division:)

(Division No. 171)

YEAS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Ashton
Atamanenko	Aubin
Bélangier	Bennett
Benskin	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brahmi
Brison	Brosseau
Caron	Casey
Cash	Chicoine
Chisholm	Choquette
Christopherson	Cleary
Comartin	Côté
Cotler	Crowder
Cullen	Cuzner
Davies (Vancouver East)	Day
Dewar	Dion
Dionne Labelle	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Dubourg
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Dusseault	Easter
Eyking	Freeland
Freeman	Garneau
Genest	Genest-Jourdain
Giguère	Goodale
Gravelle	Groguhé
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)	Harris (St. John's East)
Hughes	Hyer
Jacob	Jones
Julian	Kellway
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Larose	Latendresse
Laverdière	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Énard)
Leslie	Liu
MacAulay	Mai
Marston	Masse
Mathysen	May
McCallum	McGuinty
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	Michaud
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)	Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)	Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)	Murray
Nantel	Nash
Nicholls	Nunez-Melo
Papillon	Péclet
Pilon	Plamondon
Quach	Rafferty
Rankin	Rathgeber
Ravignat	Raynault
Regan	Rousseau
Saganash	Scarpaleggia
Scott	Sellah
Sgro	Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind- sor)
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sitsabaiesan
St-Denis	Thibeault
Toone	Tremblay
Trudeau	Turmel
Valeriote — 117	

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy	Adams
Adler	Albas
Albrecht	Alexander

Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Armstrong
Ashfield	Aspin
Baird	Bateman
Benoit	Bergen
Bernier	Bezan
Blaney	Block
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Brown (Barrie)
Bruinooge	Butt
Calandra	Calkins
Cannan	Carmichael
Carrie	Chisu
Chong	Clarke
Crockatt	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Devolin	Dreeshen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dykstra
Falk	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Galipeau
Gallant	Gill
Goguen	Goldring
Goodyear	Gosal
Gourde	Grewal
Harper	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hawn	Hayes
Hiebert	Hilmyer
Hoback	Holder
James	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lauzon
Lebel	Lemieux
Leung	Lizon
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Maguire
Mayes	McColeman
McLeod	Menegakis
Merrifield	Miller
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Nicholson	Norlock
Obhrai	O'Connor
Oliver	O'Neill Gordon
Opitz	O'Toole
Paradis	Payne
Poilievre	Preston
Raitt	Rajotte
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Saxton
Schellenberger	Seeback
Shea	Shipley
Shory	Smith
Sopuck	Sorenson
Stanton	Storseth
Strahl	Sweet
Tilson	Toet
Trottier	Truppe
Uppal	Valcourt
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vellacott	Wallace
Warawa	Warkentin
Watson	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)
Weston (Saint John)	Wilks
Williamson	Wong
Woodworth	Yelich
Young (Oakville)	Young (Vancouver South)
Zimmer — 147	

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare Motion No. 4 defeated.

I therefore declare Motions Nos. 10 to 12 defeated.

[English]

The next question is on Motion No. 5. A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 8 and 9.

● (1545)

[Translation]

(The House divided on Motion No. 5, which was negated on the following division:)

(Division No. 172)

YEAS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Ashton
Atamanenko	Aubin
Bélanger	Bennett
Benskin	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brahmi
Brisson	Brosseau
Caron	Casey
Cash	Chicoine
Chisholm	Choquette
Christopherson	Cleary
Comartin	Côté
Cotler	Crowder
Cullen	Cuzner
Davies (Vancouver East)	Day
Dewar	Dion
Dionne Labelle	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Dubourg
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Dusseault	Easter
Eyking	Fortin
Freeland	Freeman
Garneau	Genest
Genest-Jourdain	Giguère
Goodale	Gravelle
Groguhé	Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Harris (St. John's East)	Hughes
Hyer	Jacob
Jones	Julian
Kellway	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Larose
Latendresse	Laverdière
LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)	Leslie
Liu	MacAulay
Mai	Marston
Masse	Mathysen
May	McCallum
McGuinty	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
Michaud	Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)	Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)	Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
Murray	Nantel
Nash	Nicholls
Nunez-Melo	Papillon
Péclet	Pilon
Plamondon	Quach
Rafferty	Rankin
Rathgeber	Ravignat
Raynault	Regan
Rousseau	Saganash
Scarpaleggia	Scott
Sellah	Sgro
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)	
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	
Sitsabaiesan	St-Denis
Thibeault	Toone
Tremblay	Trudeau
Turmel	Valeriote — 118

Government Orders

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy	Adams
Adler	Albas
Albrecht	Alexander
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Armstrong
Ashfield	Aspin
Baird	Bateman
Benoit	Bergen
Bernier	Bezan
Blaney	Block
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Brown (Barrie)
Bruinooge	Butt
Calandra	Calkins
Cannan	Carmichael
Carrie	Chisu
Chong	Clarke
Crockatt	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Devolin	Dreeschen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dykstra
Falk	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Galipeau
Gallant	Gill
Goguen	Goldring
Goodyear	Gosal
Gourde	Grewal
Harper	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hawn	Hayes
Hiebert	Hillyer
Hoback	Holder
James	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lauzon
Lebel	Lemieux
Leung	Lizon
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Maguire
Mayes	McColeman
McLeod	Menegakis
Merrifield	Miller
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Nicholson	Norlock
Obhrai	O'Connor
Oliver	O'Neill Gordon
Opitz	O'Toole
Paradis	Payne
Poilievre	Preston
Raitt	Rajotte
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Saxton
Schellenberger	Seeback
Shea	Shipley
Shory	Smith
Sopuck	Sorenson
Stanton	Storseth
Strahl	Sweet
Tilson	Toet
Trottier	Truppe
Uppal	Valcourt
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vellacott	Wallace
Warawa	Warkentin
Watson	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to
Sky Country)	
Weston (Saint John)	Wilks
Williamson	Wong
Woodworth	Yelich
Young (Oakville)	Young (Vancouver South)
Zimmer — 147	

PAIRED

Nil

Government Orders

The Speaker: I declare Motion No. 5 defeated. I therefore declare Motions Nos. 8 and 9 defeated.

[*English*]

The next question is on Motion No. 13. A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 14 to 65.

• (1555)

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

(Division No. 173)

YEAS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Angus
Ashton	Atamanenko
Aubin	Benskin
Blanchette	Blanchette-Lamothe
Boivin	Borg
Boulerice	Boutin-Sweet
Brahmi	Brosseau
Caron	Cash
Chicoine	Chisholm
Choquette	Christopherson
Cleary	Comartin
Côté	Crowder
Cullen	Davies (Vancouver East)
Day	Dewar
Dionne Labelle	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Dusseauult	Fortin
Freeman	Genest
Genest-Jourdain	Giguère
Gravelle	Groguhé
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)	Harris (St. John's East)
Hughes	Hyer
Jacob	Julian
Kellway	Lapointe
Larose	Latendresse
Laverdière	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)
Leslie	Liu
Mai	Marston
Masse	Mathysen
May	Michaud
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)	Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)	Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)	Nantel
Nash	Nicholls
Nunez-Melo	Papillon
Péclet	Pilon
Plamondon	Quach
Rafferty	Rankin
Ravignat	Raynault
Rousseau	Saganash
Scott	Sellah
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sitsabaiesan
Thibeault	Toone
Tremblay	Turmel — 88

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy	Adams
Adler	Albas
Albrecht	Alexander
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Andrews
Armstrong	Ashfield
Aspin	Baird
Bateman	Bélangier
Bennett	Benoit
Bergen	Bernier
Bezan	Blaney
Block	Boughen
Braid	Breitkreuz
Brison	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)

Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Brown (Barrie)
Bruinooge	Butt
Calandra	Calkins
Cannan	Carmichael
Carrie	Casey
Chisu	Chong
Clarke	Cotler
Crockatt	Cuzner
Daniel	Davidson
Dechert	Devolin
Dion	Dreeshen
Dubourg	Duncan (Vancouver Island North)
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dykstra
Easter	Eyking
Falk	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Freeland
Galipeau	Gallant
Gameau	Gill
Goguen	Goldring
Goodale	Goodyear
Gosal	Gourde
Grewal	Harper
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn
Hayes	Hiebert
Hillyer	Hoback
Holder	James
Jones	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lamoureux
Lauzon	Lebel
Lemieux	Leung
Lizon	Lobb
Lukiwski	Lunney
MacAulay	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Maguire
Mayes	McCallum
McColeman	McGuinty
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	McLeod
Menegakis	Merrifield
Miller	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Murray
Nicholson	Norlock
Obhrai	O'Connor
Oliver	O'Neill Gordon
Opitz	O'Toole
Paradis	Payne
Poillievre	Preston
Raitt	Rajotte
Rathgeber	Regan
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Saxton
Scarpaleggia	Schellenberger
Seeback	Sgro
Shea	Shipley
Shory	Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind-
sor)	
Smith	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
St-Denis	Storseth
Strahl	Sweet
Tilson	Toet
Trottier	Trudeau
Truppe	Uppal
Valcourt	Valeriotte
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vellacott	Wallace
Warawa	Warkentin
Watson	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to
Sky Country)	
Weston (Saint John)	Wilks
Williamson	Wong
Woodworth	Yelich
Young (Oakville)	Young (Vancouver South)
Zimmer — 177	

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare Motion No. 13 defeated. I therefore declare Motions Nos. 14 to 65 defeated.

[Translation]

The next question is on Motion No. 66. A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 67 to 69.

• (1600)

[English]

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

(Division No. 174)

YEAS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Angus
Ashton	Atamanenko
Aubin	Benskin
Blanchette	Blanchette-Lamothe
Boivin	Borg
Boulerice	Boutin-Sweet
Brahmi	Brousseau
Caron	Cash
Chicoine	Chisholm
Choquette	Christopherson
Cleary	Comartin
Côté	Crowder
Cullen	Davies (Vancouver East)
Day	Dewar
Dionne Labelle	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Dusseault	Fortin
Freeman	Genest
Genest-Jourdain	Giguère
Gravelle	Groguhé
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)	Harris (St. John's East)
Hughes	Hyer
Jacob	Julian
Kellway	Lapointe
Larose	Latendresse
Laverdière	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Énard)
Leslie	Liu
Mai	Marston
Masse	Mathysen
May	Michaud
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)	Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)	Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)	Nantel
Nash	Nicholls
Nunez-Melo	Papillon
Péclet	Pilon
Plamondon	Quach
Rafferty	Rankin
Ravignat	Raynault
Rousseau	Saganash
Scott	Sellah
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sitsabaiesan
Thibeault	Toone
Tremblay	Turnel — 88

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy	Adams
Adler	Albas
Albrecht	Alexander
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Andrews
Armstrong	Ashfield
Aspin	Baird
Bateman	Bélanger
Bennett	Benoit
Bergen	Bernier
Bezan	Blaney
Block	Boughen
Braid	Breitkreuz
Brison	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Brown (Barrie)

Government Orders

Bruinooge	Butt
Calandra	Calkins
Cannan	Carmichael
Carrie	Casey
Chisu	Chong
Clarke	Cotler
Crockatt	Cuzner
Daniel	Davidson
Dechert	Devolin
Dion	Dreeshen
Dubourg	Duncan (Vancouver Island North)
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dykstra
Easter	Eyking
Falk	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Freeland
Galipeau	Gallant
Gameau	Gill
Goguen	Goldring
Goodale	Goodyear
Gosal	Gourde
Grewal	Harper
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn
Hayes	Hiebert
Hillyer	Hoback
Holder	James
Jones	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lamoureux
Lauzon	Lebel
Lemieux	Leung
Lizon	Lobb
Lukiwski	Lunney
MacAulay	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Maguire
Mayes	McCallum
McColeman	McGuinty
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	McLeod
Menegakis	Merrifield
Miller	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Murray
Nicholson	Norlock
Obhrai	O'Connor
Oliver	O'Neill Gordon
Opitz	O'Toole
Paradis	Payne
Poilievre	Preston
Raitt	Rajotte
Rathgeber	Regan
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Saxton
Scarpaleggia	Schellenberger
Seeback	Sgro
Shea	Shipley
Shory (sor)	Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind-
Smith	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
St-Denis	Storseth
Strahl	Sweet
Tilson	Toet
Trottier	Trudeau
Truppe	Uppal
Valcourt	Valeriotte
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vellacott	Wallace
Warawa	Warkentin
Watson	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to
Sky Country)	Wilks
Weston (Saint John)	Wong
Williamson	Yelich
Woodworth	Young (Vancouver South)
Young (Oakville)	
Zimmer — 177	

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare Motion No. 66 defeated. I therefore declare Motions Nos. 67 to 69 defeated.

Government Orders

The next question is on Motion No. 70. A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 71 to 83.

• (1610)

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

(Division No. 175)

YEAS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Ashton
Atamanenko	Aubin
Bélangier	Bennett
Benskin	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brahmi
Brisson	Brosseau
Caron	Casey
Cash	Chicoine
Chisholm	Choquette
Christopherson	Cleary
Côté	Cotler
Crowder	Cullen
Cuzner	Davies (Vancouver East)
Day	Dewar
Dion	Dionne Labelle
Doré Lefebvre	Dubé
Dubourg	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)	Dusseau
Easter	Eyking
Fortin	Freeland
Freeman	Garneau
Genest	Genest-Jourdain
Giguère	Goodale
Gravelle	Grogulé
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)	Harris (St. John's East)
Hughes	Jacob
Jones	Julian
Kellway	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Larose
Latendresse	Laverdière
LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)	Leslie
Liu	MacAulay
Mai	Marston
Masse	Mathysen
McCallum	McGuinty
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	Michaud
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)	Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)	Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)	Murray
Nantel	Nash
Nicholls	Nunez-Melo
Papillon	Péclet
Pilon	Plamondon
Quach	Rafferty
Rankin	Ravignat
Raynault	Regan
Rousseau	Saganash
Scarpaleggia	Scott
Sellah	Sgro
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)	
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	St-Denis
Sitsabaiesan	Toone
Thibeault	Trudeau
Tremblay	Valeriote— 114
Turmel	

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy	Adams
Adler	Albas
Albrecht	Alexander
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Armstrong

Ashfield	Aspin
Baird	Bateman
Benoit	Bergen
Bernier	Bezan
Blaney	Block
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Brown (Barrie)
Bruinooge	Butt
Calandra	Calkins
Cannan	Carmichael
Carrie	Chisu
Chong	Clarke
Crockatt	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Devolin	Dreeshen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dykstra
Falk	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Galipeau
Gallant	Gill
Goguen	Goldring
Goodyear	Gosal
Gourde	Grewal
Harper	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hawn	Hayes
Hiebert	Hillyer
Hoback	Holder
James	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lauzon
Lebel	Lemieux
Leung	Lizon
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Maguire
Mayes	McColeman
McLeod	Menegakis
Merrifield	Miller
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Nicholson	Norlock
Obhrai	O'Connor
Oliver	O'Neill Gordon
Opitz	O'Toole
Paradis	Payne
Poilievre	Preston
Raitt	Rajotte
Rathgeber	Reid
Rempel	Richards
Saxton	Schellenberger
Seeback	Shea
Shipley	Shory
Smith	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
Storseth	Strahl
Sweet	Tilson
Toet	Trottier
Truppe	Uppal
Valcourt	Van Kesteren
Van Loan	Vellacott
Wallace	Warawa
Warkentin	Watson
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)	
Weston (Saint John)	
Wilks	Williamson
Wong	Woodworth
Yelich	Young (Oakville)
Young (Vancouver South)	Zimmer — 148

PAIRED

Nil

The Deputy Speaker: I declare Motion No. 70 defeated. I further declare Motions Nos. 71 to 83 defeated.

[*Translation*]

The question is on Motion No. 84. A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 85 to 87.

•(1615)

(The House divided on Motion No. 84, which was negated on the following division:)

(Division No. 176)

YEAS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Ashton
Atamanenko	Aubin
Bélangier	Bennett
Benskin	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brahmi
Brisson	Brosseau
Caron	Casey
Cash	Chicoine
Chisholm	Choquette
Christopherson	Cleary
Côté	Cotler
Crowder	Cullen
Cuzner	Davies (Vancouver East)
Day	Dewar
Dion	Dionne Labelle
Doré Lefebvre	Dubé
Dubourg	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)	Dusseault
Easter	Eyking
Fortin	Freeland
Freeman	Garneau
Genest	Genest-Jourdain
Giguère	Goodale
Gravelle	Grogulé
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)	Harris (St. John's East)
Hughes	Hyer
Jacob	Jones
Julian	Kellway
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Larose	Latendresse
Laverdière	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)
Leslie	Liu
MacAulay	Mai
Marston	Masse
Mathysen	May
McCallum	McGuinty
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	Michaud
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)	Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)	Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)	Murray
Nantel	Nash
Nicholls	Nunez-Melo
Papillon	Pécllet
Pilon	Plamondon
Quach	Rafferty
Rankin	Ravignat
Raynault	Regan
Rousseau	Saganash
Scarpaleggia	Scott
Sellah	Sgro
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)	St-Denis
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Toone
Sitsabaiesan	Trudeau
Thibeault	Valeriote — 116
Tremblay	
Turmel	

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy	Adams
Adler	Albas
Albrecht	Alexander
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Armstrong
Ashfield	Aspin
Baird	Bateman

Government Orders

Benoit	Bergen
Bernier	Bezan
Blaney	Block
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Brown (Barrie)
Bruinooge	Butt
Calandra	Calkins
Cannan	Carmichael
Carrie	Chisu
Chong	Clarke
Crockatt	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Devolin	Dreeshen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dykstra
Falk	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Galpeau
Gallant	Gill
Goguen	Goldring
Goodyear	Gosal
Gourde	Grewal
Harper	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hawn	Hayes
Hiebert	Hillyer
Hoback	Holder
James	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lauzon
Lebel	Lemieux
Leung	Lizon
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Maguire
Mayes	McColeman
McLeod	Menegakis
Merrifield	Miller
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Norlock
Nicholson	O'Connor
Obhrai	O'Neill Gordon
Oliver	O'Toole
Opitz	Payne
Paradis	Preston
Poilievre	Rajotte
Raitt	Reid
Rathgeber	Richards
Rempel	Schellenberger
Saxton	Shea
Seeback	Shory
Shipley	Sopuck
Smith	Stanton
Sorenson	Strahl
Storseth	Tilson
Sweet	Trottier
Toet	Uppal
Truppe	Van Kesteren
Valcourt	Vellacott
Van Loan	Warawa
Wallace	Watson
Warkentin	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)	Weston (Saint John)
Wilks	Williamson
Wong	Woodworth
Yelich	Young (Oakville)
Young (Vancouver South)	Zimmer — 148

PAIRED

Nil

The Deputy Speaker: I declare Motion No. 84 defeated. Therefore, I declare Motions Nos. 85 to 87 defeated.

[*English*]

The question is on Motion No. 88.

•(1620)

(The House divided on Motion No. 88, which was negated on the following division:)

Government Orders

(Division No. 177)

YEAS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Ashton
Atamanenko	Aubin
Bélangier	Bennett
Benskin	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brahmi
Brison	Brosseau
Caron	Casey
Cash	Chicoine
Chisholm	Choquette
Christopherson	Cleary
Côté	Cotler
Crowder	Cullen
Cuzner	Davies (Vancouver East)
Day	Dewar
Dion	Dionne Labelle
Doré Lefebvre	Dubé
Dubourg	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)	Dusseault
Easter	Eyking
Fortin	Freeland
Freeman	Garneau
Genest	Genest-Jourdain
Giguère	Goodale
Gravelle	Grogulé
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)	Harris (St. John's East)
Hughes	Hyer
Jacob	Jones
Julian	Kellway
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Larose	Latendresse
Laverdière	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)
Leslie	Liu
MacAulay	Mai
Marston	Masse
Mathysen	May
McCallum	McGuinty
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	Michaud
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)	Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)	Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)	Murray
Nantel	Nash
Nicholls	Nunez-Melo
Papillon	Péclét
Pilon	Plamondon
Quach	Rafferty
Rankin	Ravignat
Raynault	Regan
Rousseau	Saganash
Scarpaleggia	Scott
Sellah	Sgro
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)	St-Denis
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Toone
Sitsabaiesan	Trudeau
Thibeault	Valeriotte — 116
Tremblay	
Turmel	

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy	Adams
Adler	Albas
Albrecht	Alexander
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Armstrong
Ashfield	Aspin
Baird	Bateman
Benoit	Bergen
Bernier	Bezan
Blaney	Block
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Brown (Barrie)

Bruinooge	Butt
Calandra	Calkins
Cannan	Carmichael
Carrie	Chisu
Chong	Clarke
Crockatt	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Devolin	Dreeshen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dykstra
Falk	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Galipeau
Gallant	Gill
Goguen	Goldring
Goodyear	Gosal
Gourde	Grewal
Harper	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hawn	Hayes
Hiebert	Hillyer
Hoback	Holder
James	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lauson
Lebel	Lemieux
Leung	Lizon
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Maguire
Mayes	McColeman
McLeod	Menegakis
Merrifield	Miller
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Norlock
Nicholson	O'Connor
Obhrai	O'Neill Gordon
Oliver	O'Toole
Opitz	Payne
Paradis	Preston
Poilievre	Rajotte
Raitt	Reid
Rathgeber	Richards
Rempel	Schellenberger
Saxton	Shea
Seebach	Shory
Shiple	Sopuck
Smith	Stanton
Sorenson	Strahl
Storseth	Tilson
Sweet	Trotter
Toet	Uppal
Truppe	Van Kesteren
Valcourt	Vellacott
Van Loan	Warawa
Wallace	Watson
Warkentin	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)
Weston (Saint John)	Weston (Saint John)
Wilks	Williamson
Wong	Woodworth
Yelich	Young (Oakville)
Young (Vancouver South)	Zimmer — 148

PAIRED

Nil

The Deputy Speaker: I declare Motion No. 88 defeated.

The next question is on Motion No. 89. A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 90 to 93.

● (1630)

[Translation]

(The House divided on Motion No. 89, which was negated on the following division:)

*Government Orders**(Division No. 178)*

YEAS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Ashton
Atamanenko	Aubin
Bélangier	Bennett
Benskin	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brahmi
Brison	Brosseau
Caron	Casey
Cash	Chicoine
Chisholm	Choquette
Christopherson	Cleary
Côté	Crowder
Cullen	Cuzner
Davies (Vancouver East)	Day
Dewar	Dion
Dionne Labelle	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Dubourg
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Dusseault	Easter
Eyking	Fortin
Freeland	Freeman
Garneau	Genest
Genest-Jourdain	Giguère
Goodale	Gravelle
Groguhé	Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Harris (St. John's East)	Hughes
Hyer	Jacob
Jones	Julian
Kellway	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Larose
Latendresse	Laverdière
LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)	Leslie
Liu	MacAulay
Mai	Marston
Masse	Mathysen
May	McCallum
McGuinty	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
Michaud	Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)	Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)	Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
Murray	Nantel
Nash	Nicholls
Nunez-Melo	Papillon
Péclét	Pilon
Plamondon	Quach
Rafferty	Rankin
Ravignat	Raynault
Regan	Rousseau
Saganash	Scarpaleggia
Scott	Sellah
Sgro	Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind- sor)
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sitsabaiesan
St-Denis	Thibeault
Toone	Tremblay
Trudeau	Turmel
Valerioté — 115	

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy	Adams
Adler	Albas
Albrecht	Alexander
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Armstrong
Ashfield	Aspin
Baird	Bateman
Benoit	Bergen
Bernier	Bezan
Blaney	Block
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Brown (Barrie)

Bruinooge	Butt
Calandra	Calkins
Cannan	Carmichael
Carrie	Chisu
Chong	Clarke
Crockatt	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Devolin	Dreeschen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dykstra
Falk	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Galipeau
Gallant	Gill
Goguen	Goldring
Goodyear	Gosal
Gourde	Grewal
Harper	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hawn	Hayes
Hiebert	Hillyer
Hoback	Holder
James	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lauzon
Lebel	Lemieux
Leung	Lizon
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Maguire
Mayes	McColeman
McLeod	Menegakis
Merrifield	Miller
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Nicholson	Norlock
Obhrai	O'Connor
Oliver	O'Neill Gordon
Opitz	O'Toole
Paradis	Payne
Poilievre	Preston
Raitt	Rajotte
Rathgeber	Reid
Rempel	Richards
Saxton	Schellenberger
Seeback	Shea
Shiple	Shory
Smith	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
Storseth	Strahl
Sweet	Tilson
Toet	Trottier
Truppe	Uppal
Valcourt	Van Kesteren
Van Loan	Vellacott
Wallace	Warawa
Warkentin	Watson
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)	
Weston (Saint John)	
Wilks	Williamson
Wong	Woodworth
Yelich	Young (Oakville)
Young (Vancouver South)	Zimmer — 148

PAIRED

Nil

The Deputy Speaker: I declare Motion No. 89 defeated. I therefore declare Motions Nos. 89 to 93 defeated.

[*English*]

The question is on Motion No. 94. A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 95 to 97.

● (1635)

(The House divided on Motion No. 94, which was negated on the following division:)

Government Orders

(Division No. 179)

YEAS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Ashton
Atamanenko	Aubin
Bélangier	Bennett
Benskin	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brahmi
Brison	Brosseau
Caron	Casey
Cash	Chicoine
Chisholm	Choquette
Christopherson	Cleary
Côté	Crowder
Cullen	Cuzner
Davies (Vancouver East)	Day
Dewar	Dion
Dionne Labelle	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Dubourg
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Dusseault	Easter
Eyking	Fortin
Freeland	Freeman
Garneau	Genest
Genest-Jourdain	Giguère
Goodale	Gravelle
Groguhé	Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Harris (St. John's East)	Hughes
Hyer	Jacob
Jones	Julian
Kellway	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Larose
Latendresse	Laverdière
LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)	Leslie
Liu	MacAulay
Mai	Marston
Masse	Mathysen
May	McCallum
McGuinty	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
Michaud	Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)	Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)	Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
Murray	Nantel
Nash	Nicholls
Nunez-Melo	Papillon
Péclét	Pilon
Plamondon	Quach
Rafferty	Rankin
Ravignat	Raynault
Regan	Rousseau
Saganash	Scarpaleggia
Scott	Sellah
Sgro	Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind- sor)
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sitsabaesan
St-Denis	Thibeault
Toone	Tremblay
Trudeau	Turmel
Valeriotte — 115	

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy	Adams
Adler	Albas
Albrecht	Alexander
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Armstrong
Ashfield	Aspin
Baird	Bateman
Benoit	Bergen
Bernier	Bezan
Blaney	Block
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Brown (Barrie)

Bruinooge	Butt
Calandra	Calkins
Cannan	Carmichael
Carrie	Chisu
Chong	Clarke
Crockatt	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Devolin	Dreeschen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dykstra
Falk	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Galipeau
Gallant	Gill
Goguen	Goldring
Goodyear	Gosal
Gourde	Grewal
Harper	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hawn	Hayes
Hiebert	Hillyer
Hoback	Holder
James	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lauzon
Lebel	Lemieux
Leung	Lizon
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Maguire
Mayes	McColeman
McLeod	Menegakis
Merrifield	Miller
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	Norlock
Moore (Fundy Royal)	O'Connor
Nicholson	O'Neill Gordon
Obhrai	O'Toole
Oliver	Payne
Opitz	Preston
Paradis	Rajotte
Poillievre	Reid
Raitt	Richards
Rathgeber	Schellenberger
Rempel	Shea
Saxton	Shory
Seeback	Sopuck
Shiple	Stanton
Smith	Strahl
Sorenson	Tilson
Storseth	Trottier
Sweet	Uppal
Toet	Van Kesteren
Truppe	Vellacott
Valcourt	Warawa
Van Loan	Watson
Wallace	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)
Warkentin	Weston (Saint John)
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)	Wilks
Weston (Saint John)	Wong
Wilks	Yelich
Wong	Young (Oakville)
Yelich	Zimmer — 148
Young (Vancouver South)	

PAIRED

Nil

The Deputy Speaker: I declare Motion No. 94 defeated. I further declare Motions Nos. 95 to 97 defeated.

I return to the members for Saanich—Gulf Islands and Thunder Bay—Superior North, who did not get to vote. They need to indicate which way they wish to vote.

[Translation]

The question is on Motion No. 98. A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 99 and 100.

● (1645)

[English]

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, we wish to vote in favour.

Government Orders

[Translation]

(The House divided on Motion No. 98, which was negated on the following division:

*(Division No. 180)***YEAS**

Members

Allen (Welland)	Angus
Ashton	Atamanenko
Aubin	Benskin
Blanchette	Blanchette-Lamothe
Boivin	Borg
Boulerice	Boutin-Sweet
Brahmi	Brousseau
Caron	Cash
Chicoine	Chisholm
Choquette	Christopherson
Cleary	Côté
Crowder	Cullen
Davies (Vancouver East)	Day
Dewar	Dionne Labelle
Doré Lefebvre	Dubé
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)	Dusseau
Fortin	Freeman
Genest	Genest-Jourdain
Giguère	Gravelle
Grogoué	Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Harris (St. John's East)	Hughes
Hyer	Jacob
Julian	Kellway
Lapointe	Larose
Latendresse	Laverdière
LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)	Leslie
Liu	Mai
Marston	Masse
Mathysen	May
Michaud	Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)	Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)	Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
Nantel	Nash
Nicholls	Nunez-Melo
Papillon	Péclét
Pilon	Plamondon
Quach	Rafferty
Rankin	Ravignat
Raynault	Rousseau
Saganash	Scott
Sellah	Sims (Newton—North Delta)
Sitsabaiesan	Thibeault
Toone	Tremblay
Turmel— 87	

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy	Adams
Adler	Albas
Albrecht	Alexander
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Andrews
Armstrong	Ashfield
Aspin	Baird
Bateman	Bélangier
Bennett	Benoit
Bergen	Bernier
Bezan	Blaney
Block	Boughen
Braid	Breitkreuz
Brisson	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Brown (Barrie)
Bruinooge	Butt
Calandra	Calkins
Cannan	Carmichael
Carrie	Casey
Chisu	Chong
Clarke	Crockatt
Cuzner	Daniel

Davidson	Dechert
Devolin	Dion
Dreeshen	Dubourg
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dykstra	Easter
Eyking	Falk
Fast	Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)
Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Fletcher
Freeland	Galipeau
Gallant	Garneau
Gill	Goguen
Goldring	Goodale
Goodyear	Gosal
Gourde	Grewal
Harper	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hawn	Hayes
Hiebert	Hillyer
Hoback	Holder
James	Jones
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)	Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)	Kerr
Komarnicki	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lamoureux	Lauzon
Lebel	Lemieux
Leung	Lizon
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunney	MacAulay
MacKay (Central Nova)	MacKenzie
Maguire	Mayes
McCallum	McColeman
McGuinty	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
McLeod	Menegakis
Merrifield	Miller
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Murray	Nicholson
Norlock	Obhrai
O'Connor	Oliver
O'Neill Gordon	Opitz
O'Toole	Paradis
Payne	Pollievre
Preston	Raitt
Rajotte	Rathgeber
Regan	Reid
Rempel	Richards
Saxton	Scarpaleggia
Schellenberger	Seeback
Sgro	Shea
Shiely	Shory
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)	
Smith	
Sopuck	Sorenson
Stanton	St-Denis
Storseth	Strahl
Sweet	Tilson
Toet	Trottier
Trudeau	Truppe
Uppal	Valcourt
Valeriote	Van Kesteren
Van Loan	Vellacott
Wallace	Warawa
Warkentin	Watson
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)	
Weston (Saint John)	
Wilks	Williamson
Wong	Woodworth
Yelich	Young (Oakville)
Young (Vancouver South)	Zimmer— 176

PAIRED

Nil

The Deputy Speaker: I declare Motion No. 98 defeated. I therefore declare Motions Nos. 99 and 100 defeated.

[English]

The next question is on Motion No. 101.

● (1650)

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

Government Orders

(Division No. 181)

YEAS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Ashton
Aubin	Bélangier
Bennett	Benskin
Blanchette	Blanchette-Lamothe
Boivin	Borg
Boulerice	Boutin-Sweet
Brahmi	Brisson
Brosseau	Caron
Casey	Cash
Chicoine	Chisholm
Choquette	Christopherson
Cleary	Côté
Crowder	Cuzner
Davies (Vancouver East)	Day
Dewar	Dion
Dionne Labelle	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Dubourg
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Dusseau	Easter
Eyking	Fortin
Freeland	Freeman
Garneau	Genest
Genest-Jourdain	Giguère
Goodale	Grogulé
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)	Harris (St. John's East)
Hughes	Hyer
Jacob	Jones
Julian	Kellway
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Larose	Latendresse
Laverdière	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)
Leslie	Liu
MacAulay	Mai
Marston	Masse
Mathysen	May
McCallum	McGuinty
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	Michaud
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)	Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)	Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)	Murray
Nantel	Nash
Nicholls	Nunez-Melo
Papillon	Péclet
Pilon	Plamondon
Quach	Rafferty
Rankin	Rathgeber
Ravignat	Raynault
Regan	Rousseau
Saganash	Scarpaleggia
Scott	Sellah
Sgro	Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind- sor)
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sitsabaiesan
St-Denis	Thibeault
Toone	Tremblay
Trudeau	Turmel
Valeriotte — 113	

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy	Adams
Adler	Albas
Albrecht	Alexander
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Armstrong
Ashfield	Aspin
Baird	Bateman
Benoit	Bergen
Bernier	Bezan
Blaney	Block
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Brown (Barrie)
Bruinooge	Butt

Calandra	Calkins
Cannan	Carmichael
Carrie	Chisu
Chong	Clarke
Crockatt	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Devolin	Dreeshen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dykstra
Falk	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Galipeau
Gallant	Gill
Goguen	Goldring
Goodyear	Gosal
Gourde	Grewal
Harper	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hawn	Hayes
Hiebert	Hillyer
Hoback	Holder
James	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr	Komamicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lauzon
Lebel	Lemieux
Leung	Lizon
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Maguire
Mayes	McColeman
McLeod	Menegakis
Merrifield	Miller
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Nicholson	Norlock
Obhrai	O'Connor
Oliver	O'Neill Gordon
Opitz	O'Toole
Paradis	Payne
Poillievre	Preston
Raitt	Rajotte
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Saxton
Schellenberger	Seeback
Shea	Shipley
Shory	Smith
Sopuck	Sorenson
Stanton	Storseth
Strahl	Sweet
Tilson	Toet
Trottier	Truppe
Uppal	Valcourt
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vellacott	Wallace
Warawa	Warkentin
Watson	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)
Weston (Saint John)	Wilks
Williamson	Wong
Woodworth	Yelich
Young (Oakville)	Young (Vancouver South)
Zimmer — 147	

PAIRED

Nil

The Deputy Speaker: I declare Motion No. 101 defeated.

[Translation]

The next question is on Motion No. 102. A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 103 to 153.

● (1700)

(The House divided on Motion No. 102, which was negated on the following division:)

(Division No. 182)

YEAS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Ashton
Atamanenko	Aubin
Bélangier	Bennett
Benskin	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brahmi
Brison	Brosseau
Caron	Casey
Cash	Chicoine
Chisholm	Choquette
Christopherson	Cleary
Côté	Crowder
Cullen	Cuzner
Davies (Vancouver East)	Day
Dewar	Dion
Dionne Labelle	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Dubourg
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Dusseauit	Easter
Eyking	Freeland
Freeman	Garneau
Genest	Genest-Jourdain
Giguère	Goodale
Gravelle	Groguhé
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)	Harris (St. John's East)
Hughes	Hyer
Jacob	Jones
Julian	Kellway
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Larose	Latendresse
Laverdière	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)
Leslie	Liu
MacAulay	Mai
Marston	Masse
Mathysen	May
McCallum	McGuinty
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	Michaud
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)	Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)	Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
Murray	Nantel
Nash	Nicholls
Nunez-Melo	Papillon
Péclet	Pilon
Plamondon	Quach
Rafferty	Rankin
Ravignat	Raynault
Regan	Rousseau
Saganash	Scarpaleggia
Scott	Sellah
Sgro	Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind- sor)
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sitsabaiesan
St-Denis	Thibeault
Toone	Tremblay
Trudeau	Turmel
Valerioté — 113	

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy	Adams
Adler	Albas
Albrecht	Alexander
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Armstrong
Ashfield	Aspin
Baird	Bateman
Benoit	Bergen
Bernier	Bezan
Blaney	Block
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Brown (Barrie)
Bruinooge	Butt

Government Orders

Calandra	Calkins
Cannan	Carmichael
Carrie	Chisu
Chong	Clarke
Crockatt	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Devolin	Dreeshen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dykstra
Falk	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Galipeau
Gallant	Gill
Goguen	Golding
Goodyear	Gosal
Gourde	Grewal
Harper	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hawn	Hayes
Hiebert	Hillyer
Hoback	Holder
James	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lauzon
Lebel	Lemieux
Leung	Lizon
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Maguire
Mayes	McColeman
McLeod	Menegakis
Merrifield	Miller
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Nicholson	Norlock
Obhrai	O'Connor
Oliver	O'Neill Gordon
Opitz	O'Toole
Paradis	Payne
Poilievre	Preston
Raiit	Rajotte
Rathgeber	Reid
Rempel	Richards
Saxton	Schellenberger
Seeback	Shea
Shipley	Shory
Smith	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
Storseth	Strahl
Sweet	Tilson
Toet	Trottier
Truppe	Uppal
Valcourt	Van Kesteren
Van Loan	Vellacott
Wallace	Warawa
Warkentin	Watson
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)	
Weston (Saint John)	
Wilks	Williamson
Wong	Woodworth
Yelich	Young (Oakville)
Young (Vancouver South)	Zimmer — 148

PAIRED

Nil

The Deputy Speaker: I declare Motion No. 102 defeated. I therefore declare Motions Nos. 102 to 153 defeated.

[*English*]

The next question is on Motion No. 154. A vote on this motion also applies to Motion No. 155.

● (1705)

(The House divided on Motion No. 154, which was negated on the following division:)

Government Orders

(Division No. 183)

YEAS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Ashton
Atamanenko	Aubin
Bélangier	Bennett
Benskin	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brahmi
Brison	Brosseau
Caron	Casey
Cash	Chicoine
Chisholm	Choquette
Christopherson	Cleary
Côté	Crowder
Cullen	Cuzner
Davies (Vancouver East)	Day
Dewar	Dion
Dionne Labelle	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Dubourg
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Dusseault	Easter
Eyking	Freeland
Freeman	Garneau
Genest	Genest-Jourdain
Giguère	Goodale
Gravelle	Groguhé
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)	Harris (St. John's East)
Hughes	Hyer
Jacob	Jones
Julian	Kellway
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Larose	Latendresse
Laverdière	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)
Leslie	Liu
MacAulay	Mai
Marston	Masse
Mathysen	May
McCallum	McGuinty
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	Michaud
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)	Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)	Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
Murray	Nantel
Nash	Nicholls
Nunez-Melo	Papillon
Péclet	Pilon
Plamondon	Quach
Rafferty	Rankin
Ravignat	Raynault
Regan	Rousseau
Saganash	Scarpaleggia
Scott	Sellah
Sgro	Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind- sor)
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sitsabaiesan
St-Denis	Thibeault
Toone	Tremblay
Trudeau	Turmel
Valériote — 113	

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy	Adams
Adler	Albas
Albrecht	Alexander
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Armstrong
Ashfield	Aspin
Baird	Bateman
Benoit	Bergen
Bernier	Bezan
Blaney	Block
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Brown (Barrie)
Bruinooge	Butt

Calandra	Calkins
Cannan	Carmichael
Carrie	Chisu
Chong	Clarke
Crockatt	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Devolin	Dreeshen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dykstra
Falk	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Galipeau
Gallant	Gill
Goguen	Goldring
Goodyear	Gosal
Gourde	Grewal
Harper	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hawn	Hayes
Hiebert	Hillyer
Hoback	Holder
James	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lauzon
Lebel	Lemieux
Leung	Lizon
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Maguire
Mayes	McColeman
McLeod	Menegakis
Merrifield	Miller
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Nicholson	Norlock
Obhrai	O'Connor
Oliver	O'Neill Gordon
Opitz	O'Toole
Paradis	Payne
Poilievre	Preston
Raïtt	Rajotte
Rathgeber	Reid
Rempel	Richards
Saxton	Schellenberger
Seeback	Shea
Shipley	Shory
Smith	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
Storseth	Strahl
Sweet	Tilson
Toet	Trottier
Truppe	Uppal
Valcourt	Van Kesteren
Van Loan	Vellacott
Wallace	Warawa
Warkentin	Watson
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)	
Weston (Saint John)	
Wilks	Williamson
Wong	Woodworth
Yelich	Young (Oakville)
Young (Vancouver South)	Zimmer — 148

PAIRED

Nil

The Deputy Speaker: I declare Motion No. 154 defeated. I therefore declare Motion No. 155 defeated.

[Translation]

The next question is on Motion No. 156. A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 157 to 159.

● (1715)

(The House divided on Motion No. 156, which was negated on the following division:)

(Division No. 184)

YEAS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Ashton
Atamanenko	Aubin
Bélangier	Bennett
Benskin	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brahmi
Brison	Brosseau
Caron	Casey
Cash	Chicoine
Chisholm	Choquette
Christopherson	Cleary
Côté	Crowder
Cullen	Cuzner
Davies (Vancouver East)	Day
Dewar	Dion
Dionne Labelle	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Dubourg
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Dusseauit	Easter
Eyking	Freeland
Freeman	Garneau
Genest	Genest-Jourdain
Giguère	Goodale
Gravelle	Groguhé
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)	Harris (St. John's East)
Hughes	Hyer
Jacob	Jones
Julian	Kellway
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Larose	Latendresse
Laverdière	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)
Leslie	Liu
MacAulay	Mai
Marston	Masse
Mathysen	May
McCallum	McGuinty
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	Michaud
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)	Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)	Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)	Murray
Nantel	Nash
Nicholls	Nunez-Melo
Papillon	Péclet
Pilon	Plamondon
Quach	Rafferty
Rankin	Ravignat
Raynault	Regan
Rousseau	Saganash
Scarpaleggia	Scott
Sellah	Sgro
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)	St-Denis
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Toone
Sitsabaiesan	Trudeau
Thibeault	Valeriote — 114
Tremblay	
Turnel	

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy	Adams
Adler	Albas
Albrecht	Alexander
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Armstrong
Ashfield	Aspin
Baird	Bateman
Benoit	Bergen
Bernier	Bezan
Blaney	Block
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Brown (Barrie)
Bruinooge	Butt

Government Orders

Calandra	Calkins
Cannan	Carmichael
Carrie	Chisu
Chong	Clarke
Crockatt	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Devolin	Dreeshen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dykstra
Falk	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Galipeau
Gallant	Gill
Goguen	Goldring
Goodyear	Gosal
Gourde	Grewal
Harper	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hawn	Hayes
Hiebert	Hillyer
Hoback	Holder
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)	Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)	Kerr
Komarnicki	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lauzon	Lebel
Lemieux	Leung
Lizon	Lobb
Lukiwski	Lunney
MacKay (Central Nova)	MacKenzie
Maguire	Mayes
McColeman	McLeod
Menegakis	Merrifield
Miller	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Nicholson
Norlock	Obhrai
O'Connor	Oliver
O'Neill Gordon	Opitz
O'Toole	Paradis
Payne	Poilievre
Preston	Raitt
Rajotte	Rathgeber
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Saxton
Schellenberger	Seeback
Shea	Shiple
Shory	Smith
Sopuck	Sorenson
Stanton	Storseth
Strahl	Sweet
Tilson	Toet
Trottier	Truppe
Uppal	Valcourt
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vellacott	Wallace
Warawa	Warkentin
Watson	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)
Weston (Saint John)	Wilks
Williamson	Wong
Woodworth	Yelich
Young (Oakville)	Young (Vancouver South)
Zimmer — 147	

PAIRED

Nil

The Deputy Speaker: I declare Motion No. 156 defeated.

I therefore declare Motions Nos. 157 to 159 defeated.

[English]

The next question is on Motion No. 160.

● (1720)

(The House divided on Motion No. 160, which was negated on the following division:)

Government Orders

(Division No. 185)

YEAS

Members

Allen (Welland)
Ashton
Aubin
Blanchette
Boivin
Boulerice
Brahmi
Caron
Chicoine
Choquette
Cleary
Crowder
Davies (Vancouver East)
Dewar
Doré Lefebvre
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Fortin
Genest
Giguère
Groguhé
Harris (St. John's East)
Jacob
Kellway
Larose
Laverdière
Leslie
Mai
Masse
Michaud
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Nantel
Nicholls
Papillon
Pilon
Quach
Rankin
Ravignat
Rousseau
Scott
Sims (Newton—North Delta)
Thibeault
Tremblay

Angus
Atamanenko
Benskin
Blanchette-Lamothe
Borg
Boutin-Sweet
Brosseau
Cash
Chisholm
Christopherson
Côté
Cullen
Day
Dionne Labelle
Dubé
Dusseault
Freeman
Genest-Jourdain
Gravelle
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Hughes
Julian
Lapointe
Latendresse
LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)
Liu
Marston
Mathysen
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
Nash
Nunez-Melo
Péclet
Plamondon
Rafferty
Rathgeber
Raynault
Saganash
Sellah
Sitsabaiesan
Toone
Turmel— 86

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy
Adler
Albrecht
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Ambrose
Anderson
Armstrong
Aspin
Bateman
Bennett
Bergen
Bezan
Block
Braid
Brisson
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Bruinooge
Calandra
Cannan
Carrie
Chisu
Clarke
Cuzner
Davidson
Devolin
Dreeschen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)
Dykstra
Eyking
Fast

Adams
Albas
Alexander
Ambler
Anders
Andrews
Ashfield
Baird
Bélangier
Benoit
Bernier
Blaney
Boughen
Breitkreuz
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Barrie)
Butt
Calkins
Carmichael
Casey
Chong
Crockatt
Daniel
Dechert
Dion
Dubourg
Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Easter
Falk
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)

Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Freeland
Gallant
Gill
Goldring
Goodyear
Gourde
Harper
Hawn
Hiebert
Hoback
Hyer
Jones
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Kerr
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lauzon
Lemieux
Lizon
Lukiwski
MacAulay
MacKenzie
May
McCallum
McGuinty
McLeod
Merrifield
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Moore (Fundy Royal)
Murray
Norlock
O'Connor
O'Neill Gordon
O'Toole
Payne
Preston
Rajotte
Reid
Richards
Scarpaleggia
Seeback
Shea
Shory
sor)
Smith
Sorenson
St-Denis
Strahl
Tilson
Trottier
Truppe
Valcourt
Van Kesteren
Vellacott
Warawa
Watson
Sky Country)
Weston (Saint John)
Williamson
Woodworth
Young (Oakville)
Zimmer— 177

Fletcher
Galipeau
Gameau
Goguen
Goodale
Gosal
Grewal
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hayes
Hillyer
Holder
James
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Komarnicki
Lamoureux
Lebel
Leung
Lobb
Lunney
MacKay (Central Nova)
Maguire
Mayes
McColeman
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
Menegakis
Miller
Nicholson
Obhrai
Oliver
Opitz
Paradis
Poilievre
Raitt
Regan
Rempel
Saxton
Schellenberger
Sgro
Shipley
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind-
Sopuck
Stanton
Storseth
Sweet
Toet
Trudeau
Uppal
Valeriote
Van Loan
Wallace
Warkentin
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to
Wilks
Wong
Yelich
Young (Vancouver South)

PAIRED

Nil

The Deputy Speaker: I declare Motion No. 160 defeated.

[Translation]

The question is on Motion No. 166. A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 167 to 272.

● (1730)

(The House divided on Motion No. 166, which was negated on the following division:)

Government Orders

(Division No. 186)

YEAS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Ashton
Atamanenko	Aubin
Bélangier	Bennett
Benskin	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brahmi
Brison	Brosseau
Caron	Casey
Cash	Chicoine
Chisholm	Choquette
Christopherson	Cleary
Côté	Crowder
Cullen	Cuzner
Davies (Vancouver East)	Day
Dewar	Dion
Dionne Labelle	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Dubourg
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Dusseauit	Easter
Eyking	Fortin
Freeland	Freeman
Garneau	Genest
Genest-Jourdain	Giguère
Goodale	Gravelle
Groguhé	Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Harris (St. John's East)	Hughes
Hyer	Jacob
Jones	Julian
Kellway	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Larose
Latendresse	Laverdière
LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)	Leslie
Liu	MacAulay
Mai	Marston
Masse	Mathysen
May	McCallum
McGuinty	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
Michaud	Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)	Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)	Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
Murray	Nantel
Nash	Nicholls
Nunez-Melo	Papillon
Péclét	Pilon
Plamondon	Quach
Rafferty	Rankin
Ravignat	Raynault
Regan	Rousseau
Saganash	Scarpaleggia
Scott	Sellah
Sgro	Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind- sor)
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sitsabaiesan
St-Denis	Thibeault
Toone	Tremblay
Trudeau	Turmel
Valerioté — 115	

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy	Adams
Adler	Albas
Albrecht	Alexander
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Armstrong
Ashfield	Aspin
Baird	Bateman
Benoit	Bergen
Bernier	Bezan
Blaney	Block
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Brown (Barrie)

Bruinooge	Butt
Calandra	Calkins
Cannan	Carmichael
Carrie	Chisu
Chong	Clarke
Crockatt	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Devolin	Dreeschen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dykstra
Falk	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Galipeau
Gallant	Gill
Goguen	Goldring
Goodyear	Gosal
Gourde	Grewal
Harper	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hawn	Hayes
Hiebert	Hillyer
Hoback	Holder
James	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenny (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lauzon
Lebel	Lemieux
Leung	Lizon
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Maguire
Mayes	McColeman
McLeod	Menegakis
Merrifield	Miller
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Nicholson	Norlock
Obhrai	O'Connor
Oliver	O'Neill Gordon
Opitz	O'Toole
Paradis	Payne
Poilievre	Preston
Raïtt	Rajotte
Rathgeber	Reid
Rempel	Richards
Saxton	Schellenberger
Seeback	Shea
Shipley	Shory
Smith	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
Storseth	Strahl
Sweet	Tilson
Toet	Trottier
Truppe	Uppal
Valcourt	Van Kesteren
Van Loan	Vellacott
Wallace	Warawa
Warkentin	Watson
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)	
Weston (Saint John)	
Wilks	Williamson
Wong	Woodworth
Yelich	Young (Oakville)
Young (Vancouver South)	Zimmer — 148

PAIRED

Nil

The Deputy Speaker: I declare Motion No. 166 defeated. I therefore declare Motions Nos. 167 to 272 defeated.

[*English*]

Hon. Joe Oliver (Minister of Finance, CPC) moved that the bill be concurred in.

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Government Orders

The Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

● (1735)

[English]

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

*(Division No. 187)***YEAS****Members**

Ablonczy	Adams
Adler	Albas
Albrecht	Alexander
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Armstrong
Ashfield	Aspin
Baird	Bateman
Benoit	Bergen
Bernier	Bezan
Blaney	Block
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Brown (Barrie)
Bruinooge	Butt
Calandra	Calkins
Cannan	Carmichael
Carrie	Chisu
Chong	Clarke
Crockatt	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Devolin	Dreeshen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dykstra
Falk	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Galipeau
Gallant	Gill
Goguen	Goldring
Goodyear	Gosal
Gourde	Grewal
Harper	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hawn	Hayes
Hiebert	Hillyer
Hoback	Holder
James	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lauzon
Lebel	Lemieux
Leung	Lizon
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Maguire
Mayes	McColeman
McLeod	Menegakis
Merrifield	Miller
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Nicholson	Norlock
Obhrai	O'Connor
Oliver	O'Neill Gordon
Opitz	O'Toole
Paradis	Payne
Poilievre	Preston

Raitt	Rajotte
Rathgeber	Reid
Rempel	Richards
Saxton	Schellenberger
Seeback	Shea
Shiple	Shory
Smith	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
Storseth	Strahl
Sweet	Tilson
Toet	Trotier
Truppe	Uppal
Valcourt	Van Kesteren
Van Loan	Vellacott
Wallace	Warawa
Warkentin	Watson
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)	
Weston (Saint John)	
Wilks	Williamson
Wong	Woodworth
Yelich	Young (Oakville)
Young (Vancouver South)	Zimmer — 148

NAYS**Members**

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Ashton
Atamanenko	Aubin
Bélanger	Bennett
Benskin	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brahmi
Brisson	Brousseau
Caron	Casey
Cash	Chicoine
Chisholm	Choquette
Christopherson	Cleary
Côté	Crowder
Cullen	Cuzner
Davies (Vancouver East)	Day
Dewar	Dion
Dionne Labelle	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Dubourg
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Dusseau	Easter
Eyking	Fortin
Freeland	Freeman
Garneau	Genest
Genest-Jourdain	Giguère
Goodale	Gravelle
Groguié	Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Harris (St. John's East)	Hughes
Hyer	Jacob
Jones	Julian
Kellway	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Larose
Latendresse	Laverdière
LeBlanc (LaSalle—Énard)	Leslie
Liu	MacAulay
Mai	Marston
Masse	Mathysen
May	McCallum
McGuinty	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
Michaud	Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)	Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)	Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
Murray	Nantel
Nash	Nicholls
Nunez-Melo	Papillon
Péclet	Pilon
Plamondon	Quach
Rafferty	Rankin
Ravnault	Raynault
Regan	Rousseau
Saganash	Scarpaleggia
Scott	Sellah
Sgro	Simms (Bonaville—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind-
sor)	
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sitsabaiesan
St-Denis	Thibeault
Toone	Tremblay

Trudeau
Valeriote — 115

Turmel

PAIRED

Nil

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

[*Translation*]

It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the question to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment is as follows: the hon. member for Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord, Canadian Heritage.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1740)

[*English*]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 27 petitions.

* * *

TRADE-MARKS ACT

Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-611, an act to amend the Trade-marks Act (public authority).

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to table a bill that would amend the Trade-marks Act.

It has come to my attention from a constituent who is a small business owner, and through intellectual property experts, that official marks are at times used for commercial benefit rather than to protect public interests, as intended by the Trade-marks Act.

The bill would clarify what constitutes a public authority under section 9 of the Trade-marks Act. It would also create a review and objection process to ensure that official marks are in the public interest and do not unduly restrict the market.

I would like to thank Dr. Andrea Slane, associate professor at the University of Ontario centre for technology, and Dr. Teresa Scassa, the Canada Research Chair in Information Law at the University of Ottawa, for their input on the bill.

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

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

STATUS OF WOMEN

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP) moved:

That, the Second Report of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women, presented on Thursday, February 6, 2014, be concurred in.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise to speak to a study on sexual harassment in the federal workplace by the Standing Committee on the Status of Women. This is a study that we

Routine Proceedings

embarked on a while ago. It took a considerable amount of time because we took the topic of this study seriously. It is a form of violence that, sadly, too many women face in their workplaces. It is a kind of violence that we know as sexual harassment.

Like any other committee, our committee embarked on a study that we felt was very serious. We extended invitations to many witnesses who represent the range of workplaces. We did so with some concern and trepidation. The reason was that the initial aim of the study, and there is no way of denying it, was to study sexual harassment in the RCMP. That initial sense came from the serious situation that we know has existed in our national police force for some time. We have heard of numerous cases of sexual harassment aimed at women police officers. It includes a range of examples, but has also in some cases led to sexual assault.

We know that many of these RCMP officers, including former officers, have put together a class action lawsuit against the RCMP to achieve justice because of the harm that was done to them. We know the sexual harassment that they experienced, and in some cases the sexual assault, has led to mental trauma, psychological, emotional, and of course physical trauma as well.

As I rise in the House to speak to this very issue, I am reminded of interactions I have had, and my colleagues, the critic for public safety and our deputy critic for public safety, have had as well, both in and out of the committee, talking with RCMP members who have experienced sexual harassment. The irony is not lost on us that the people we depend on for our safety, our families' safety and our communities' safety, have themselves been put in harm's way as a result of the culture that prevails in their workplace and the inaction that has existed for far too long.

Some measures have been taken in the recent year with the aim of putting an end to sexual harassment and sexual assault in the RCMP. However, what we found in the study conducted in our committee was that it is very clear that a lot more needs to be done in the RCMP, and across the federal workplace.

I would point to our supplementary report that indicates we in the NDP noted that instead of focusing on the RCMP, the committee undertook a general study of sexual harassment in the federal workplace. While we believe that this study is important in its own right, we are concerned that the gender-based violence affecting women in the RCMP has not been thoroughly examined by the committee. In fact, we only spent one meeting hearing from RCMP officials. Through the limited witness testimony we heard regarding the RCMP, we learned that there are systemic issues within the federal police force that require investigation and action.

Astonishingly, in spite of hearing this testimony, the report tabled does not include a single recommendation relating directly to the RCMP. As parliamentarians, we are responsible for the RCMP, and we find this report and subsequent recommendations to be insufficient. Therefore, it was our recommendation in our supplementary report, and it continues to be the direction, that the status of women committee move to conduct a comprehensive study on sexual harassment in the RCMP in order to complete the task of ending the widespread harassment suffered by women in our national force.

Routine Proceedings

• (1745)

So it was that the government ensured that we would take on a much broader study. It was something we were concerned to see. We felt that in undertaking such a broad study, we had to do justice to all the women and men who are sexually harassed in the federal workplace.

We engaged 40 witnesses, who testified before the committee. People travelled from across the country. They spoke to us through teleconferencing. We heard from experts in other countries around the world. We got a very full picture of the range of challenges women, and some men, face when it comes to sexual harassment in the workplace. We also found out that, once again, the federal government is grossly inactive in addressing these issues. While some measures have been taken at the bureaucratic level, and I am thinking particularly of the Treasury Board, a lot more is needed to put an end to sexual harassment in the federal workplace.

Given the inaction of the federal government, we came up with key recommendations. They are not difficult recommendations, but they require the federal government to take some leadership, leadership it is currently not taking when it comes to ending sexual harassment in the federal workplace. For example, we recommended that Status of Women Canada work with the Government of Canada to develop a national action plan on violence against women. This national action plan would address sexual harassment and violence in the workplace.

This is not a difficult undertaking. First I put forward a motion about a year ago, motion No. 444, calling for a national action plan. It would be a comprehensive action plan, which in its current form called on the government to take various steps to prevent violence against women and to support survivors of violence. It also called on the government to invest in critical factors that we know lead to women's insecurity. We are talking about the workplace, but we know that the violence women face in the workplace contributes to the overall insecurity that too many women face in our country. In particular, we called for action when it comes to housing, education and training, shelters, counselling services, and policing.

When we talk about the workplace, we recognize that violence against women is something that exists in the form of sexual harassment, and it is something that needs to be stopped. It is not enough for departments to leave it to the Treasury Board to make some commitments to ending sexual harassment in the workplace. We need real leadership. We all know that leadership is best practised by those who know an issue well. What better department to take leadership on the issue of sexual harassment in the federal workplace than Status of Women Canada? That is why we in the NDP recommended that Status of Women Canada take the lead in working with experts to study the extent of under-reporting in the federally regulated workplace and commit to taking action immediately. Status of Women Canada is a department that has so much to provide in this area. Sadly, it is not being given the space and encouragement to take leadership in ending sexual harassment in the workplace.

• (1750)

The committee heard that workplace culture, particularly in male-dominated hierarchical organizations such as the Department of

National Defence and the RCMP, presents a significant barrier to reporting and preventing sexual harassment and discrimination. Therefore, we in the NDP recommended that Status of Women Canada partner with federal and federally regulated workplaces to increase the number of women in managerial positions and positions of power, including by establishing benchmarks and goals to help promote a workplace reflective of a society that does not accept harassment, including sexual harassment.

We need look no further than the House to recognize the benefit when Parliament is more representative of society. We in the NDP have always been a party that has been committed to gender equality. We do not just make that commitment verbally; we make it through our practice. Canadians certainly rewarded us, and for the first time in history, the official opposition has a high percentage of women MPs, thanks to the election of 40 NDP women. We know that Canadians certainly appreciate that kind of leadership and know that when Parliament looks more like our country, the kinds of decisions we make reflect us better. Sadly, the same cannot be said about the other side of the House or the Liberal Party, where, if we take an average, only 17% of the caucus is women.

We call on departments and institutions such as the Canadian Forces and the RCMP to appoint more women to managerial positions. We are asking them to recognize how having women in leadership and decision-making positions actually helps change the culture. I would point government members to our study. We heard from experts who indicated a very strong correlation between a higher number of women in managerial positions in the public service, particularly, and lower levels of sexual harassment and harassment overall.

We also pointed to the fact that this study indicated a complete dearth of data collection when it comes to sexual harassment. This falls in line with a pattern we have seen with the government, with its cuts to Statistics Canada, its cuts to research in various departments, and basically an ignorance and a neglect of research and its importance in guiding future actions. If we do not know what the extent of a problem is, how can we strive to solve it?

The same, sadly, is the case when it comes to sexual harassment. It may be shocking for Canadians to know that there is a complete lack of data regarding the presence of sexual harassment in most federal workplaces. This was uncovered by the committee. While the public service employee survey asks about harassment in general, we found that there is no question in the survey about sexual harassment specifically. If we are not asking the question, we are not getting the data. We are talking about a problem we know exists across all departments and exists in greater numbers in certain departments and institutions, yet we have no way of tackling it effectively, because we do not know the extent of it.

Routine Proceedings

We can only speculate about what percentage of harassment is sexual in nature, and we are concerned by the knowledge that harassment of all sorts is under-reported. Therefore, we in the NDP recommend that Status of Women Canada work with Statistics Canada to take the lead in establishing a framework whereby consistent data on sexual harassment can be collected by all workplaces and compared accordingly.

I will note that the government's response indicates that there will be a sub-question in the upcoming public service employee survey. While that is encouraging, having not seen the actual text of the sub-question, I certainly would not be able to comment. I hope that in devising the language for that sub-question, and frankly, it should be an entire question, given the severity of sexual harassment, I hope the question is being developed with the help of experts, including the Public Service Alliance of Canada and other labour experts who deal with sexual harassment first-hand in their work.

• (1755)

In conjunction with the complete absence of a question on sexual harassment and therefore a lack of information on the extent of sexual harassment in the federal workplace, we also expressed grave concern that the last time Statistics Canada undertook a national survey to collect data on violence against women in general was in 1993. I was 11 years old in 1993. It is alarming to know that in most of my lifetime we have yet to revisit this tragedy of violence against women in our country and to understand what it looks like today.

I rose in the House last week to say that even though violent crime in our country is decreasing, sexual crime, particularly against women, remains stagnant. This indicates that we have to undertake a study and understand the reality women face when it comes to violence. We need to ensure that this understanding of violence includes an understanding of violence in our workplaces. Therefore, we recommended that a follow-up survey be conducted and that Status of Women Canada use the information to establish a baseline understanding of sexual harassment in the workplace in Canada.

I have mentioned the lack of leadership, the lack of data collection, and the lack of understanding of the current state of violence against women in our country. Another theme we found to be very alarming, which I am sure will not surprise any member of this House, particularly the government member, is the strain being placed on the public service because of the major cuts of public sector workers through the budgetary cuts. The fear of job loss is creating a difficult work environment.

One of the points that was raised, and I want to particularly acknowledge the Public Service Alliance of Canada and members who work so hard fighting for public sector workers and frankly the rights of all Canadians, is that they are seeing, and are fearful, that women will be less likely to report sexual harassment because of the fear of losing their jobs in the times we live in.

Many women in the public service do not feel that their jobs are secure enough to risk reporting harassment. The committee heard that precarious employment in the public sector has grown since 20,000 have been cut from the public sector since 2006.

Therefore, we as New Democrats recommend that Status of Women Canada study the impact of job insecurity, including recent

and pending budget cuts, on sexual harassment and the possible under-reporting of sexual harassment.

In conclusion, we felt compelled to write a dissenting report on this study, because we felt that the government, sadly, was showing real inaction on the issue of sexual harassment. In their response to our recommendations, we continue to see a failure to act and a failure to show leadership.

We are proud to stand up on behalf of women and men in the federal workplace, in federally regulated workplaces, calling for an immediate end to sexual harassment.

• (1800)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP): Mr. Speaker, at the beginning of her speech, the hon. member spoke about prevention.

I believe that the recommendations laid out in the report suggest that there are relatively simple measures that could be taken to prevent sexual harassment and to ensure that all workplaces, including government workplaces, are completely free of all forms of harassment.

Ms. Niki Ashton: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for her question. Many of the recommendations are centred around prevention. I would also like to add that measures need to be implemented and we need to acknowledge the reality of sexual harassment in federal workplaces. That is not happening right now because the government is not taking action.

In order to prevent harassment, we need to know where it is happening, what it looks like and in which department it is the most prevalent.

As I said, one aspect of prevention is changing the federal workplace culture. That includes increasing the number of women in managerial positions and positions of power. We know that can help change workplace culture.

Training programs also need to be improved. We heard that because of cuts, the federal government was trying to impose online training as opposed to in-person training. We feel that is unacceptable.

Many other measures were mentioned during the testimony we heard as part of the study. The federal government has decided to disregard these measures, which is disappointing. We hope that the government will look at them and take action as quickly as possible.

• (1805)

Mrs. Djaouida Sellah (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for a very good speech. I would also like to mention that we are on the same committee.

Routine Proceedings

Various witnesses told us about a culture that tolerated harassment in the workplace. Women complained about it. Many witnesses said that the retaliation was worse than the sexual harassment itself. They gave us examples of retaliation that people might experience if they reported harassment. They might be ostracized, isolated in the workplace or transferred to another job outside of the organization. They might get sent on undesirable assignments or be demoted.

Is it not time for the government to show some leadership and take concrete action to eradicate this culture, especially considering that women are being encouraged to pursue positions of responsibility?

Ms. Niki Ashton: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague. It was a pleasure to work on this study with her and the other committee members. She is absolutely right: we need the government to show leadership so that we can change the culture and eradicate sexual harassment.

I am glad she raised a point that we heard about repeatedly during our study: retaliation can be the worst part.

We must learn from the examples people gave about departments that mishandled sexual harassment cases. We heard about people who had been harassed being punished, not those who did the harassing. That makes no sense. That has to change.

The RCMP harassment cases are shocking. Those who repeatedly committed sexual harassment were simply sent home for a few days or transferred to another posting. Unfortunately, there have been no punitive measures yet.

Over the past few months, we have started seeing some things that could deter people from sexually harassing co-workers. This is something concrete that we have to act on. We are asking the government to do so as soon as possible.

• (1810)

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé (Saint-Lambert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to congratulate my colleague, our party's status of women critic, on her speech.

The study was originally supposed to be on sexual harassment in the RCMP. However, the committee completely transformed the study to instead focus on sexual harassment in the federal workplace.

What can my colleague tell us about this change of topic?

Ms. Niki Ashton: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question.

Our dissenting report starts off with that same observation. As the official opposition, we wanted to focus on sexual harassment in the RCMP, since this is a serious issue that has caused a lot of harm to women in the RCMP.

Canadians want the federal government to show some leadership. This is a spectacular example of how the government refused to show leadership and did everything it could to conduct a much broader study and avoid putting the focus on the RCMP.

It is even more shocking that we spent only one session hearing testimony from the RCMP. That is unacceptable, in light of how serious the problems are within the force. Worst of all, the committee did not make a single recommendation specifically about the RCMP.

It means nothing for the federal Conservative government to say that it supports our police officers if it does not take action and focus the study on cases of sexual harassment in the RCMP.

[*English*]

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I move:

That the House do now proceed to the orders of the day.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Call in the members.

• (1850)

[*Translation*]

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(*Division No. 188*)

YEAS

Members

Ablonczy	Adler
Albas	Albrecht
Alexander	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Ambler	Ambrose
Anders	Anderson
Armstrong	Ashfield
Aspin	Baird
Bateman	Benoit
Bergen	Bernier
Bezan	Blaney
Bloek	Boughen
Braid	Breitkreuz
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Brown (Barrie)	Butt
Calandra	Calkins
Cannan	Carmichael
Carrie	Chisu
Chong	Clarke
Daniel	Davidson
Dechert	Devolin
Dreeschen	Duncan (Vancouver Island North)
Dykstra	Falk
Fast	Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)
Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Fletcher
Galipeau	Gallant
Gill	Glover
Goodyear	Gosal
Gourde	Grewal

Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn
Hayes	Hiebert
Hillyer	Hoback
Holder	James
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lauzon
Lebel	Lemieux
Leung	Lizon
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Maguire
McColeman	McLeod
Menegakis	Merrifield
Miller	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Nicholson
Norlock	Obhrai
O'Connor	Oliver
O'Neill Gordon	Opitz
O'Toole	Paradis
Payne	Poilievre
Preston	Raitt
Rajotte	Rempel
Richards	Saxton
Schellenberger	Seeback
Shea	Shiple
Shory	Smith
Sopuck	Sorenson
Storseth	Strahl
Sweet	Tilson
Toet	Trottier
Truppe	Uppal
Valcourt	Van Kesteren
Van Loan	Wallace
Warawa	Warkentin
Watson	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)
Weston (Saint John)	Wilks
Williamson	Wong
Woodworth	Yelich
Young (Oakville)	Young (Vancouver South)
Zimmer — 137	

NAYS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Ashton
Atamanenko	Aubin
Bennett	Benskin
Blanchette	Blanchette-Lamothe
Boivin	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brahmi
Brisson	Brosseau
Caron	Casey
Cash	Chicoine
Chisholm	Christopherson
Cleary	Comartin
Côté	Crowder
Cullen	Cuzner
Davies (Vancouver East)	Day
Dewar	Dion
Dionne Labelle	Dubé
Dubourg	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)	Dusseault
Easter	Eyking
Freeland	Freeman
Garneau	Genest
Genest-Jourdain	Giguère
Goodale	Gravelle
Grogoué	Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Harris (St. John's East)	Hughes
Jacob	Jones
Julian	Kellway
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Latendresse	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)
Leslie	Liu
MacAulay	Mai
Marston	Masse
Mathysen	McCallum
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	Michaud
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)	Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)	Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)

Government Orders

Murray	Nantel
Nash	Nunez-Melo
Papillon	Péçlet
Pilon	Quach
Rafferty	Rankin
Rathgeber	Raynault
Regan	Rousseau
Saganash	Scott
Sellah	Sgro
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)	
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	
Sitsabaesan	St-Denis
Thibeault	Toone
Tremblay	Turnel
Valeriote — 101	

PAIRED

Nil

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): I declare the motion carried.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

STRENGTHENING CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP ACT

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-24, An Act to amend the Citizenship Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, as reported (with amendment) from the committee; and of the motions in Group No. 1.

Hon. John McCallum (Markham—Unionville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to this bill and to announce that the Liberals will be voting against it.

We do not like this bill at all, except for the part that deals with lost Canadians. We think that all of the other aspects of this bill are bad for Canada, so we will be voting against it.

There are two main aspects that we do not like at all. First, the Conservatives believe that the more difficult it is to get Canadian citizenship, the more valuable it is to be a Canadian. We do not think that makes sense. On the contrary, if we make it difficult for people to become citizens, they will go elsewhere, such as to Australia, the United Kingdom or the United States.

[*English*]

Otherwise, we in Canada are competing for people around the world with countries like Australia, the U.K., and the U.S. When the Conservatives erect barrier after barrier to make it harder for people to become citizens of this country, as they do in this bill, in no way does that increase the value of citizenship. Rather, what it does is turn people off of becoming citizens of Canada and induce them to become citizens elsewhere. Indeed, I would say this bill devalues Canadian citizenship, because while it makes it harder for newcomers to become citizens, it makes it easier for the minister to arbitrarily remove someone's Canadian citizenship. In that sense, it devalues our citizenship and makes it less durable against attack from a minister of the crown. The individual Canadian would have limited right to appeal to the courts.

Government Orders

We in the Liberal Party believe that we should reduce the barriers to citizenship and welcome people to this country, whereas the Conservatives would erect more barriers. Instead of welcoming newcomers with a smile, they welcome newcomers with a scowl and force them to climb all of these hurdles to achieve citizenship.

If we look at the hurdles, we see that most of them make very little sense. I would like to name a few.

First of all, until now international students have been able to claim 50% of their time as students as credit toward becoming citizens. Under this bill, the Conservatives would make that amount zero. This is foolish in the extreme. We are encouraging international students to go elsewhere. Who are better candidates to be citizens of Canada than students, who by definition are educated, have experience in this country, and presumably speak English or French? They are giving students a kick in the pants when instead we should be welcoming them to our country.

Second, they impose language tests on older newcomers. Up until now, beyond age 54, one did not have to pass a difficult language test. Now one does if one is between the ages of 54 and 65. We believe this is unnecessary. We believe many loyal Canadians who have come here and become citizens speak less than perfect English as older citizens, but I have no doubt their children and grandchildren will speak perfect English or French. We do not think that the imperfect French of the older generation has been any impediment to becoming good citizens and contributors to this country.

The third barrier, also inappropriate, is that the Conservatives have increased the length of time that people have to be residents. They have tightened the definition of "resident" so as not to allow any more time spent abroad if, for example, the person is working for a Canadian company.

In all these ways, the government has increased the barriers or the difficulties in becoming a citizen. We believe this is bad for this country, particularly in the world of 2014, when we have an aging population and are competing with many different countries around the world for new citizens.

Finally, as if that were not enough, they have increased the wait time for becoming a citizen from 16 months to 31 months, which is double, and for many people it is even longer than that.

None of these aspects of the bill are positive for this country.

● (1855)

[*Translation*]

For that reason, we in the Liberal Party are very pleased to vote against this bill.

[*English*]

The second component of our objection is, in one sense, even more serious. What I have just said is serious enough: we compete for immigrants, we need immigrants, we want to welcome immigrants. However, the second part has to do with infringing upon the Constitution by passing laws that many lawyers agree would be unconstitutional and would not be able to stand a test in the Supreme Court.

I have a letter here. I might not have too much time, but I will read a bit of it:

...removal may occur despite the fact that they have not, do not, nor wish to apply for dual nationality. A Canadian-born citizen may be removed and wake up to landing in a country which may not recognize the dual nationality and thus become stateless.

The letter, from lawyers Messrs. Galati, Slansky, and Azevedo, representing the Constitutional Rights Centre, goes on to say:

...the Federal Parliament has absolutely no constitutional authority over the citizenship of persons born in Canada, but only over "Aliens and Naturalization".

It adds:

This aspect of C-24, in its seismic shift from the historical and constitutional understanding of the citizenship of those born in Canada, should be referred to the Supreme Court of Canada...and not simply passed through Parliament....

It concludes that:

The Constitutional Rights Centre Inc. intends to take every judicial proceeding possible against Bill C-24.

In the good old days, governments assured themselves that a bill was constitutional before passing it through Parliament. Under the current government, bill after bill seems to go through Parliament with no assurance that it is constitutional, and indeed with assurances from well-reputed lawyers that it is not.

We object in principle to the arbitrary removal of citizenship from individuals for reasons that are highly questionable and to the very limited opportunity for the individual to appeal to the courts against that removal of citizenship. We object to the onus of proof regarding dual citizenship being placed not upon the government to prove that the person is a dual citizen but upon the individual to prove that he or she is not. That also is wrong.

For all of these reasons, we and many legions of lawyers across this country are convinced that the bill would fail the test of the Constitution, and well should it fail that test, because it would do things that are inconsistent with not only the Constitution of Canada but also with the spirit of this country as developed over many decades of our history.

● (1900)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Laurin Liu (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the bill is very long and, as the member mentioned, some measures are worse than others.

Could my colleague talk about the omnibus nature of this bill? This does not allow opposition members to fully debate this bill, which contains a number of measures that affect potential new Canadians.

Hon. John McCallum: Mr. Speaker, it is a matter of both content and procedure. I indicated that we do not like the content of this bill at all.

With regard to the procedure, I agree with my colleague. It leaves much to be desired since we have not had much time to debate the bill. Since the government is rushing Parliament, we have only a few hours to debate this bill. As a result, hundreds of legal experts who would like to share their opinions have not had much opportunity to do so.

Government Orders

Both the content of this bill and the procedure surrounding it are inadequate.

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am sure the member is aware that there has been a significant jump in the time involved for processing an application for citizenship. I can recall when Prime Minister Jean Chrétien was in power the citizenship process would take roughly 12 months once a person had qualified. It now takes close to 28 months, well over two years, to process an application.

It seems to me that this legislation would change the way in which an application is processed but if the government had the political will to speed up the process, the legislation would not be required in the first place. People should not have to wait more than two years to acquire citizenship. That is being generous, especially if we look at those who meet the residency requirement where it could go well beyond four or five years.

Hon. John McCallum: Mr. Speaker, I do agree with my hon. colleague. The average processing time is now 31 months, which is two and a half years. It used to be just over one year. These are the government's own numbers.

I should add that it could add a lot more time for some individuals who have to fill out the residency questionnaire, and it is a rather arbitrary and mysterious process by which it is decided who has to fill out the questionnaire and who does not, and we do not know according to what criteria. That is another element that can impose a huge burden on individuals in terms of the time it takes.

This is a general problem across the board. We are looking at a doubling of citizenship wait times but if we look at processing time for all components of immigration, whether it is family class, parents, grandparents, children, spouses, economic immigrants, provincial nominee programs, visitors, and citizenship applicants, all have experienced dramatic, sometimes two or three times higher, processing times under the Conservative government. Perhaps departments have been starved of funds, perhaps the government does not care, perhaps it has erected new bureaucracies, we do not know all of the reasons, but across the board it is totally unacceptable. This case of doubling wait times for new citizens is terrible but it is just typical of what the government has done across the board.

● (1905)

Mr. John Rafferty (Thunder Bay—Rainy River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the member for Markham—Unionville was on CBC recently. He was being skeptical about the government's promise to reduce the processing time from upward of 36 months to under one year. He went on to say that it was just in time for an election year.

Is he really that cynical?

Hon. John McCallum: Mr. Speaker, perhaps I lack the idealism of some of my NDP colleagues, so perhaps I should simply take the government at its word.

In general, members of the NDP and the Liberals, and I dare say a good chunk of the Conservatives themselves, would be skeptical at some of the more daring promises of the Conservatives when

waiting times have gone up egregiously for seven years. Are they suddenly going to plummet in the one year before the election? My colleagues can believe that if they will, but I suggest it would be dangerous to indulge in such beliefs.

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am rising in opposition to the piece of legislation that is here before us today, an act to amend the Citizenship Act and to make consequential amendments to other acts.

Just as other pieces of legislation are seen in the House, the Conservative government has a knack for taking a few things that we can really support and, instead of moving them ahead and getting consensus on them, throwing them in with aspects that we absolutely cannot support. That what is we have in the citizenship bill.

There are bits in here that I have really been pressing on the ministers and the government to change. One of the bits that I really want to acknowledge is that, at long last, the “lost Canadians” issue has been addressed. This issue was addressed previously because the NDP pushed so hard to get it addressed, but it left out those who were born before 1947, people who served on behalf of Canada in wars but were not given citizenship. That right has been addressed. I would like to acknowledge the work done by Don Chapman and others, who carried on and put in an incredible amount of hours to see this injustice righted. I am glad to see that.

I am also glad to see in this bill that tougher measures would be taken against fraudulent immigration consultants. They absolutely should be, and I am really pleased to see this. I am so proud of an ex-colleague of mine, the former member of Parliament for Trinity—Spadina, who put in a lot of work on this file and really pushed to get something done about the fraudulent consultants. Let me tell members that not all immigration consultants are fraudulent, but where we are hearing of abuse, it is quite grotesque.

There are other little bits in here about fines for fraud from the current fine of \$1,000 to \$100,000. We are fine with that. However, there are bits in this bill that I absolutely cannot support. One of those is the process by which this piece of legislation has landed in the House.

I know that members are going to be shocked at this. Did they know that this piece of legislation, after it came through second reading and was sent to the committee stage, never heard any witnesses? The committee never heard any expert testimony. Instead, the Conservatives used their majority at committee to move straight into clause-by-clause study.

Government Orders

This, once again, goes to a trend that I have seen in the House. There is an allergy to data, an allergy to science, and an allergy to expert opinion. The Conservatives had already made up their mind. They did not need to be informed by experts of the dangers of some aspects of the bill, and maybe even be enlightened and accept some of the amendments that the opposition put forward. Why would they do that? Despite this, I have heard the minister stand in the House and say that they heard lots of testimony. They did a study in general, without having the legislation in front of them. No report of that study has been tabled in the House on this legislation, which has seven key components, and where we heard no expert witnesses. There are probably more components, but I have identified seven.

This is a bill that should cause every Canadian living in this country or overseas to be worried, because what we have in this bill, for the first time since Canadian citizenship was established, is a two-tiered citizenship for some. By the way, when people talk to me, they say, "Oh yes, it must only be two-tiered for people who were born in other countries." Oh no, this bill would actually create two-tiered citizenship for those who were born in this country and those who became citizens through naturalization.

One of the things that has been truly amazing about Canadians and Canada's history is that we accepted a long time ago that a citizen is a citizen. If a citizen does something wrong, we have a penal system and there are consequences that the citizen has to bear.

● (1910)

Under this legislation, some people will be more citizen than others. I am talking about those who end up with dual citizenship.

By the way, I was shocked after I became an MP, when there was that income tax fiasco for many of my Canadian constituents who then found out that they were still American. They had thought they had let that go a long time ago, but apparently it is very difficult to let go of American citizenship. They found they had dual citizenship. I would say that there will be all kinds of people who do not even know they have dual citizenship, and yet they do through birth, through their parents. For example, my children have the right to dual citizenship from England. There are people who come from different countries. Historically, when we have accepted them into this country, we have said, "Yes, we accept dual citizenship." Then, when they have their children, their children have that right to that dual citizenship.

We are not really debating dual citizenship or the pros and cons of that. What we are really looking at is what it means to have Canadian citizenship. What we are saying, as I said previously, for the first time in our history is that some citizens will have different rights than others.

I am not a lawyer and have never tried to pretend I am, but I could see that there could be some legitimate legal constitutional challenges with this. How could two Canadians who were born here or two Canadians who came here to this country be treated differently, just because one happens to have a dual nationality?

This bill takes components of the bill that the government tried to rush through this House under the guise of a private member's bill. When it did not get that, it brought it back here and threw in quite a few other components. It should really concern us.

As I said, I am still shaking my head that, here we are, a country that has been a country built through immigration, and the only people who can really say they were here long before the rest of us, first, second, third, fourth, fifth generation, are the aboriginal communities.

What we are seeing once again from the government that likes to spend a lot of money and resources wooing the immigrant community is it is sending a very different message through the legislation. It can be an attack on family reunification. We have a government that is always talking about the importance of family. At the same time, we say we want the young and the brightest from other countries. Of course we do.

However, the young and the brightest do not fall out of the sky. In many cases, they are coming from families where they may be the only child. Then we are saying to them that family reunification, the chance of their families ever coming to join them, has now been turned into a lottery system, and they just have to keep trying.

I do not think that is the way to build a country. I do not think that is the way we want to build our communities.

We also tried to address the long wait lists. We shredded applications for people who waited legitimately. We have shut the door on immigration in so many ways, and yet under the government, the floodgates have been opened for the temporary foreign worker program that has kept wages down at entry-level jobs and in the low-skilled sector. I would say there are abuses throughout that program that we are hearing about over and over again.

The government says it is going to address the lengthy wait lists for citizenship. I could more than pack this chamber with people who have been waiting and waiting. After they have qualified for citizenship, they could wait another 32 to 36 months to get their actual citizenship papers.

● (1915)

There is a little throw-in here for men and women who served in the armed forces. They are going to get to apply for their citizenship one year early. That sounds good on paper, and we support it. On the other hand, when a citizenship system is so backed up and people are waiting for years and years, it seems like a gift that is not really a gift, or a reward that is not really a reward.

As I was saying, once again, the government has tried to pull a sleight of hand by throwing in a few good things in this bill, and quite a bit that is not acceptable to the opposition.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jonathan Tremblay (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, who always gives such incredible speeches that are nuanced and balanced. I congratulate her.

Government Orders

When the bill was studied in committee, all the amendments were rejected. The Conservatives are also not rising to discuss this bill, defend it or answer questions. I have difficulty understanding why the Conservative government takes this tack when people want to improve the bill. The government, which has probably already made up its mind, does not want to listen at all and is letting things go. It is not allowing Canadians to contribute to the debate.

Can my colleague talk more about this?

[*English*]

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his very thoughtful question. As I said earlier, what we have is a government that appears to be scared, or the Conservatives are so determined to exercise their majority that they have stopped respecting parliamentary democracy.

Once again, there was a huge number of amendments made and not one taken. The Conservatives also skipped hearing from experts during the committee stage. Even though they did a prestudy, this shocked me. While I was not there, it showed that those who were testifying, without seeing the bill, said there were about 106 amendments or things that need to be in the bill that we do not have there.

When we think about it, the current government has very little respect for democracy. If it did, it would have speakers. Those speakers would be up debating. They might even hear a thing or two and then be persuaded that they should change their minds on some things. However, we have a government whose members are so convinced that they are right, and only they are right, and that nobody else, whether experts, scientists, or citizens, can possibly share a different point of view than theirs, that they shut off debate.

Here we are sitting until midnight, night after night, which is not a problem. However, where are my colleagues across the way?

• (1920)

Hon. Peter Van Loan: Where are your colleagues?

Mrs. Cathy McLeod: You complained and complained, and now we do not speak.

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims: Yes, Mr. Speaker, but we stand up and speak. We are taking up all of the speaking moments.

In Parliament, for a debate to take place, speaking spots are allocated according to the number of MPs that a party has in the House. The Conservatives get the most speaking spots; then it is the official opposition, the NDP; then of course it is the third party, the Liberals. However, the ruling party, the Conservatives, using bullying tactics, cannot find speakers to defend a bill that they are trying to rush through Parliament without going through the committee stage and without hearing from witnesses. Right now they do not even want to hear from members of Parliament. They have wool in their ears or their fingers in their ears, and they are quite happy to be like that. They smile quite gleefully that they accept the bill as it is.

If we were to carry on with that kind of logic, and they have the majority, we would never have to debate on anything. They could just bring forward something, vote on it, and it would be done. However, that is not how parliamentary democracy was set up.

Parliamentary democracy was set up with checks and balances, and the members of the current government are bludgeoning those checks and balances that defend the democracy that I am so proud of.

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, when we look at legislation in the House and talk about the thoughts or ideas we have about it, there is no better way to look at legislation than through the lens of our work as members of Parliament. We have a lot of opportunities as MPs to talk to people, to hear different things, to meet with experts, people who have studied different issues and done academic work on things. We also talk to front-line workers, the people who experience the front lines of issues and have good feedback about potential impacts of legislation.

We also have the experience of talking to people in community, who will feel the impacts of potential legislation and have to live with the impacts of our legislative decisions. That is some of the work that we do as MPs that gives us a unique perspective.

As MPs, a lot of us also have caseworkers in our offices. The caseworkers help people to navigate through the federal government, get people information about files, or where someone's file is at on a particular issue. MPs having caseworkers has been long standing. Our caseworkers are doing more and more casework since the Conservatives have started whittling away at the basic services that people need to understand the federal government, whether it is applying for employment insurance, a veteran applying for services, someone asking for information about permanent residency, or even student loans. They are confronted with 1-800 numbers, voice mail, or waiting on hold forever. It is hard for them to talk to real people.

Many of us have caseworkers in our offices to help folks navigate these systems. Over the last six years, my office in Halifax has seen a growing wait list for citizenship. Phyllis Larsen does casework in my office, and she is fantastic at it. I have had a lot of assumptions made about the kind of casework that she must do. People think that because it is the east coast, there must be a lot of EI applications or working with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Actually, the number one issue in my office is immigration.

Every day that Phyllis works in my community office on Gottingen Street, she sees new residents in Halifax who want to become Canadian citizens. These are people from all walks of life. There are university professors, truck drivers, families working to get the rest of their family to Canada, so family reunification, and there are families looking to adopt children from other countries. It is a whole range of different situations, and it takes a lot of courage, a lot of bravery, and sometimes even desperation to come here. However, lately it takes more skill, more tenacity, and more patience to become a citizen of this country.

Government Orders

Phyllis used to work for my predecessor Alexa McDonough, so she has been doing this kind of work for a long time. It was not that long ago that Phyllis saw routine citizenship applications moving through the system in about a year. Today, thanks to the government, the average processing time on a routine application is about 23 months. That is a routine application. That is not all of the strange things that can happen, like someone coming from Ethiopia whose birth certificate is in the Ethiopian calendar, and the age does not match up. We have seen all kinds of non-routine applications, I can certainly say that. Keep in mind that the option to apply only comes after three years of permanent residency.

Even worse is somebody who is give a residency questionnaire, an RQ. This is a questionnaire that will automatically increase the processing time from 23 months to 37 months. The frequency with which residency questionnaires are being given out is alarming. People who sometimes cannot afford bus fare are now being asked to supply everything, from pay stubs to tax returns to airline tickets, to prove that they meet the residency requirements. It does not make sense to do this. However, the government is continuing to add this extra layer of bureaucracy to an already lengthy process, a process that is fearful for a lot of people and uncertain for everyone.

● (1925)

It is no surprise that these constituents, these individuals and families, are angry, frustrated, and sometimes they feel like giving up hope. They pay their taxes, study, and work. They do all of the things that Canadian citizens are expected to do, yet they are not offered the full rights and benefits of Canadian citizenship.

New Canadians build strong communities and healthier families, and this is key to creating a strong and proud Canada. However, it is becoming harder and harder to do so. We are seeing wait times that are so long that medical and fingerprint tests are expiring. This forces people to resubmit their application, which means increased costs for them. Often it means long perilous journeys to obtain these documents.

This is not an issue addressed by the bill, but we have had reports in my riding, especially from the universities, that there is a systematic denial of visas for international students who come from eastern and southern parts of Africa. There is no accountability when it comes to those missions abroad in how they process and deny visas. Oftentimes we are hearing reports that applicants are refused before their applications are even viewed. Therefore, it is broader than the citizenship piece. It goes to a lot of different things that the immigration office is dealing with. We get these kinds of stories from our constituents.

I want to share a story from a recent case that we are working on. Unfortunately, it is a case that is not unique. It is a case where a family has gone missing.

A mother in Canada is trying to bring her children here under the one-year window program. In December 2013, she travelled to her home country, in Africa, to see her children at the address where she knew they were being cared for by friends. Upon her arrival, she discovered that the children had been taken to an orphanage in the capital city. She went to that orphanage, but she could not find her children.

CIC wait lists are so long that while this woman waited for her children's file to be processed, they went missing and she cannot find her family. Can members imagine what it would be like if their children went missing while they were waiting for paperwork to be processed?

This woman is trying to be reunited with her family, but it is our system that has resulted in her not knowing whether she is ever going to see her kids again. During her time there, someone went through her personal belongings, and the only things that were taken were pictures of her children.

I was hoping that the minister would commit to working with us to bring real improvements to citizenship laws, especially when it comes to this backlog.

I have concentrated on some issues that have not been fixed in the bill, and I do not have a lot of time left. However, I want to talk about a problem that I have with in the bill, and that is the ability to revoke citizenship. I believe that the bill would create two tiers of citizens in this country, and it is reprehensible that a government would do that.

I had hoped to read from a brief by the Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers, or CARL. As members have heard from some of my colleagues, Bill C-24 has not been studied in committee. There was a motion tabled by the Conservatives to study the purpose of the bill, but the bill itself has not been studied. No report on the subject matter of the bill has been tabled.

I have in my hands a copy of a brief that CARL put together. These folks are the experts, and not just legal experts. They are working on the front lines and know what this immigration process is like. They have done a fantastic job of pointing out some of the key problems, especially around the ability to revoke citizenship and the fear that it creates. With the time that I have left, there is one line that I will read. CARL calls it "a way to foster a citizenship of fear".

I highly recommend the brief to anybody who is interested in this issue. They should read the brief by CARL. The Canadian Bar Association and the BC Civil Liberties Association have done excellent work on this as well. They are giving us advice. They are telling us that the bill is not constitutional. They are telling us it is creating a citizenship of fear. They are saying that this is not the way forward when it comes to reforming our immigration law.

● (1930)

Mr. Corneliu Chisu (Pickering—Scarborough East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened, with great attention, to the presentation of my colleague opposite. I am a first generation of immigrants in our country and I defended our country in Afghanistan and so on.

Is the member opposite defending those who engage in armed conflict against our country? She was speaking about civil liberties, that they were so nice to the people, that they were so concerned about people and that this legislation was not in line with the issues giving citizenship for everybody maybe.

What does the member think about people who are engaged in conflicts against our country? Should they get citizenship or should we not revoke their citizenship?

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Ms. Megan Leslie: Mr. Speaker, I can tell that the member has been handed his marching orders on what question to ask me. He said that I talked about civil liberties and all these fantastic things when actually I did not. I was talking about something else entirely, but he has his cue card in front of him and he asked me a question, so I will answer it.

If someone is a citizen of Canada, he or she is a citizen of Canada. There should not be two tiers of citizenship. I am also the first generation born in Canada in my family, the child of an immigrant family, and we are Canadian. It is not conditional Canadian.

With the bill, for example, if the minister thinks that there is fraud on a balance of probabilities, he or she can revoke citizenship. That is the minister saying “Yes, probably, so I’m going to take your citizenship away.” Absolutely not. The test should not be yes, probably. What it means is that citizens of our country do not have due process and that is something we need to stand up against.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member’s comments especially when she highlighted an area that has caused a great deal of frustration for me, as a local member of Parliament who deals considerably in issues like immigration and citizenship.

The processing times have increased significantly. In fact, it is just over two and a half years. That is how long it takes for people who qualify today, meet the criteria, want to have their citizenship and put in their applications. They can anticipate waiting a minimum of 28 months.

The government created this crisis and now it comes in and says that it has wonderful legislation and its purpose, in part, is to reduce the waiting times for the processing of citizenship.

Does the member believe that because of this legislation, it will cause the wait times to go down, or does she believe it is because of the government’s low priority of processing citizenship that is the root of the problem of unacceptable wait times for processing citizenship?

• (1935)

Ms. Megan Leslie: Mr. Speaker, the member posed it as a question, but in there was also his point of view, and I agree with it. It was sort of implicit in the way he asked the question. I do not think this has anything to do with money. It has to do with priority. Do not forget that this is not the first time the Conservatives have promised and failed to address the backlog. The backlog of requests has doubled under their supposed leadership.

There is a strategy there. I do not know that I have the psychological training to peel back the layers of what that strategy is, but it does not seem that the Conservatives are taking seriously the citizenship system and real reforms to immigration to actually help people get through this process and deal with the backlog.

I will add to it, it is not just immigration. We see the same backlog when it comes to EI and when it comes to veterans trying to get services. When people call our office and ask for any information about their file, we could tell them to call a number for MPs, but it will not change anything. It is not going to make anything go faster. When we call, we get the news that it is being processed. That is the best we can do.

Ms. Irene Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking my colleague, the member for Pierrefonds—Dollard, who did incredible work on this file. She made sure that we on this side of the House understood just what a tangle we were getting into with this change to the Citizenship Act, and provided the background so we knew, absolutely, what we had to push back against, which is a bill that would not serve the people of Canada.

I would also like to thank my colleagues from Halifax and from Newton—North Delta for their arguments and for their very clear understanding of what this bill means.

I have some real concerns as does the entire NDP caucus. These concerns stem from the fact that all of the Conservative legislation we have seen, which purport to make positive change, actually do precisely the opposite.

This bill purports to improve the situation for those seeking help by becoming part of our Canadian community. It seems to me that it would actually, in many ways, hurt the very people and communities that governments are supposed to support. Governments that take their job seriously are supposed to protect them.

I will give a rundown of the process of the bill. As members know, in February of this year, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration tabled Bill C-24. The purpose, apparently, was to introduce sweeping changes to Canada’s citizenship laws. At that time, the minister stated that the bill represented the first comprehensive reforms of the Citizenship Act since 1977. He said that it would protect the value of Canadian citizenship for those who have it, while creating a faster and more efficient process for those applying to get it.

That sounds absolutely wonderful, and we agree that Canadian citizenship has enormous value. The world recognizes the citizenship of Canada. I am sure that you go to citizenship court on a regular basis. Mr. Speaker, I certainly do. The pride, the joy and the incredible sense of happiness that we see among those new citizens tells everyone in that court just how important Canadian citizenship is. It has enormous value. This is why it is very troubling that the government would play politics with such an important issue.

Some of the changes to the Citizenship Act are quite good and they are long overdue. They address the deficiencies in the current system, and we need to applaud that. It is important to say that, because we are not just naysayers. We are very diligent, and we recognize and are willing to say that some changes are good.

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For example, the implementation of stricter rules for fraudulent immigration consultants is good. There is a provision that would authorize the government to designate, by regulation, a regulatory body whose members would be authorized to act as consultants and make it an offence for any person who had not been duly recognized by the regulatory body to offer immigration consultant services for a fee.

I have seen in my riding of London—Fanshawe the terrible harm that these fraudsters can cause. It is very expensive. I have had people come into my office who have said that they have been waiting two or three years and have given this person all the money they have, which might be tens of thousands of dollars. When they go to find out where they are in the process, they find out nothing has been done.

This kind of fraudulent behaviour leaves people desperate. They are people who came with great hopes and aspirations, who are left without any hope and very often without recourse. They feel very vulnerable. They are not Canadians in a country where maybe they will not be believed. Maybe they will not be able to speak out against this fraudster.

● (1940)

I am glad that immigration fraud will no longer be condoned. We actually pushed the government to crack down on these crooked immigration consultants, so we are very supportive of the anti-fraud measures.

The provisions of expediting citizenship for permanent residents serving in the Canadian Forces is, again, very good. Bill C-24 would shorten the residency requirement from four years to three for permanent residents serving in the Canadian Forces during this period. That is a very important change to the Immigration Act. We need to understand that it applies to only a very few people.

However, it is important to show gratitude. I just wish that same level of gratitude also applied to our veterans, the veterans who gave their service and their absolute dedication to our country. They seem to have been forgotten by the government.

The provision for extending citizenship to lost Canadians is also good. The NDP was involved in this issue as far back as 2007. Therefore, in response to NDP pressure, the government introduced measures in 2009 to extend citizenship to most of these lost Canadians. Unfortunately, in the first go-around, the amendments did not apply to people born before 1947. Bill C-24 would close that loop. Unfortunately, it has taken five years. The government dragged its feet. However, at this point in time, I would say better late than never.

Bill C-24 would also significantly increase fines for fraud from the current level of \$1,000 to a maximum of \$100,000. Under the bill, a maximum prison sentence would also be extended from 5 years to 14 years, depending on circumstances.

As I said, I have had many people come to my office who have lost all that they had. Again, if the government is to address this kind of fraud, because it is extremely lucrative, to make it onerous on those who would commit fraud, that is very good.

It would also increase the requirement from three out of four years, to four of six, and would clarify the requirement of physical residence in Canada prior to citizenship. One of the benefits of the bill is that it specifies how long individuals must physically be present in Canada before applying for citizenship.

While I have outlined some of the things we think are very good and very positive, there is the other side. I mentioned that at the beginning of my remarks.

Bill C-24 would give the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration many new powers, including the authority to grant or revoke citizenship of dual citizens. Unfortunately, the government has a strong tendency to develop legislation that concentrates power in the hands of ministers.

As I said the last time I spoke to this bill, governments come and governments go, and there has to be a respect for the fact that no one individual will be in a position of power forever. To grant that individual this kind of power, even for a short period of time, frightens me.

This is a very punitive government, as members will know. It lashes out against those who criticize it. We saw that at the beginning of its mandate. Women lost equality rights because the Status of Women department lost funding. First nations and first nations women have not been given the kind of supports they deserve. We have seen the deaths of far too many first nations women being swept away and not considered.

KAIROS was an organization that criticized the government for its failure in terms of the environment and housing. Well, KAIROS was punished and was told that the funding it was expecting would not be forthcoming.

The National Association of Women and the Law is an organization that reports on women's equality to the UN and on Canada's progress. When it reported that there had not been any progress for the last 30 years, NAWL had to be disposed of.

● (1945)

I hope members would agree that the very idea of giving the minister the power to revoke or to allow citizenship is putting too much power in the hands of one person. We have courts of law. It is very important that we in this House and those in the government respect the authority of the courts and leave that determination to them.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé (Saint-Lambert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to congratulate my colleague on her speech.

I would like to remind members that this bill was introduced in 2013 as a private member's bill and it contained the same provisions.

To the NDP and all members in the House, citizenship is extremely valuable. We must acknowledge the importance attributed to citizenship. We need not give further proof of that.

However, this bill would make it possible to revoke citizenship, which has given rise to major legal concerns. Furthermore, there is a real concentration of additional powers in the hands of the minister, including the power to revoke and grant citizenship.

Government Orders

Could my colleague elaborate on that?

[English]

Ms. Irene Mathysen: Mr. Speaker, the revocation or granting of citizenship should not be based on incomplete evidence or the whim of anyone. It does not matter who the minister is. That individual does not have the expertise of legal advisers or people who practise citizenship law or the courts. He or she simply does not. To allow that individual to decide the fate of someone based on speculation or incomplete information is absolutely terrifying.

We in the NDP were hoping that the minister would commit to working with us to bring some real improvements to the citizenship laws. We were hoping for wait times to be reduced, and in fact, they have increased significantly: 320,000 individuals are still waiting for their citizenship. This is not acceptable. We need to demand better.

• (1950)

Mr. Devinder Shory (Calgary Northeast, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite spent quite a bit of her time praising the bill. She discussed regulating citizenship consultants, fast-tracking the process for PRs serving in the Canadian Armed Forces, and tougher penalties for those who have obtained citizenship through fraud.

Does the member opposite believe that those who gained Canadian citizenship through fraudulent means deserve a tough punishment, or was she just talking in front of the camera?

Ms. Irene Mathysen: Mr. Speaker, I am sure the member did not mean to insult me and question my integrity. I will say that it is important, and I did indicate what the minister got right.

However, in the balance of things, they have to get more than just a few things right. They have to get it all right, because people's lives hang in the balance. The very fact that they have not reduced the wait times and that they have given incredible power over people, verging on the power of life and death, to a single individual or his or her department, is just not acceptable. We have courts. We have processes in this country. We should be following them.

As wonderful as this place is, it is not without its weaknesses, and it is not perfect. Mistakes are made. I would like to see the mistakes in regard to this hurried and unamended bill corrected. I would like the Conservatives to have the integrity, the honesty, and maybe even a bit of courage to say that they were not exactly right with all the provisions and could have done better. They should have and need to do better.

[Translation]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé (Saint-Lambert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this evening I rise to participate in the debate on a very important subject: Bill C-24.

Seventy-five months have passed since March 2008. During those 75 months, the current Conservative government has changed the citizenship processes, rules and regulations about once every three months on average.

Of course things change. Of course a government can recognize that it made a mistake. Of course the government can change its policy. However, when a government changes its mind every three months about an issue as serious as immigration, of course we are going to wonder whether it knows what it is doing.

This government is so incapable of understanding the implications of a situation, so incapable of understanding its options and looking for a lasting solution that will benefit Canadians that it frantically starts over every three months.

This government spends its time bashing the public service. That is its stock in trade. It keeps dumping on public servants' supposed inefficiency and making wholesale cuts to every budget in sight.

In his March report, the Parliamentary Budget Officer, whom the Conservatives continue to ignore because they cannot handle the truth, revealed that only two-fifths of the public service's goals were achieved in 2013.

How can we expect the right hand to know what the left hand is doing when the brain is AWOL? Either this government does not realize how absurd it is to change the rules every three months yet expect them to be useful, or it realizes exactly how absurd that is and is manipulating immigration rules purely to get votes.

Plainly put, the government's immigration policy is ineffective. Once they had their majority, the Conservatives imposed a moratorium on sponsoring parents and grandparents, they made family reunification harder, and they started punishing refugees. Then they gave us their masterpiece: they opened the floodgates to temporary foreign workers.

The result of this absurd and unjust policy was not long in coming. The Conservatives became mired in a historic scandal involving abuses of the temporary foreign worker program. Now they are fighting tooth and nail to get out of it, but they cannot find a way to solve the problem. This government could not care less about reality. It would rather make all of the issues political and attack the credibility of anyone who dares to contradict it.

How can we give such an irresponsible government the right to decide who should get citizenship and who should have it revoked at the minister's discretion? This is a clear case of feudal arbitrariness.

This bill raises some serious legal concerns. According to the bill's provisions, the minister could revoke the citizenship of someone who has supposedly committed fraud. The individual's citizenship could be revoked based on something the minister or one of his employees believes. It would be based on a balance of probabilities that the individual obtained his or her citizenship fraudulently. Simply put, it means that the minister will now have the power to strip someone of their citizenship based on a mere suspicion.

Even in a country with strict immigration laws such as the United States, any individual who is prosecuted for illegally obtaining citizenship has the right to plead his case in court. Every ruling can be appealed, and the individual is guaranteed due process.

From now on, under Bill C-24, none of that will exist in Canada. One word from the minister and someone can lose their citizenship. The decision cannot be appealed.

Government Orders

The icing on the cake is that the minister announced that he would not disclose the list of people to whom he will be so kind as to grant Canadian citizenship.

I want to remind the government, which cares so little about civil liberties, that in the legal system we inherited from Great Britain, such a process is labelled as being arbitrary.

I would also like to remind the government, which does not care, that prohibiting arbitrary government decisions is a fundamental principle set out in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It comes to us from British law, which in 1215, with the Magna Carta, and in 1679, with the principle of habeas corpus, made it clear that arbitrariness was a principle to fight against.

I want to warn the government about what it is doing. In addition to being completely immoral, the possibility that the minister can revoke or grant citizenship at his discretion goes against the underlying principles of our legal system.

Once again, the government should expect a long, bitter battle with the Supreme Court concerning one of its many unilateral decisions.

• (1955)

Everyone in the country recognizes the value of Canadian citizenship. There is no need to start such a battle on this subject. That is why we were hoping that this government would change its ways a little and consult the opposition in order to come to an agreement.

However, those hopes were in vain: the Conservative members of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration once again showed just how stubborn this government is by rejecting all of the amendments proposed in committee. We continued to hope in responsible people who believe that the government can and must change people's lives.

That is why we in the NDP strive to find a constructive solution to all of the problems confronting us, regardless of the circumstances. When it comes to immigration, this government's inadequacy has led to unacceptable delays in the processing of applications. We understand that these delays make applicants frustrated and bitter.

However, this wasted time also translates into economic losses. Economic immigrants who knock on our door to come work in Canada may very well turn to other host countries because of the long wait times for their application to be processed. They will then be helping to build economies other than ours.

When the government announced its intention to reduce backlogs, we applauded this commendable intention. However, we reminded the Conservatives that they themselves had created the conditions leading to these delays by making systematic budget cuts throughout the public service. Since 2009, the average time to process an application has more than doubled, going from 15 to 31 months. Since the NDP will have to fix the Conservatives' many mistakes when it forms the next government, we might as well start now.

In order to make processing times reasonable, this government is proposing to merely simplify the process for handling applications by getting rid of the middle man. This is another example of the

Conservatives' wishful thinking and simplistic announcements. They were unable to deal with the backlog by putting \$44 million on the table as part of the economic action plan, and now they think they will be able to do so by introducing administrative mini-measures. Given these circumstances, why is the government once again making amendments to Canada's immigration system?

In truth, there is only one explanation for the government turning a blind eye to the negative consequences of this legislation: it does not care about the consequences. This government is only interested in how to make itself look good. That is the foundation of its policy. This government does not care about the best interests of Canadians. It is pandering to its voter base. This government is not showing its determination. It is showing its stubbornness. This government does not take action. It acts out.

• (2000)

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her great speech on Bill C-24. She certainly has expertise on the subject of citizenship and immigration.

Like me and a number of experts who have looked at the bill, does she have any concerns about the constitutionality of the bill, especially with regard to revoking citizenship?

Does she think that this bill might be challenged if it is passed in its current form?

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question. Indeed, as far as the revocation of citizenship is concerned, this bill will definitely be challenged.

This is a classic example of two-tiered citizenship. If a person with dual citizenship has their citizenship revoked, they are at risk of becoming stateless. In other words, their country of origin might not take them back and they will be in limbo.

The revocation of citizenship, a power that will be concentrated in the hands of the minister, will constantly be appealed in court.

Mr. Jonathan Tremblay (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my colleague just touched on something I wanted to ask a question about. She talked about the minister's discretionary powers to deny or approve immigration applications.

What concerns does my colleague have about that, since we are talking about a major overhaul of how this department works? I would like to hear my colleague's concerns about that.

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. As I said in my speech, concentrating powers, such as the power to revoke or grant citizenship, in the hands of the minister, takes us back to a feudal time when seigneurs had the power of life or death over their tenants. Fortunately here we are talking about citizenship.

This raises an ethical problem. We cannot be judge and jury. Before, people had the possibility of appeal, but now they will no longer have that option once their citizenship is revoked. That is quite simply unacceptable in a country that abides by the rule of law as we do.

Government Orders

Ms. Laurin Liu (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, NDP): Mr. Speaker, could my colleague tell us more about how this bill could be subject to constitutional challenges? We know that the government does not always bother to make sure that its bills respect human rights and comply with the Canadian Constitution. Could my colleague talk about the problems with this bill and how it might not meet constitutional standards?

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question. As some witnesses pointed out in committee, there will certainly be some constitutional challenges, and I think this will likely go to court.

We are all familiar with the universal principle that all human beings are born free and equal. Our country has the charter to protect all citizens, and the provisions in Bill C-24 clearly interfere with those protections. There will obviously be challenges.

● (2005)

Ms. Laurin Liu (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to Bill C-24, An Act to amend the Citizenship Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts.

I should mention that the Conservatives limited time for debate on this bill. This is really problematic and it infringes on our right to express ourselves on bills that will affect the lives of Canadians and immigrants.

It is more or less an omnibus bill. In fact, it is the first major reform of the Citizenship Act since 1977. We really ought to do our homework to come up with the best legislation possible.

I oppose this bill and I will take my ten minutes to explain why.

I would like to begin by recognizing the work done by groups in my riding that welcome immigrants, such as ABL Immigration, which works in the Lower Laurentians to help immigrants better integrate into our society and country and have access to services that can help them.

My fellow Canadians are ready to welcome newcomers, to have new people come to live here, but this bill goes against Canadian values.

I would like to mention that I was a panellist at a meeting in Montreal on Bill C-24. Julius Grey, a very well-known lawyer in Montreal whose name is probably familiar to all members, and the Table de concertation des organismes au service des personnes réfugiées et immigrantes, which is active in Montreal, also participated in this event.

With the people who took part in the discussion, I was able to see that this bill raises a number of concerns about the Conservative government's approach. There were also concerns about the negative impact of that rather complex legislation, which includes many measures.

Since March 2008, or since the Conservatives took office, over 25 major changes have been made to immigration practices, rules, laws and regulations. We found that not all of these changes have been positive, including the moratorium on sponsoring parents and grandparents.

In my riding I met people affected by this measure. In fact, I meet people from across Canada who are affected by the fact that they cannot bring their parents and their grandparents here. In recent years, fewer family reunifications have taken place. This threatens the well-being of Canadians.

We saw that the government also chose to punish vulnerable refugees. On this issue, I want to note that Bill C-31 imposes a number of measures that experts deem dangerous for refugees. These provisions give the minister the power to hand-pick which countries are deemed safe, without consulting independent experts. They also give the minister the power to detain asylum seekers for one year, without reviewing that decision.

This bill also contains provisions to deny certain refugees access to the refugee appeal division. Bill C-31 also imposes a mandatory waiting period of five years before legitimate refugees can become permanent residents and be reunited with their families.

As we can see, these are very tough measures that adversely affect the safety of refugees who come to Canada after fleeing unstable situations in their country of origin.

● (2010)

We have also seen that under the Conservative government there has been an increase in the number of temporary foreign workers to the detriment of Canadian workers. Furthermore, and I am sure that I am not the only member to have noticed this, our riding offices are reporting that processing times, which are currently 31 months, are harming our constituents who come to our offices looking for help. Unfortunately, too many of these people want to know the status of their file. The only thing we can tell them is that they have to wait, even though the processing times are unreasonable. Instead of attacking refugees and preventing families from being reunited, this government should instead be tackling processing times. That should be the priority.

I will now focus on the measures in the bill that the NDP members are concerned about. First, we have seen that Bill C-24 concentrates many new powers in the hands of the minister, including the power to grant citizenship and to revoke it from dual citizens. This creates two tiers of citizenship and penalizes people with dual citizenship. It allows a minister to revoke the citizenship of a person who has dual citizenship and commits illegal acts, whereas someone without Canadian citizenship will be punished in the criminal justice system instead.

We believe that this is rather arbitrary. We should not have two tiers of citizenship. I am very proud of my Canadian citizenship and I know that my parents, who immigrated from China, were as well. A Canadian is a Canadian, period. We should not have two types of citizens, those who have dual citizenship and those who have single citizenship.

Government Orders

Under the provisions of the bill, the minister may revoke citizenship if he, or any staffer he authorizes, is satisfied on the balance of probabilities that a person has obtained citizenship by fraud. That poses significant problems because this clause is based on the balance of probabilities. If the minister has reason to believe that the person has obtained citizenship fraudulently, he has the right to unilaterally revoke that citizenship. Clearly, that prevents the individual from appealing to the courts and it places more arbitrary powers in the minister's hands.

This bill is problematic for another reason, namely the provisions related to the declaration of intent to reside in Canada. The minister can arbitrarily choose to strip someone of citizenship if he believes that the individual does not intend to reside in Canada. That penalizes those who obtain citizenship and then perhaps get a job offer elsewhere but still plan on returning to Canada. It penalizes people who find themselves in rather unique situations.

The final measure in this bill that I would like to raise is the fact that the length of time someone spends in Canada as a permanent resident will no longer be taken into consideration for the granting of citizenship.

● (2015)

Clearly, the NDP feels it must oppose many of the measures. I urge my colleagues to oppose this bill as well, for the reasons I have just presented.

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member made reference to the issue of people who leave Canada to work. I want to give a specific example of how this legislation would have a very real impact.

I can recall a case where a family from the Philippines came to Canada and the husband was not able to get his credentials recognized as an auditor. Therefore, after his family was settled here, he went to another country and was able to continue on as an accountant. Now, there are serious restrictions within this proposed legislation that would prevent that individual from being able to do that today, even though his entire family is here and the only reason he left the country was to practise that which he was trained to do with the full intention of coming back.

I wonder if the member might want to comment on the fact that, by rushing the bill through, we were not able to have that thorough discussion so that examples such as this would have had much more attention given to them.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Laurin Liu: Mr. Speaker, that is not the only example of its kind. When I talked to groups of immigrants in Montreal, they gave me this example: a person gets a scholarship to Oxford or Harvard and has to leave for a period of months or years but fully intends to return to Canada and live as a Canadian citizen on Canadian soil.

These are opportunities our citizens should have. They should not be punished for wanting a chance to live or work elsewhere for a period of time. This bill goes way too far. Clearly, the Conservative government really did not do its homework on this one.

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, thank you for letting me ask my colleague from Rivière-des-Mille-

Îles a question. She spent a few seconds, possibly a minute, talking about wait times, which have gone up considerably in the past few years. Nowadays, it can take 31 months for a person to get citizenship. The government boasted that this bill would reduce wait times.

Does my colleague think that any of the measures in this bill will really tackle this problem effectively? Perhaps the government is saying this just for the sake of argument when ultimately, there is really nothing here that will reduce wait times. Why is it important to tackle wait times in this system? I will not answer the question; I will let my colleague answer it.

Ms. Laurin Liu: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his question. I imagine that in his riding office he must also provide services to people who are waiting to get their citizenship.

Since the Conservatives came to power, wait times have doubled and today, 320,000 people in Canada are still waiting for their application to be processed.

Of course, humanitarian cases have to be processed as quickly as possible. My colleague from Halifax mentioned the case of a mother who was waiting to sponsor her children. For the months she had to wait, she lost track of her children who were in her home country. The wait times are unreasonable. They penalize people who live in Canada, who want to be good citizens and contribute to our country. For humanitarian reasons, we have to address the processing times problem.

● (2020)

[*English*]

Mr. Alex Atamanenko (British Columbia Southern Interior, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am thankful to have a few minutes to speak to Bill C-24. As an interesting coincidence, I was recently reading the latest issue of *Novyi Shliakh*, or the *New Pathway*, a Ukrainian newspaper published here in Canada. On page 6 of the May 15 edition, there was an article by the Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers, and the very fact that this article appeared in the *New Pathway* to me is a clear indication that there is a concern about Bill C-24 in the Ukrainian Canadian community and, I would venture to say, in many immigrant communities. Readers of the article who had concerns were asked to contact their local member of Parliament.

This article states:

This new law changes core aspects of Canadian citizenship as we know it.

If passed, Bill C-24 will make it more difficult for new immigrants to get Canadian citizenship and easier for many Canadians to lose it, especially if they have dual citizenship. Most Canadians do not understand the ways in which Bill C-24 will undermine their fundamental right to be a citizen of Canada. The Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers has provided a summary of the most important changes to the Citizenship Act.

It goes on later in the same article to say:

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In Canada, citizenship has always been secure. Whether native-born or immigrant, once you are granted Canadian citizenship, you are secure. Under the current system, you cannot lose your citizenship unless you obtained it by fraud, and even then, a Federal Court judge must make that decision after a full court hearing. Under the current system, if you do not agree with the judge, you have a right of appeal. Under the new law, there will be several ways to lose your citizenship. As well, the decision as to whether you lose your citizenship will be made by a government bureaucrat who will inform you in writing with no opportunity for a live hearing to defend yourself.

Why will citizenship be harder to get?

New immigrants will have to wait longer before they can apply for citizenship. Older and younger people will now have to pass language and knowledge tests to qualify for citizenship. The citizenship application fees have been tripled. There will be no right of appeal for those who are refused.

[*Translation*]

Everyone recognizes the considerable value of Canadian citizenship, but we do not want to politicize this issue. We have seen that approach far too often since the current government came to power.

As far as the bill is concerned, it is high time that we resolve the issue of lost Canadians. This is an unfair situation that has been going on for far too long.

Other parts of the bill raise concerns. For example, the revocation of citizenship gives cause for major legal concerns. We are always worried about proposals to concentrate power in the hands of the minister.

Since March 2008, more than 25 major changes have been made to the methods, rules, laws and regulations related to immigration. More and more changes have been made since the Conservatives formed a majority government, changes such as a moratorium on sponsoring parents and grandparents, fewer family reunifications, punishing vulnerable refugees and increasing the number of temporary foreign workers in order to meet the needs of corporations.

The considerable changes the Conservatives have made to Canada's immigration system have not helped improve the efficiency or fairness of the system.

• (2025)

[*English*]

That is what is troubling. All these proposed changes are not necessarily going to make the system more efficient. In a sense, we can understand why the system cannot be more efficient. If we cut people who are working, the numbers of public servants, increase their hours, and make it more difficult for them, obviously the system will not get more efficient.

I would like to argue as an aside that maybe a good way to improve our immigration system is to make it more efficient by hiring more people so we can get the job done and process all the immigrants that we have today.

However, I will return to my speaking notes. Bill C-24, as I said earlier on, gives the minister many new powers including the authority to grant or revoke the citizenship of dual citizens.

As we know, the government has a pretty strong tendency to develop legislation that concentrates more power in the hands of ministers. Obviously if we have ministers who understand the situation and I would hope they do, things could work okay, but

there are people who do not. We on this side condemn this practice. We cannot trust the Conservatives or any government by giving a minister new powers because we open the door to arbitrary politically motivated decisions.

I guess we all should know that there are politically motivated decisions in any government. What we as parliamentarians have to do is to ensure that we take those politically motivated decisions away from people making decisions.

Let us look at revocation of citizenship. The very idea of giving the minister the power to revoke citizenship raises serious questions and it is on this principle that we should be looking at the bill. Canadian law already has established mechanisms by which we can punish individuals who commit unlawful acts. It should not be the job of the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration to make these judgments.

Another problem with revoking the Canadian citizenship of dual citizens is that it creates a two-tier citizenship where some Canadians could have their citizenship revoked, while others would be punished by the criminal system for the same offence.

As an aside, let me say a few words about dual citizens. We have already seen discrimination by the government against Canadians who are subject to U.S. tax laws. My colleague, the MP for Victoria, has raised the issue of FATCA and the problems it poses for U.S. dual citizens and family members of dual citizens. I would say that once a person is a Canadian citizen, he or she should have the full protection of our government. It does not matter if one is born here or somewhere else, once one is a Canadian citizen, we should all be on the same level playing field.

There should be no question, for example, of the U.S. government obtaining banking information or for a Canadian citizen to file unnecessary U.S. tax forms when a person already pays taxes here in Canada and fills out the forms. We have had that debate earlier on in this session.

Coming back to this bill, under the provisions of the bill the minister may revoke citizenship if he or she, or any staffer he or she authorized, is satisfied in the balance of probabilities that a person has obtained citizenship by fraud. Until now, such cases have all typically gone through the courts and cabinet, which makes sense. It will not be the case anymore. This aspect poses serious issues to the extent that the minister would have the power to revoke a person's citizenship solely on the basis of suspicion without an independent tribunal to rule on the veracity of the allegations. This is not the case in the United States where that person has the legal right to have the issue resolved in a court of law.

In closing, the bill, although it has some good provisions in it, is another slow erosion of our rights as democratic citizens and for this reason we should oppose the bill in its current form.

Government Orders

● (2030)

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and for Western Economic Diversification, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I do not know if my hon. colleague is aware, but currently many permanent residents wait for four years to make a decision. I have met many people at citizenship ceremonies for whom it was 20 or 30 years before they made that decision. Choosing to become a citizen of Canada is a very important decision and people learn to feel an attachment to the country.

Does the hon. member really believe that people with little or no connection to Canada, who have spent very little time in Canada, should really be handed Canadian citizenship? Sometimes it is through fraudulent means. Is he objecting to having some time limits around people getting to know us before they make those decisions?

Mr. Alex Atamanenko: Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is that we have a system in place that works. The overwhelming majority of people who apply for citizenship and become citizens under our current system become good Canadian citizens. My parents are immigrants. Many of us here have family members who have immigrated. The current timeline in place is a workable timeline, and I do not really see why we need to change the system. What we need is to ensure it becomes more efficient, and that implies hiring a few more people to increase the efficiency so that we can process more immigrants at a faster pace.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his speech on Bill C-24. He mentioned some of our concerns about this bill.

I would like to hear him talk more about the constitutional aspect of this bill, given that the government has been told three or four times to change course, if I may use that expression, or go back to the drawing board. A number of bills have already been rejected in part by the Supreme Court.

Does he think that the same thing could happen to this bill? That is obviously a hypothetical question. A number of experts have already commented on this. Does my colleague have the same concerns as the experts who appeared before the committee and said that they were concerned that the Conservative government is again passing a bill that will very likely be challenged, with good reason, before the different courts?

Mr. Alex Atamanenko: Mr. Speaker, I would like to mention to my colleague from Sherbrooke that I attended the graduation ceremony at a high school in my riding. I mentioned that he is the youngest MP to ever be elected to Parliament. I told the graduates to follow his example. My colleague was 19 years old when elected and they could become MPs as well.

I am very pleased that he has asked this question. Yes, I do have some concerns. On a number of occasions we have seen the government trying to go down a particular path too quickly without having really thought about the consequences. If people have concerns like the ones I just mentioned in my speech, that means that there are problems.

I hope that this government will nevertheless try to improve this bill. As we have already mentioned, it does have some good

elements. There are some things in this bill that work well. Let us try to improve it and make it into a bill that serves all Canadians.

● (2035)

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House today to participate in this broad discussion on Bill C-24, introduced by the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. I want to commend my colleague, the member for Pierrefonds—Dollard and the official opposition's critic on this file, for her excellent work.

Unfortunately, once again, the Conservatives have failed to follow the rules and do the right thing, as serious parliamentarians should do. There was no real study of this bill in committee, even though this bill could have some potentially serious consequences. I will talk about those later on.

I do not understand why the government did not take the time to listen to the experts in committee. My guess is that it was because the Conservatives knew that the experts would probably disagree with them. That is the impression we got from the testimony during the pre-study and afterwards. People are very worried about this bill, which affects something very basic—citizenship and the minister's power to grant or revoke citizenship.

I think it is rather absurd and even shameful that the Conservatives decided to extend our evening debates in the House of Commons—which is something I am very comfortable with; I am pleased to be here tonight—but they do not show up, do not do their job and do not speak to their own bills. Since the Conservatives decided to extend our evening debates, they have missed 67 shifts. They have turned down 67 opportunities to speak, often on their own bills. That is an insult to people's intelligence. The Conservatives are flouting the rules of Parliament.

This bill is extremely serious because previously, a person's citizenship could be revoked only in cases where it could be demonstrated that fraud had occurred and the person had become a citizen through fraudulent means. Even though that was the only case where a person's citizenship could be revoked, the person could still appeal to the Federal Court so that his or her case could be heard properly. Today, that is no longer true. The government is lengthening the list of reasons why a person's citizenship can be revoked and, at the same time, concentrating a huge amount of arbitrary, discretionary power in the hands of the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration alone. That is very risky and hangs a sword of Damocles over the heads of millions of individuals in our country.

I want to begin this speech by quoting some people who are somehow involved in the conversation about this bill and the type of status the government wants to give Canadian citizens.

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A French writer, Amin Maalouf, had this to say, not about the bill specifically, but in general:

It is first up to your country to keep a certain number of commitments to you: that you be considered a full-fledged citizen and that you suffer no oppression, discrimination or undue hardship. Your country and its leaders have the obligation to make sure that is the case. If not, you own them nothing.

Here is another quote about the bill from Thomas Walkom, a columnist for the *Toronto Star*. He said:

The federal government's new citizenship bill is a Trojan horse. It is presented as an attempt to reduce fraud and rationalize the process of becoming a Canadian citizen, both of which are sensible aims.

But it would also give [the] Prime Minister[s] Conservative government unprecedented authority to strip Canadians—including thousands born in this country—of their citizenship.

The more we read about the bill that is before us this evening, the more reasons we have to be concerned. It seems we are at a point where citizenship is like the prize in a box of Cracker Jack. Citizenship can be given or taken away on a whim or based on the minister's goodwill.

Last year, I had the opportunity to attend my first official citizenship ceremony in my riding, Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie. I must say that the people who were there were deeply moved and very pleased to officially become citizens. I cannot imagine having to explain to them that now a minister can choose to take that citizenship away from them, and this is actually part of the legislation, if they have dual citizenship, meaning that they are citizens of another country as well.

● (2040)

The minister is giving himself the power to take away their Canadian citizenship in a number of situations, simply because they already have another nationality or another official citizenship. We already heard the former immigration minister say that it was too bad that Canada has to fulfill its obligations under international treaties because the government cannot create statelessness. I get the feeling that if the Conservatives had the opportunity to do so and if it did not contravene the treaties that Canada has already signed, they would not hesitate.

Barbara Jackman of the Canadian Bar Association said this in April:

Taking away citizenship from someone born in Canada because they may have dual citizenship and have committed an offence proscribed by the act is new. That's a fundamental change. For people who are born here and who have grown up here, it can result in banishment or exile. It's a step backwards, a huge step backwards—and it's a huge step being taken without any real national debate or discussion about whether Canadians want their citizenship amended in that way...

That's a fundamentally different concept of citizenship that needs to be addressed. It needs to be discussed and debated. We think that it could raise serious human rights concerns. It does raise serious human rights concerns. It may well contravene the Charter. The Supreme Court of Canada has already ruled in the past that we can't exile Canadians. By redefining who a Canadian is, you achieve exile. That's not right. It's against the Charter.

We have good reason to be very worried about this government's apparent desire to resurrect a situation that, for all practical purposes, has not been seen since the Middle Ages: forcing one of its citizens into exile, kicking a citizen out of the country. If a person has another nationality—be it French, Algerian or Burmese—and if that is enough to strip him of Canadian citizenship, that is very serious because that means condemning him to exile and forcing him to

leave the country, banishing him. I do not think that is what Canadians and Quebecers want or are prepared to accept, particularly not in the overall scheme of this bill, which, as we will see, gives tremendous powers to the minister.

In May of this year, Dr. Patti Tamara Lenard, an assistant professor at the University of Ottawa's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs and an expert on the subject of ministerial discretionary power, which she was concerned about, had this to say:

Finally, the bill grants the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration the discretion to revoke citizenship in too many cases. Currently, as written, the bill would give the minister discretion to revoke citizenship in cases of fraud, but there is no requirement—as there was in the previous bill, or as currently enacted now—for a court to evaluate if fraud in fact did occur. If the revocation provisions are kept, every such decision must be considered by, or appealable to, a court, even in cases where citizenship is revoked under suspicion of fraudulent applications. This is for at least two reasons. First, some forms of apparent misrepresentation are made for legitimate reasons—that is, to escape genuine and real harm. Second, judicial proceedings provide the only mechanism to protect against the otherwise inevitable suspicion that the minister is using fraud as a reason to revoke citizenship of people who are suspected of aiming to harm Canada where the proof doesn't exist.

Like many people, I am very concerned about the fact that we will kick people out and force them into exile. We will revoke the citizenship of those who should keep it. If someone commits a crime, there is a penal system for that. We must use that system to ensure that people pay for their crimes. There is nothing wrong with that.

I do not see why we have to do something as radical as revoke someone's citizenship, especially when these convictions could be handed down in foreign countries, including those for terrorism, which could give rise to concerns about the legitimacy of certain convictions. Just look at Burma, North Korea or Syria. I do not think we should rely on the justice systems of those countries to decide whether or not someone should keep their Canadian citizenship.

● (2045)

Mr. Hoang Mai (Brossard—La Prairie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie for his speech.

My colleague knows what is happening, including this government's way of doing things. We see how it deals with bills. Bill after bill goes against the charter and the Constitution. We saw how the current government disregarded Quebec in the securities commission case. Then, the whole thing went to the Supreme Court. Again, taxpayers had to foot the bill. This bill is not the only example. We see this time after time.

I would like my colleague to elaborate on that and on the approach of this government, which disregards the law, the charter, and everyone's opinion.

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his pertinent question.

As the English would say, there is a pattern with this majority Conservative government. It is my way or no way, or the bulldozer approach, and too bad if there are judges, laws or courts in the way. All this government wants to do is impose its vision and its views and too bad if scientists contradict it. The government tells itself that it will disregard them, muzzle them and that it will thus be able to act in a very high-handed way.

Government Orders

This bill is unprecedented in that it creates two classes of citizens in Canada. If someone only has single citizenship, such as Canadian citizenship, it cannot be taken away no matter the circumstances. However, if this person has dual citizenship, they do not have the same rights and they could lose their Canadian citizenship. It is unprecedented. I do not believe that the Supreme Court or Parliament will permit it.

[*English*]

Mr. Devinder Shory (Calgary Northeast, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite appears to oppose stripping citizenship from convicted terrorists. We are talking about terrorists.

I believe that the member is not aware of Bill C-24's revocation process. It would start only after a terrorist had been convicted. Once a terrorist was found guilty of terrorism, that person would have the right to appeal up to the Supreme Court of Canada about the conviction, if that person believed it was a false conviction.

I would like the member opposite to tell Canadians whether he believes that under any circumstances a convicted terrorist should have his or her citizenship revoked.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Mr. Speaker, if a person is accused of committing terrorist acts, they must be tried and, if found guilty, they must be imprisoned in the interest of public safety. It is as simple as that. It has nothing to do with their citizenship.

One of the problems with this bill is that it does not distinguish between democratic countries that have a reliable justice system and authoritarian countries or dictatorships that will convict their political opponents of terrorism.

Can my colleague really tell Canadians whether the people opposed to the political regime in Syria are all terrorists?

Mr. Marc-André Morin (Laurentides—Labelle, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I do not understand one aspect of the question from the member for Calgary Northeast. Does he realize that if we committed the same offence, he could be treated differently than I would be because of his background?

Would my colleague like to comment on that?

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Mr. Speaker, I understand the intent behind the question, but I cannot answer for my colleague from Calgary Northeast.

Mr. Devinder Shory: Ask me.

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Mr. Speaker, unfortunately I cannot do that. I would like to take this opportunity to say that this bill does not fix some serious problems.

Wait times and processing times have doubled under the Conservatives. The average processing time of 31 months could skyrocket to six, seven or eight years. That is not a respectful or dignified way to treat people who want to become Canadian citizens.

• (2050)

Mr. Hoang Mai (Brossard—La Prairie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House today to speak to Bill C-24 on citizenship and immigration.

It is no secret that I was born here to parents of Vietnamese origin. Immigration issues hit close to home and are often close to my heart.

This is not the first time that I have been disappointed in the government's actions, but I am particularly disappointed here. The government is not fixing the existing problem. There is a problem with wait times, and that is obvious. Since I was elected, one of the biggest files my constituency office has dealt with is immigration, whether we are talking about visas or citizenship applications.

I represent a very multicultural riding that works very well. My riding includes the city of Brossard, which is incredibly multicultural. On the weekend I watched a high school graduation ceremony. There were people from all over. It is extraordinary to see.

I would like to come back to the bill we are debating today, and I am going to start by talking about an aspect of the bill that is a bit more technical. My colleague from Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, who spoke before me, mentioned it. In our opinion, it is a very good example of how this government operates.

First of all, the government comes up with a bill that is unconstitutional and goes against the charter. That is not surprising coming from this government. I am talking more specifically about the fact that the government wants to be able to revoke citizenship in certain cases.

The government is giving the minister the power to revoke citizenship. Of course, we are talking about cases where the person in question has dual citizenship. The minister can revoke that individual's citizenship by saying that the person committed fraud or wrongdoing or that other situations warrant it.

The question is not whether the government can revoke citizenship or not, but the reasons for which it can do so. To be more specific, we are wondering how the government came up with the idea of revoking people's citizenship.

The fundamental problem is that the government is creating two classes of citizens: those who have dual citizenship and those who have only Canadian citizenship. For example, the government will not be able to revoke the citizenship of a person who does not have dual citizenship, but will be able to revoke the citizenship of someone who does.

In this case, what is worse is that the minister could say, based on a preponderance of evidence, that he is of the opinion that a person's citizenship should be revoked for such and such a reason. The problem is that there is no appeal process. There is no process whereby the courts can verify that decision at the federal level. The government is putting that power into the hands of the minister. This could lead to an excessive abuse of power. In fact, experts, lawyers and the Canadian Bar Association are opposed to this bill.

Earlier in the debate, the minister said that some people were opposed to this measure but that it was only a small group of lawyers. The minister dismissed the Canadian Bar Association out of hand. This clearly shows that the Conservatives believe that everyone who opposes their opinions is useless. The way the government treats the Supreme Court, among others, has become truly disgraceful.

Government Orders

I am going to come back to how this government operates, instead of solving a problem. There is the problem of the ever-growing wait times and the fact that the government decided to make cuts to immigration. Clearly, immigration is not a priority for this government.

I would like to remind all of my colleagues opposite, none of whom are likely to be listening, that Canada was created by immigration.

● (2055)

This is a personal issue for me because I am from an immigrant family. Thanks to family reunification, my family and I integrated well and now I am an MP. Family reunification is therefore very important to us. However, I heard comments from people on the other side of the House about how grandparents were a burden on society. There is a disconnect over there. They are losing sight of the human side of things. That scares me because this majority government does whatever it wants.

Even though we made recommendations and proposed amendments in committee, we do agree with some aspects of the bill. For example, we agree that some people, such as middlemen, are abusing the system and should be punished. However, in general, the Conservative government does not really want immigrants to feel welcome in Canada. It has made all kinds of promises about improving the system, but the truth is that it is bringing in temporary foreign workers. That is exactly why its management of this file has been criticized.

My family, my NDP colleagues and I all understand the importance of Canadian citizenship, and it is something that is quite obvious when we attend citizenship ceremonies. Having attended many of them, I know that the new citizens in my riding are very proud. However, the Conservatives prefer to give priority to temporary foreign workers, to the detriment of immigration and families who want to settle here and become part of society.

I would like to sincerely thank the hon. member for Pierrefonds—Dollard, our critic, and the hon. member for Saint-Lambert for their hard work on this. It shows how important we feel the human element is. The NDP is making this much effort perhaps because our caucus is made up of many nationalities and cultures, so we are very open-minded.

I know that some of my Conservative and Liberal colleagues understand because they also come from immigrant families. This is an important debate, yet those members are allowing the government to take this sort of action and push family reunification aside.

Processing times have nearly doubled. That is incredible. People are not advancing through the system. I have seen processing times increase with my own eyes since I was elected, and that was only three years ago. When we want to serve our constituents, we are sometimes faced with a system that is overloaded. The government is choosing not to find solutions or invest to integrate immigrants better and work with them better so that they settle here with their family and participate in Canada's economy as well.

When my parents came here, it really helped to have their family here, their brothers and sisters, who took care of us. It helped my

parents find a job, get settled and move forward. I am disappointed that my Conservative colleagues are not on the right track.

● (2100)

[*English*]

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and for Western Economic Diversification, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have found it a little unusual tonight, in terms of some of the comments that members of the NDP have been making throughout their speeches. On the one hand, we often hear from them how they do not have enough time to debate. We are giving them plenty of opportunity to put up speakers to put their views forward, yet they are complaining because we are not using some of our time. I think it is very bizarre that on the one hand they complain about not having enough time to debate, and then on the other hand are saying that they should not have to speak so often.

Having said that, we heard the member talk about his parents who came here, raised a family, and stayed here. They made a very strong commitment to this country, and it sounds like they took great pride in their decision to become Canadian citizens. Does the member not believe that four years provides the opportunity for a permanent resident to come here, to understand the country and make that very important decision? Is four years a good time in terms of making those important decisions about how they are going to spend their lives and where they want their citizenship to be?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Hoang Mai: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour for asking a question.

There are two parts to her question. In response to the first part, I just wanted to explain that we want a debate. The fact that my colleague asked a question is a step in the right direction. We also want answers. Why do we not hear anything about the government's vision? That is what we call having a debate. Unfortunately, that is not what we are seeing today.

In response to the second part of the question, the thing that is important to me is really the way we deal with the system. The problems I mentioned are the fact that things are delayed, the government does not invest enough, and the wait times keep getting longer. All that slows down the system. As I was explaining to my colleague, citizenship is very important to me. People here are struggling to get it, but when I ask why the system takes so long and why there are no solutions, I unfortunately do not get the answers I want.

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé (Saint-Lambert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. He reiterated, as other NDP speakers have, that we want a fair, efficient, transparent and accountable immigration system. Obviously, we completely reject the measures in Bill C-24, which will result in a restrictive immigration system based on arbitrary decisions made in secret.

Could my colleague comment on a quote from the president of the Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers, Lorne Waldman? He said:

The US Supreme Court got it right over 50 years ago when it said that citizenship is not a licence that the government can revoke for misbehaviour. As Canadians, we make our citizenship feeble and fragile if we let government Ministers seize the power to extinguish it.

Government Orders

Mr. Hoang Mai: Mr. Speaker, that is a very good question that we can indeed debate. I am quite pleased, as the objective is to have another vision.

The question raised by my colleague from Saint-Lambert is very important. The bill creates two categories: citizens and citizens with dual citizenship. Citizenship can be removed and revoked for one category, but not for the other. Furthermore, this can undermine the significance of or the confidence that we might have in the system.

At present, we have a system in place that can arrive at solutions or penalties, when necessary, for people who contravene the rules and the law. With the current version of Bill C-24, the government wants to give the minister the power to actually grant or revoke citizenship in an almost haphazard way. That is very problematic. That is why lawyers have objected.

That is deplorable because the minister has simply dismissed the objections. This happens regularly with the Conservatives: they could not care less about the law or about anything coming from the Supreme Court. Then, we will have to deal with it. Who will end up paying? Taxpayers, and that is deplorable.

● (2105)

[*English*]

Mr. Malcolm Allen (Welland, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to stand in this place to debate legislation, whether members on the other side have a contradictory view or not. That is a decision that those members will make, of course. They decided to have us stay here later because they wanted to debate legislation. However, I am more than happy to fill up the time.

Let me start by offering a few words of encouragement to my friends on the other side because there are a few decent things in Bill C-24.

Heaven knows, we have been asking the Conservatives, for years, to crack down on consultants who victimize residents living in our constituencies. Our constituents come to us, faced with the same dilemma they faced at the beginning of the process when they went to a consultant. Consultants charge individuals thousands of dollars to perhaps fill out a form, but they do not give them any decent advice. In some cases, the consultants steer them in the wrong direction after extracting a great deal of money from them. These people are quite frantic because they are trying to either reunify their family or they are trying to bring loved ones over here. Some of them are trying to expedite their own situation with respect to citizenship. They end up being faced with someone who literally takes the money from their bank accounts.

The government has probably done a decent thing here. We should crack down on illegal consultants because it is time that they be stopped. In my previous life, before I came to the House, I heard about basically the same thing happening with respect to Ontario's compensation system. Consultants would get folks, usually widows in a lot of cases, to sign over a form, giving them 15% to 20% of anything they wanted. They knew full well that the only thing they had to do was to have the individual sign the bottom of the form and send it off because a loved one had died of an occupational disease and they were entitled to some money. The consultants would take a big percentage from what the people received in compensation.

Kudos to the government. Conservatives do not hear that from us too often, but I do think they would be doing a decent thing by cracking down on consultants.

My good friend Olivia Chow was a great advocate of cracking down on crooked consultants, who literally bleed immigrants of their financial resources, the limited financial resources that many of them have, in the hope that their family will arrive quickly.

This brings me to the question of why we do not bring their families over here sooner. I had the pleasure of being born somewhere else, but I also have the great pleasure of being a Canadian citizen. I am a dual citizen. People born here are Canadians by birth. Some Canadians, because one of their parents was born in another country, may have dual citizenship of which they are unaware. In some cases, this may work for them. For example, they can go back to where their parents came from and use that citizenship if they so choose. However, some individuals with dual citizenship do not do that. Some believe they are just Canadians.

If this legislation were to pass, citizens with dual citizenship could find themselves in a precarious situation, albeit the crime that is purported to be adjudicated in the bill is a heinous one, I agree. Many of my colleagues in the House are also like me. They were born elsewhere and became Canadian citizens, obviously, because one must be a Canadian citizen to be in this place. That is a requirement of the Parliament of Canada Act. We would not find too many more passionate Canadians than those of us who have acquired our citizenship after coming here from somewhere else.

Many constituents in my area are Slovak, Hungarian, and Italian. They are passionate Canadians. These individuals would be the first to condemn anyone who would dare to slight the Canadian flag or our armed forces or talk negatively about Canada. They are the first ones to defend Canada, long before natural born Canadians. Why is that? It is because they see the seriousness in it. They understand what it means to acquire Canadian citizenship, to work for it. They get that.

They also have a sense of fairness. They believe that one should be adjudicated fairly because many of them came from places where they were not.

● (2110)

The great disparity in my riding is that I am probably one of the few Scots who actually resides in that riding. When we have heritage week and I ask where the person is who will wear a kilt for the Scottish heritage, the executive director tells me that unless I put one on, there will not be one.

However, there will be Ukrainians, Slovaks, Hungarians, Czechs, Poles, and Italians, and many of them came at a time when they were oppressed. They are now older, of course. Their kids were born and raised here. In fact, their grandkids are being raised here now.

They are passionate Canadians. They understand when things are taken out of a stream that looks like it is not fair and put in a place where it is not fair, even if that place is going to be fair. "I will judge it fairly", says the government. If my constituents who came from the other side of the wall at that time were asked, they would say "Oh, not so fast. That is what they used to say too".

Government Orders

Now, I am not suggesting that the government is anything like the other side of the wall. That would be reprehensible. It would not true either.

Hon. Chris Alexander: You just did.

Mr. Malcolm Allen: No, not quite, Mr. Speaker. What I said was that is why one has to make sure it is seen to be fair, and then there would not be a comparison. If it is deemed to be fair, then nobody will make the comparison.

The issue is when it is isolated, when it is put in the hands of a minister who says he is fair, but it is still in the hands of a person not a system. That is part of the problem, when it looks as if it may be in the hands of a person.

What else is good in the bill? The fact that it will expedite citizenship for those who are landed or in the armed forces is a good thing. If they are willing to serve Canada, to go abroad, to put their lives in harm's way, I think there should be a reward for that. Expedited citizenship would be fair.

Then I would ask, on the other side, what about those temporary foreign workers who have been here for 10, 12, 15 years or more? If we decide at some point to put them on a path to citizenship, should we not count the time that they have been here?

I know workers in my area. I come from Niagara where agricultural workers come in. I know employers who have had the same employees for 20-plus years. If we finally grant them the opportunity to work towards citizenship, which I believe they should get, and most of the industry in this country says they should get, whether it is the horticultural industry, the meat-packing facilities, they believe that is the direction it should go.

These workers should be allowed a path to citizenship. Why should we then restart the clock when they have been here for 20 years? They work for 10 or 11 months a year and go home for vacation. They do not work for four months anymore. In the old days, workers used to come to Niagara and pick fruit for four months and then leave. Those days are gone.

There are temporary foreign workers in the agricultural sector, which is really not a temporary foreign worker program but a foreign worker program. By and large, it is a 10-month job. They live for ten months in Canada and go home for two months, wherever home happens to be. It is perhaps Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, or Jamaica.

If the government decides in its wisdom, as I think it should, to start that group of folks on a pathway to citizenship, why does the clock have to reset? Why can we not simply say that they have been here for 10 years? We would still have to look at some time and there would be things to work out, and the other requirements would still hold. The language provisions would be there. In most cases, the workers speak one of the two official languages in this country, especially those who have been here for 10 or 20 or more years. We actually would not see any of that.

Clearly, there are opportunities here for some things that work, but there are some things that do not work. I am a passionate Canadian. My father used to call the family five-dollar Canadians. I always used to wonder why. One day, when I was a little older, I asked him

why he called us five-dollar Canadians. He said it was because he paid \$5 for our cards.

He did not mean that we were only worth \$5 or that our citizenship was only worth \$5. When we got our citizenship cards, in the 1970s, if we wished to get one with our picture on it, which was a great ID, it cost \$5. That is all it cost to get that card. I still have it, albeit I look a little younger in that picture.

Ultimately, it is and always will be about being equal under the law, being equal not only under the law but equal amongst all Canadians. For folks like me who are dual citizens, we take this seriously. It is a personal piece. It is almost a personal affront. I know that was not the intention. It is about making sure that bad folks do not do bad things.

• (2115)

Unfortunately in life bad folks do bad things. That is why we have jails. We lock bad folks up for doing bad things. Why should we discriminate or decide to change the rules for one group versus another group? Why do we not just simply say bad folks are bad folks? If they deserve to go to jail for doing things that are criminal and heinous, we should send them to jail.

However, there is a process for that called "the rule of law". I know the government always talks about law and order. Let us use the rule of law, in all cases, and apply it equally to all of us, so that for those of us who have dual citizenship, it ends up being what it is.

Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it was a promising beginning for the member opposite. There was some praise for the bill. Then, as we suspected, he repeated the criticisms of some of his colleagues, that there should not be grounds for revoking citizenship for dual nationals when we would be unable to do that for those with only one citizenship. The member then went on to make a more serious point, which was that those tried for and convicted of acts of terrorism, espionage, or treason in our country might not actually have received due process.

I thought I heard the member say that in some countries of the old Eastern bloc these were political charges, politically inspired, ideologically applied in a court system that was never just and that in our country sometimes there had been this kind of miscarriage of justice for those very serious crimes.

Could the member cite one case where someone has been prosecuted for the crimes of terrorism, espionage or treason in our country and the conviction has been unjust, overturned or not accepted in the eyes of the Canadian people?

Mr. Malcolm Allen: Mr. Speaker, the minister is right. I made somewhat of a convoluted statement. However, I was not suggesting that the court systems was wrong or that there was a miscarriage of justice in that they did not follow through with the proper procedure if people were charged with crimes of treason and did not get due process. They do.

Government Orders

Some of my constituents are suspicious when they hear that perhaps a minister of the crown will have the authority to do something. They feel this is not necessarily due process, that somehow this is a slippery slope.

With all fairness to the minister, I was not accusing the government. Those passionate Canadians are dual citizens. When we say to them that the rules will be changed and the minister could have a certain authority, they want to know what that means. There is always that sense around things about how one sees it versus the reality.

Yes, if people are charged with treason, they go to court., they are found guilty and they should go to jail. Quite frankly, the key should be thrown away.

In my book, you're quite right to send them to jail if they are guilty. Take the keys and I will hide them in the bottom of the Welland canal for you. How is that?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): I remind all hon. members to direct their questions and comments to the Chair rather than directly at their colleagues.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Sherbrooke.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to sincerely thank my colleague for his speech about citizenship. His speech was very passionate. He obtained his citizenship when he was younger. I am not saying that he is no longer young, but that is a debate for another day.

I would like to come back to the fact that we must have a fair and equitable process if we really want to move forward with revocation of citizenship. Considering the importance of Canadian citizenship to Canadians, it is important that people follow a fair and equitable process and that the decision is not made by only one person or as a result of rather secret processes, something that we find hard to swallow. In the case of this bill, why is it so important?

• (2120)

[*English*]

Mr. Malcolm Allen: Mr. Speaker, having an open and transparent system ensures that the rule of law is not only done but is seen to be done. That is why we have a transparent legal system and a court system. That is the essence of it. It cannot be about secret tribunals hidden behind a curtain somewhere. This leads to suspicion that perhaps it has been unfair, and I used the word “perhaps”.

The issue becomes how we ensure everyone is treated equally. Presently, people do not get their citizenship revoked. In the case of a heinous crime it should be revoked, and no one dismisses that fact, but this would allow it to happen to those who have dual citizenship.

For those of us who do hold dual citizenship, whether we choose it or not, sometimes we just end up with it. We do not get a choice to say no, but quite often cannot revoke it. It seems that those of us who have it would be treated under a separate standard than those who perhaps would not have it. However, as I said earlier, if people commit heinous crimes, they should be sent to jail if they are found guilty, full stop.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Marie-Claude Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise this evening to speak to this bill, which proposes significant amendments to the Citizenship Act and, as a result, to the lives of our immigrants.

I am particularly interested in this issue because there are many immigrants in my riding. There are also a lot of refugees, who also struggle to get citizenship, and I see that this bill will not make their lives easier, even though they in no way deserve to be treated like this.

To provide some background, on February 6, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration introduced Bill C-24, which significantly amends Canadian immigration legislation.

The minister said that Bill C-24 represented the first comprehensive reforms to the Citizenship Act since 1977.

He went on to say:

[The bill] will protect the value of Canadian citizenship for those who have it while creating a faster and more efficient process for those applying to get it.

I doubt it. I have had a chance to carefully study this bill and I do not see a single change that will make the process faster and more efficient. This remains to be seen, but there is nothing concrete there.

Since March 2008, about 25 major changes have been made to immigration procedures, rules, laws and regulations. More and more changes have been made since the Conservatives won a majority, including the moratorium on sponsoring parents and grandparents. There have also been fewer family reunifications, which is very problematic. There is no point in elaborating on this because the expression “family reunification” is self-explanatory. I believe that in life we need to be with our family.

There is also the punishment imposed on vulnerable refugees. Do these people really need to be punished for crimes they did not necessarily commit? I doubt it. Then, there was an increase in the number of temporary foreign workers to meet the needs of large businesses, at the expense of many Canadian workers.

The significant changes made by the Conservatives to the Canadian immigration system did not improve the system's efficiency or fairness. Absolutely not. Some changes to the Citizenship Act proposed in this bill are long overdue. They address some flaws in the existing system and they should be mentioned. When our opponents do good work, we recognize it. We are not stupid.

However, certain clauses are changing the rules. They are totally unacceptable and, in my opinion and in my colleagues' opinion, they must be condemned. Before explaining the provisions that we will support and those that we will not support, I want to describe the changes proposed in the bill.

The bill gives the minister some major new powers, including the power to grant or revoke citizenship. It does not provide any real solutions to reduce the ever-increasing number of delays and the citizenship application processing wait times. It eliminates the use of the length of stay in Canada during a non-permanent residency. It bars individuals who have been convicted of what would constitute an indictable offence in Canada from acquiring citizenship. It includes a clause on the intention to reside in Canada. It increases residency requirements from three years out of four to four years out of six, and it specifies the requirements on physical presence in Canada before obtaining citizenship. It includes tougher sentences for fraud. It extends the granting of citizenship to lost Canadians. It provides an accelerated process to citizenship for Canadian Armed Forces personnel. It applies stricter rules to fraudulent immigration consultants. Also, applicants aged 14 to 64—it used to be 18 to 54—will now have to pass a test assessing their knowledge of French or English.

As I said earlier, we nevertheless support some provisions of this legislation. Other aspects raise a lot of concerns and must be condemned, such as the fact that Bill C-24 concentrates many powers in the hands of the minister, including the power to grant or revoke citizenship in the case of persons with dual citizenship.

● (2125)

I have often told the House that I am always uncomfortable when we give discretionary powers to ministers, because they are human. We all agree that they are not gods. These are very serious issues that should be examined by a committee made up of several individuals. Such issues, including the fate of political refugees, should not be in the hands of a single individual. It is unacceptable. Under the bill, the minister or an authorized official can revoke the citizenship if he is persuaded, on the balance of probabilities, that the person obtained citizenship by fraud.

Until now, these cases were usually referred to the courts. That will no longer be the case. However, these situations lend themselves to interpretation. A person suspected of fraud still has the right to a fair trial, like everyone else. In Canada, we are still innocent until proven guilty. That principle also applies to these individuals.

The minister may also revoke the citizenship of a person convicted under section 47 of the Criminal Code and sentenced to life imprisonment for treason, high treason or espionage; or the citizenship of a person sentenced to at least five years of imprisonment for a terrorism offence under section 2 of the Criminal Code, or an offence outside Canada that, if committed in Canada, would constitute a terrorism offence as defined in that section.

This provision does not in any way distinguish between convictions for terrorism in a democratic country such as Canada, with a credible and reliable justice system, and convictions in undemocratic regimes whose justice systems may be corrupted. We should look at this issue. I am going to give the minister the benefit of the doubt. Perhaps he did not think about it, but I doubt it. Still, it would be pertinent to review these issues.

Bill C-24 also does not provide any real solutions to reduce the ever-increasing number of delays and the citizenship application processing wait times. I have said it many times, but it is important.

Government Orders

Except for eliminating go-betweens and granting the minister a discretionary power, nothing is done to reduce processing times.

In other words, the quality of the processing is reduced. An application can be botched or it can be properly dealt with. A person could end up not being granted citizenship because the minister is not in a good mood. That is a little far-fetched. As I said earlier, I always feel uncomfortable when discretionary powers are given to ministers.

The declaration of intent to reside in the country also poses a slight problem. The bill introduces a requirement whereby a person to whom the minister grants citizenship must intend to reside in Canada after obtaining citizenship. The government maintains that this requirement is designed to send the message that citizenship is reserved for people who want to live in Canada. The law that is currently in effect does not include a provision on the intent to reside in the country.

The president of the Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers, Lorne Waldman, said that this amendment gives public servants the power to speculate on a citizenship applicant's intentions and then refuse them citizenship based on that speculation.

● (2130)

I would like to briefly quote what he had to say. I find it very interesting. He said:

The provision also holds out the implicit threat that if a naturalized Canadian citizen takes up a job somewhere else (as many Canadians do), or leaves Canada to study abroad (as many Canadians do), the government may move to strip the person of citizenship because they misrepresented their intention to reside in Canada when they were granted citizenship.

That is rather problematic. In the end, people are basically trapped in the country. That is not really fair. People should be given the freedom to choose where they want to live. If they are not happy in Canada but they want to keep their citizenship, they should be able to study or work abroad and have that experience. I do not see what the problem is with that, and I do not understand why the government would prevent people from having that sort of experience.

In closing, I will quote section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms:

Every individual...has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

Ms. Sadia Groguhé (Saint-Lambert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my colleague on her speech.

She mentioned a provision of Bill C-24 that concerns the declaration of intent to reside in Canada. It is quite obvious that this provision will be challenged in court. This was mentioned by one of the witnesses, who belongs to the Canadian Bar Association, because this provision is contrary to the free movement of people, which is protected by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

What can our colleague tell us about potential court challenges?

Ms. Marie-Claude Morin: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for her excellent question.

Government Orders

As I mentioned in my speech, I find it very problematic that the government is depriving future citizens of experiences abroad that could be extremely interesting. That is something that could be challenged under the charter and that, in the end, could be unconstitutional.

I would like to say to the government that this is not the first time that their bills have ended up before the courts and have failed. That will be the case with the bill before us. The government should do its homework and try to introduce bills that adhere to our constitution and do not violate human rights. That would really be something.

• (2135)

[*English*]

Mr. Costas Menegakis (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my question for the member opposite is simple. Bill C-24 would actually allow for a lot of flexibility for people to be able to move around if they need to leave the country. They would need to have been in Canada for four of the last six years, in accordance with provisions in the bill. That would allow for up to two years for someone to be flexible and move around.

It is not the government that wants the intent to reside to be a key element in the bill; it is Canadians who are telling us to put it in there. Canadians have worked all of their lives, as have those who are naturalized and work hard here in Canada to contribute to our nation. We think that it is only reasonable to expect people who want to have the benefits of Canadian citizenship to have the intention to reside in this country.

That is what citizenship is. It is someone who wants to live in the country and be a part of Canadian society. They have the intent to live here and actually be present in this country. I do not understand why the member feels it is asking a little bit too much of people who aspire to get Canadian citizenship to abide by what Canadians themselves are doing by being citizens.

The member is a Canadian. Does she not feel that it is important for those people who have the same benefits and rights that she has in this country to live in this country or intend to live in this country before they get the privilege, not the right, of Canadian citizenship?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Marie-Claude Morin: Mr. Speaker, I totally disagree with my colleague. In fact, I was born in Canada. I am not an immigrant, however I know many immigrants and political refugees. There are a number of communities in my riding, and I do not see why we would deprive those people of some great school or work experiences by forcing them to remain in Canada if they become Canadian citizens. That makes absolutely no sense to me.

I do not see why that is so important. I do not understand that and I find it somewhat stupid.

[*English*]

Mr. John Rafferty (Thunder Bay—Rainy River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak to Bill C-24, particularly in light of the fact that later this week, on Friday, I will be at a citizenship ceremony in Thunder Bay. I try to get to as many as I can. I have not been to all of them, of course, but I will be there.

A citizenship ceremony is a wondrous thing. It is filled with people who have worked long and hard and who have spent a lot of time, and in many cases a lot of money, to get to where they are at that citizenship ceremony. One thing that really stands out above all at a citizenship ceremony, as I know my colleagues will agree, is that it is clear from looking at the faces of these new Canadians that Canadian citizenship is something of enormous value. For everyone who is becoming a new Canadian on Friday, with their families, friends, and relatives in attendance, Canadian citizenship is really something that is an apex for many people in their lives at this point.

Unfortunately, with Bill C-24 and with many other things the government does, we see an approach that plays politics with the issue. We have seen that a lot with the government. I would like to take my time today to speak about the good—because there is some good that I can certainly agree with—the bad, and in some cases, the ugly in the bill. I will try to use my time wisely.

First, as a little background, we were hoping that the minister would commit to working with the NDP to bring real improvements to our citizenship laws. Instead, he opted to go on with a bill that in many cases is likely to be unconstitutional. Unfortunately, the Conservatives on the committee rejected every one of our proposed amendments to the bill, amendments that perhaps could have made it good and good, instead of good and bad.

Canadians expect us to collaborate in this place and come up with absolutely the best bills possible for the benefit of all Canadians. However, since the 2011 election we have not seen that. We have not seen the collaboration that Canadians expect in this place.

Now, here is a bill that will likely be passed. It is a majority government. The Conservatives were not willing to listen to any amendments. On top of everything else, they do not care if it is challenged in the courts. They just want to go right ahead and do it and let someone else worry about it. That is not what Canadians expect us to do in this place.

Let me speak about some of the provisions that I just cannot agree with and some that I can. Let me start with the ones that I cannot.

Bill C-24 gives the minister many new powers, including the authority to grant or revoke citizenship of dual citizens. It should not be the job of the minister of citizenship and immigration to make these kinds of judgments. Before it was done by Governor in Council, by cabinet. It was done by a larger group of people. At one time, up until now, a judge would be involved. The judge would have to make some details known and make a determination of some kind. However, this government has a very strong tendency to develop legislation that concentrates more powers into the hands of ministers.

Needless to say, we condemn this practice. We do not trust the Conservatives, and by giving a minister new powers, we open the door to arbitrary and politically motivated decisions. The very idea of giving the minister, by himself, the power to revoke citizenship raises serious concerns, and it is on this principle that we can talk about this issue.

Government Orders

• (2140)

Another problem with revoking the Canadian citizenship of dual citizens is that it would create two-tier citizenship, where some Canadians could have their citizenship revoked while others would be punished by the criminal justice system for the same offence.

Let me talk about how the minister, under the provisions of the bill, could revoke citizenship. If he or any staffer he authorizes is satisfied, on a balance of probabilities, that a person has obtained citizenship by fraud, until now such cases have all typically gone through the courts and cabinet, but that will not be the case anymore.

A person could be convicted under section 47 of the Criminal Code, and these are serious offences, such as treason, high treason, or spying, or of an offence outside Canada that if committed in Canada would constitute a terrorism offence, for example, as defined in that section, or sentenced to five years imprisonment.

We cannot rely on justice systems outside of this country. We have a justice system in Canada that we believe is fair, honest, and decent, but frankly, some countries in the world do not have the same kind of justice system we have. To base the revocation of citizenship on something that may have happened in another country, and I will go into more detail about that later, does not make any sense at all.

The minister would have the authority under the bill to grant citizenship. At present, and I think I mentioned this before, it rests with the Governor in Council, which is the cabinet. Bill C-24 would transfer this power directly to the minister. This measure was introduced by the minister as a means of improving services for applicants by simplifying and speeding up the process. Specifically, the measure raises concerns, because the minister has indicated that the list of persons to whom he would grant citizenship would not be disclosed. Once again, we see the government's lack of transparency, and that should raise red flags. It certainly does with us, and it certainly does with the third party, and it should with all Canadians.

Bill C-24 provides no real solution to reducing the growing backlog and citizenship application processing delays. There has been some money allotted in the last two budgets to help speed up the process, but the fact remains that there are 320,000 applications still waiting to be dealt with.

Let me go back very quickly to Friday when I will be at the citizenship ceremony. The people who are becoming new Canadians this Friday in Thunder Bay are very fortunate and very, very lucky, because 320,000 people are still waiting to have their applications dealt with.

I do not want to belabour this point, because some other speakers have talked about it, but it is about the declaration of the intent to reside. The bill would introduce a requirement that if granted citizenship, a person would intend to continue to reside in Canada. I do not know what the government would do if a person became a Canadian citizen and then received a job overseas and was gone for two years working in another country and was not actually resident here in Canada. It is not addressed in the bill, and it is going to be a problem.

The bill would prohibit the granting of citizenship to persons who have been charged outside of Canada with an offence that if committed in Canada would constitute an indictable offence. Again, we would have the minister, who would be the sole arbiter now, if the bill were passed, of who could stay in Canada and who could not stay in Canada, which would depend partly on the justice systems of other countries. In other words, a person convicted of practising homosexuality in another country, and we know that there are many countries where this is illegal, would be prohibited from becoming a citizen of Canada. That just does not make any sense.

• (2145)

I see I have three minutes left, so I will try to be very quick here. There are some provisions we can support.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): The member has about 10 seconds left, if he would like to wrap up.

Mr. John Rafferty: Mr. Speaker, perhaps I will forgo some of the things we do like. I know I have a question or two from the other side. I would just ask the other side if someone is going to stand and explain to us how it is that his or her government feels that it is acceptable to bypass judicial due process in revoking citizenship. I would like someone to explain that to me.

Mr. David Christopherson: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. If you seek it, I believe you would find unanimous consent to allow the member to continue and conclude all of that important speech.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): Order, please. Does the hon. member have unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): There does appear to be unanimous consent but not for the position the member is putting forward.

This is not a point of order. If the hon. member is making a legitimate point of order, it will be heard.

I appreciate that it is getting well into the evening, but at this point we will have questions and comments. The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Costas Menegakis (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his speech and congratulate him in advance for attending the citizenship ceremony in his riding this Friday. It is an emotional time for a lot of people, and it is certainly rewarding for us to see the bestowing of citizenship on new Canadians. I wish him the very best of luck with that experience on Friday.

Unfortunately, the member's speech was fraught with a lot of inaccuracies, one of which was the fact that the minister will be the ultimate decision-maker. If the member has a good read of the bill, he will see that there is provision in the bill for an appeal to the Federal Court. Of course, the Federal Court is not controlled, managed, or influenced by the minister.

Government Orders

My question for the member opposite, who I happen to have a lot of respect for, is simply this. He mentioned the possibility of someone convicted of an act of homosexuality in another country being able to lose their citizenship in Canada. Does he not realize that the bill speaks to an equivalent crime, something that would be a crime in Canada as well, before he or she would lose his or her citizenship? The example he stated is absolutely false and would not happen.

● (2150)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): Order, please. Before I go back to the member for Thunder Bay—Rainy River, I would like to remind all hon. members in this place that the Chair gives the members signals when their time needs to be wrapped up and would appreciate the co-operation of all hon. members, even at this late hour.

The hon. member for Thunder Bay—Rainy River.

Mr. John Rafferty: Mr. Speaker, I must apologize for wanting to take a little more time, but there is a lot to say about this bill.

The preface to the member's question was interesting. He is a member I have a lot of respect for. We work together and have had a number of chats. Why would the Conservatives introduce a bill that they know would be challenged? There is a provision to go to the appeal court and so forth. Why even introduce a bill that they know would be challenged in court? One of the things I mentioned is that there is a real possibility that this would be found unconstitutional and would go to higher courts to be appealed. It just does not make any sense.

I used that example in the question my friend had. However, there are situations in other countries where something could be considered aggravated assault but really was not. Perhaps that person was living in a country where he had to defend himself. There are so many instances, it just does not make any sense.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, earlier today in debates we heard the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration say that he did not understand why members of the opposition parties were not prepared to accept the advice of the Department of Justice lawyers and were instead relying on advice from numerous jurists as well as the Canadian Bar Association.

The difficulty I have, as a former practising lawyer and a member of the Canadian Bar Association, is that I have not seen the advice from the Department of Justice. I do not know that the advice from the Department of Justice has not included that which any lawyer, I believe, familiar with the charter, would raise as a concern. The bill violates the Constitution and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Does the member for Thunder Bay—Rainy River think we can press the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and the Minister of Justice to have presented to this chamber the so-called advice from the Department of Justice?

Over and over, these bills passed by the Conservative majority are being defeated in the Supreme Court of Canada. I want to know what the advice is from the Department of Justice.

Mr. John Rafferty: Mr. Speaker, not being transparent in the bill, as with just about every other bill the Conservative government puts forward, is a hallmark, a trademark, of the current government. Even

in the situation where the minister grants automatic citizenship, he does not have to provide a list. He does not have to name who these people are. He does not have to provide that kind of information.

There were 29 individuals who spoke on Bill C-24 in committee, and the vast majority, to varying degrees, were opposed to the bill. It has all kinds of problems.

● (2155)

Mr. David Christopherson (Hamilton Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to join in the debate. I will say a couple of things at the outset.

First, with regard to the question that was just asked, that point is worth underscoring. Traditionally, laws are passed here in good faith. There is a requirement to check to make sure that they are constitutional. If advice is given that they are constitutional, then they proceed. In the rarest of cases, there are occasions when a law is challenged in the courts, all the way to the Supreme Court. It would be big news if the Supreme Court ruled against a piece of government legislation not only because it was a big deal but mostly because it happened rarely.

Now we seem to have a system where the government really does not care about the appropriateness of a bill. I believe this is true. It does not care about whether it is building the right kind of legal infrastructure that a modern democracy like Canada should have. It does its polling, focus groups, decides what the hot button issues are, and how it can turn those into some policies that it can make into laws. If it happens to be unconstitutional, so what, and besides, it will go to the Supreme Court and it will fix it, for anybody in the cabinet who has that kind of a conscientious moment.

An hon. member: They are smoking something over here.

Mr. David Christopherson: I thought I had the floor, Mr. Speaker, but it seems that maybe somebody else actually has the floor over here, or at least they should heckle louder so I can hear them.

Hon. Peter Van Loan: Nobody heckles louder than you.

Mr. David Christopherson: That's true, Mr. Speaker. The government House leader just responded to me and said, "Nobody heckles louder than you", and he is right. I give him that. It is the first time I have agreed with the government House leader in I cannot remember how many months. However, that is not the point.

The point is that the government sends these things to the Supreme Court. In this case, it is also hoping that it will take longer than the next election cycle so that it does not become a nuisance during any kind of election campaign. What is really interesting and is the great big question here is how the government believes that it can be consistent when it recognizes that the Supreme Court has the right to pass judgment on these laws and yet when it does, oftentimes what we hear from the government and other right wingers is, "We have an activist court again. There are the courts going beyond their mandate, there they are making laws rather than interpreting them."

Government Orders

We mostly hear that in the U.S., but we hear an echo of it here in the chamber when it suits the government's purposes. It needs to be said that this is another case. There are serious issues, politics aside. I am not a lawyer, but those who are and who have a reputation that they care about when they speak publicly are saying that this has some real constitutional questions. I am underscoring from the get-go that is not unusual with the current government. It really does not care about that part of the process at all. In fact, we know how it feels about any entity that presumes to have more power than it does, or more authority. Look at what happened to the chief justice of the Supreme Court recently because the Prime Minister got into a bit of a snit over a recent decision by the Supreme Court.

For the rest of us in Canada, all we can say is thank God the court is there and thank God that so far it still is the body that Canadians have come to rely on to be their absolute final line of defence in terms of defending their rights in this country. However, make no mistake, if it had the opportunity in any way to change that and bring the Supreme Court under its thumb, where it wants everybody and everything else in Canada to be, it would do it in a blink.

I do not know how much it has been talked about, but the fact that this is retroactive is always worrisome. Also, that is a rarity. It is certainly not the regular course of events where legislation is made retroactive, and yet this one is.

● (2200)

The question mark at least has to be raised, what cases have the Conservatives got in mind that are not currently out there, where individuals may not even know they have a problem, but there is trouble coming. We do not know, and what is more worrisome is that some of the new powers the minister has, he or she does not have to divulge to the public. It is not necessary put in as secrets with CSIS, but the Conservatives certainly are not going out of their way in any way, shape, or form to publicize, be transparent about, and account for the power they are giving themselves.

This is all so very troublesome. Having been around here enough, when we start seeing retroactive, people who thought their legal matters were over and done with should be paying a little extra attention. The feds could be coming when individuals thought they were already through whatever system they were involved in.

I have to say that I am rather shocked, and we say this about every wrong thing the government does, but I really am shocked that there is not a greater outrage. I have heard colleagues talk about how much they enjoy speaking at the citizenship ceremonies, and I do too. They are one of the best events that we could attend, because at that very moment, happening right in front of us, ordinary people of the planet suddenly, in a blink, become Canadian citizens. Anybody who has ever attended knows the magical moment when these individuals go from being non-Canadian to Canadian.

I am sure I am not the only one who says, during all those speeches when we are given a chance to say how proud we are of our new citizens, “welcome to the family of Canadians”. They are in, they have made it, they are Canadians, and unless they have fraudulently made their way there, and there are processes and procedures as there should be to go after people who fraudulently make themselves Canadian citizens, it is fair game.

When we start going beyond that, we say to people, “You are a Canadian, mostly. You have this big bag of rights over here and the charter, but one minor little technicality, a little catch in terms of your citizenship versus my citizenship, and that is, yours can be taken away.”

This is Canada. The rest of that story does not matter. If they have done something absolutely horrible to humanity, we have laws to deal with that just the same as if it were one of us who were born here. That is the whole idea of citizenship: we are equal. We do not stand before a judge and say, “Madam Justice, I have to admit to being a dual citizen, so you have to bring out the other book of rules for Canadians, because I am not in that first tier of Canadians. I am in the second tier, the one where you can take away my citizenship”.

This is so wrong. It is so un-Canadian, and I have not even gotten to all the stuff about what the minister can and cannot do without having to be transparent. I have touched on it, but it is, I cannot think of a better word, ugly. It is ugly in terms of what it does.

I agree with my colleague, there is so much to be said about this, but of course, we will respect the rules. However, I have to say this is wrong. In my opinion it is un-Canadian. That is not what it means to be a Canadian citizen with a string attached, where we can pull the string back whenever we want if we do not like an individual's actions.

No, that is not right. We stand before the court and before our justice system as equals where nothing is supposed to taint the decision, nothing.

● (2205)

Yet in this case, we would have a law where people can be punished by having their citizenship taken away, but it could not be done to someone who was born here. It is wrong, it is un-Canadian, and we can only hope that, since the government will pass this, our precious Supreme Court of Canada does step in and deem that this is outside the Constitution and that this would not become the law, but if it does we will get a new government—

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

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his excellent speech, which was passionate as usual. This time, he spoke about Canadian citizenship, a subject that all of us are even more passionate about. He clearly explained how the system would create two classes of citizens that do not have equal standing. I do not think that I have to ask him a question that deals specifically with that issue because he already talked a lot about it.

Government Orders

My question deals with the false measures that the government put in this bill to deal with the wait times that have been getting longer and longer over the past decade. It now takes 31 months for an application to be processed. The government says that it wants to address the wait times, but those wait times have more than doubled since this government came to power.

Does my colleague think that it is important to worry about wait times, given how important Canadian citizenship is to all residents here in Canada? Why do we need to continue to reduce wait times, rather than continue to extend them, as this government is doing?

[English]

Mr. David Christopherson: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague who, of course, is the youngest person ever elected to this place, an historic figure, very cool.

When I listened to the question, I immediately started to think about a detailed answer, but it struck me that back in the bad old days of the Mike Harris government in Ontario, the education minister was actually recorded saying that the government was looking to create a crisis in the education system so it could fix it. Create a crisis that does not exist, tell everybody, “Look at this mess, it is falling apart”, much like the length of time they are talking about, saying “Oh look how awful this is, and we are going to solve it. We will step in.”

Then the solutions they provided were much worse than the circumstance and even worse than the crisis they had generated. However, that is how they did it. They created a crisis and told everybody, “See, it is not working. We have to fix it.” They call the horrible thing they do “the fix”. That is an easy storyline to follow and it is very difficult to counter that, to get people to focus long enough to understand that they have artificially created this problem and it gives them the opportunity to say, “Here is the solution”, which of course is something they could not have done if they did not have the crisis in front of them.

It is not surprising that a number of the front-line cabinet ministers are from the Mike Harris government. It is not surprising that the former chief of staff to the Prime Minister used to be the chief of staff to Mike Harris.

Mr. Costas Menegakis (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I too listened to that passionate speech from the member opposite, and I was quite surprised at a couple of his comments, particularly that it seems to be a continuation of the NDP attack on this bill to keep saying “two tiers of citizenship”, as if there are two tiers of citizenship somewhere inherent in this bill. What the member is referring to is those people who are dual nationals and have a benefit of being a citizen of another country as well, and that Canadians who do not have the dual nationality do not have those benefits.

However, I want to bring something to the member's attention. I am going to point him to the oath that people take when they come here from another country and they lawfully go through the process and finally get to the citizenship ceremony, and then here is what they say, “I swear (*or* affirm) that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second, Queen of Canada, Her Heirs and Successors, and that I will faithfully observe the laws of Canada and fulfill my duties as a Canadian citizen.”

Does the member not think that if individuals perpetrate an act of terror or treason against Canadians and Canada that it is in direct violation of the oath that they took when they came to this country and said, “I want to choose Canada as my country; I am making this oath but I am going to be unfaithful and untruthful because after I make this oath I am going to perpetrate treason and I am going to do terror against my country, Canada”, those people should lose their Canadian citizenship? That—

• (2210)

The Speaker: I will have to stop the member there. There are only about 25 or 30 seconds for the member for Hamilton Centre to respond.

Mr. David Christopherson: Mr. Speaker, you know what a challenge that is in that short period of time, so between us we will do our best, and you will win.

I want to respond by taking on the member directly and saying that it is two-tiered citizenship. That is what my whole speech was about. When we have those ceremonies, we welcome people to the family and tell them that they are Canadian. Now, if they violate any law, like anybody else they will be held to account, and if the crimes are serious enough, they are probably going to do some time. That is the same for everybody.

However, one thing that does not happen to a Canadian citizen who is born here is that their citizenship is threatened. This takes that principle and shreds it. That is wrong. It is not Canadian. It is not the way we do things. It needs to be changed back.

[Translation]

Mr. Jonathan Tremblay (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thought there was a law that said that the hon. member for Hamilton Centre always has to speak last. With all the energy he has, there is a different atmosphere in the House after he speaks. I would like to recognize the excellent work that he does and the excellent speech that he gave just before me.

Today, I am rising to speak to Bill C-24, which was introduced at first reading on February 6. According to the minister, this bill is very important, but it was all but forgotten after February 27. The media spoke about it a little bit, but it was not debated again until May 29. The government did not put this bill back on the House's agenda for many months.

It is also important to note that the committee began studying this bill before the end of second reading. This is a 50-page citizenship reform bill that has been needed for nearly 30 years. It was touted and heralded and did not even go through normal House procedures. We debated it for one hour and then it was shelved. Then, all of a sudden, we were forced to study it in committee before second reading had even finished.

Government Orders

This approach will have a negative impact on experts and people in general. It will prevent them from having an opportunity to study the bill, testify before the committee and contribute to the study of this bill. Many people have talked to me about this in my riding. They wanted to know how they could contribute to the study of Bill C-24 with their analysis and their expertise. Unfortunately, we have had to tell them that it is already too late. The usual procedures went out the window. Experts and individuals were not able to contribute because the government rushed the committee's work and because we were not allowed to have a normal debate in the House.

The NDP wanted to call more witnesses but our requests were denied. The NDP put forward a number of amendments in committee. The Conservative committee members rejected our amendments. Then debate resumed in the House. A week later, it was report stage. The Conservatives rushed the committee's clause-by-clause study. Because a reasonable study was not done, we have before us today a poorly written, botched bill.

The NDP wanted to remove several clauses or at least study them in depth. Many experts and individuals are concerned about these clauses. The government rejected all of the amendments proposed by the experts who appeared and by the opposition.

One of the problematic measures is that Bill C-24 places a lot of power in the minister's hands. This is an unfortunate trend we have seen across many different bills. One of these powers is the power to grant citizenship to dual nationals or revoke it from them.

The government has a marked tendency to create laws that concentrate power in ministers' hands, which is something the NDP does not support. We cannot and will not trust it, and by giving a minister new powers, we are exposing ourselves to the possibility that the minister could make arbitrary, politically motivated decisions. It will be sad if that is how things turn out. That is what is happening in other countries, and it is bad for democracy. I truly hope it will not come to that.

The very idea of giving the minister the power to revoke citizenship raises serious questions. Canadian law already includes mechanisms to punish people who commit illegal acts, so why would the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration need to make that type of decision? The minister could revoke citizenship when he, or one of his authorized employees "is satisfied on a balance of probabilities" that the person has fraudulently obtained citizenship.

Until now, these issues were generally sent before the courts and cabinet. This element poses serious problems in that the minister would have the power to revoke citizenship based on suspicion, without an independent court ruling on whether or not the accusations are true.

• (2215)

In the United States, the government may file a civil suit to revoke an individual's citizenship if it was obtained illegally, if the individual concealed information that was relevant to eligibility for citizenship or if the individual made false statements. In that situation, the individual in question has the legal right to refer the matter to the courts. Every ruling can be appealed, and the individual is guaranteed due process. However, here the government wants the minister to have the right to veto.

The minister could revoke the citizenship of someone who was convicted under section 47 of the Criminal Code and sentenced to imprisonment for life for treason, high treason or espionage; or someone who was convicted of a terrorism offence as defined in section 2 of the Criminal Code—or an offence outside Canada that, if committed in Canada, would constitute a terrorism offence as defined in that section—and sentenced to at least five years of imprisonment.

The problem is that this measure makes absolutely no distinction between a terrorism conviction handed down in a democratic country with a credible and reliable justice system and a conviction in an undemocratic regime where the justice system could very well be corrupt or beholden to political interests. This revocation process can be used without the Federal Court ever seeing the file. In addition, the measure is retroactive.

What is more, candidates between the ages of 14 and 64, instead of 18 and 54, will now have to pass the test that determines their knowledge of French or English. A 14-year-old child belongs with his parents. Denying him citizenship on the grounds that he still has not mastered either official language is questionable. In this case, family reunification is paramount and that child is young enough that he has enough time ahead of him to learn one language or even both. Again, a 14-year-old child belongs with his parents.

Last but not least, this bill could be subject to constitutional challenges. The use of revocation of citizenship as a legal consequence for dual citizens could, in some circumstances, be inconsistent with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Revoking the citizenship of those found guilty of treason and terrorism by a Canadian or foreign court could be perceived as a punitive measure imposed in addition to other criminal sentences.

Among other problems, treating people with dual citizenship differently by exposing them to the possible loss of their citizenship creates a double standard and raises major constitutional questions, particularly under section 15 of the charter. This section states that everyone has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

Section 11 of the charter could also be invoked in cases of revocation of citizenship, when the legislation is not about revocation for fraud, but rather imposes a punishment after the fact. If the revocation is perceived by the courts as an additional punishment for crimes, then it is even more likely that the accused will point to the key elements of section 11, including the presumption of innocence and the right to be heard by an independent and impartial tribunal, which are fundamental rights in our country.

Increasing the government's powers to revoke citizenship causes not only moral problems, but also constitutional problems, which might occur because of this bill.

Government Orders

The government is doing away with the process of passing a bill in the House at first reading, at second reading, in committee and at third reading.

• (2220)

Then it moves a time allocation motion to limit our debate in the House. That shows utter contempt for our parliamentary institutions. We have a duty to make excellent laws for our constituents, and I think this Conservative government should keep that in mind.

[*English*]

Mr. Costas Menegakis (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the member's speech and I hoped I would hear something new, but it was once again a regurgitated, repetitive speech highlighting the very same things we heard many times from NDP members in the debate on this bill.

It is unfair when members of the NDP talk about the witnesses who appeared before committee. It is unfair when they suggest that their proposed amendments and we did listen. This is why it is unfair.

Prior to the bill even being studied at citizenship and immigration committee, prior to listening to a single witness, the hon. member for Pierrefonds—Dollard, the NDP critic for citizenship and immigration, stood in the House and put forward a motion that the bill not be heard a second time. That was even before we heard from any of the witnesses, who today those members have been highlighting as experts. The Canadian Bar Association, which the NDP considers independent, former directors of the bar association and individual lawyers who are members of the bar association do not, in our opinion, constitute an independent view of the bill.

Amendments were proposed but they did not make sense. One amendment that did not make sense was the requirement for a 15 to 17 year old, after having spent four of the last six years in the country, to speak an elementary level of one of Canada's two official languages, English or French. Would the member not agree that this is an obvious ask of Canadians, that people learn one of the two official languages?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jonathan Tremblay: Mr. Speaker, we would not separate a 14-year-old kid from his parents. That is basic. That is our position and I do not understand why that would not be the position of the Canadian government.

Unfortunately, this evening no Conservative members are rising to speak and answer questions. I have heard some twisted analyses in questions to us. It would be good to hear a Conservative speak to this Conservative bill so that we could ask questions and get some answers.

I think that Canadians across the country are watching us and would like some answers to their questions. As the official opposition, we are doing our job and would like some answers to our questions and an opportunity to contribute to this parliamentary system.

• (2225)

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to pick up on my colleague's answer. I was

astounded to hear our Conservative colleague say that he was tired of hearing NDP members repeat the same things in this debate, when we hear nothing from them.

They are silent on their own bill. This evening they have missed 18 chances to speak. They decided to extend our sitting hours until midnight. We are happy to work and debate. That is no problem. However, they are not showing up to do their job.

I would like to know what my NDP colleague thinks about that.

Mr. Jonathan Tremblay: Mr. Speaker, that is what is difficult about all this. It takes two to tango. It is a partnership. Therefore, in order for the system to work, people have to engage in debate, ask questions and so forth. We currently have a stakeholder who refuses to use our parliamentary system and our Canadian Parliament. Therefore, the system is already lopsided.

That is unfortunate because, in the end, Canadians lose out. We have less debate and fewer studies. At the national level, in the media, Canadians see less happening on Parliament Hill, in Ottawa, because the government currently does not want to be part of our system that helps make our country a better place by introducing bills that advance our communities. That is unfortunate. The Conservatives must stand up. If they do not, one of the partners—the government—is missing from the parliamentary system.

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to speak to Bill C-24. As the member for the beautiful city of Sherbrooke, it is truly an honour to speak to this bill. In fact, most of Sherbrooke's residents will be interested in this bill.

Sherbrooke is one of the most important immigration hubs in Quebec. Every year, we welcome hundreds of new immigrants. As an MP, I am proud to welcome them. They sometimes get a lot of help in my riding office, which is located at 100 rue Belvédère Sud in Sherbrooke.

I invite all Sherbrooke citizens, if they are interested or need help, to contact my office anytime during our office hours. One of the things we work on the most is helping new immigrants with the citizenship or permanent resident process.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Nancy and Martine, my two assistants who work hard on citizenship cases. They are often assisted by interns. Previously, we had Roxanne, Samuel, Christophe, Véronique and Joannie helping us out. At present, Aline is helping new immigrants with the citizenship process.

The reason I am thanking all these people is that citizenship issues are something my office deals with the most. One of the things I take the most pride in as the member for Sherbrooke is helping newcomers navigate a process that can be quite murky, very difficult, filled with roadblocks and quite time-consuming.

Government Orders

We all know processing times for citizenship applications have increased a great deal in the last few years. They have in fact more than doubled in the past decade and have now reached 31 months. Applications for permanent residence take even longer to process. This can be very stressful for newcomers. It can lead to very difficult situations, on a personal and professional level. Newcomers who have been waiting for months can start wondering if there is a problem with their file. They see no end in sight.

That is why I am delighted to speak to a bill that directly and fundamentally affects the citizenship process as a whole in Canada.

I would also like to acknowledge the work of the Service d'aide aux Néo-Canadiens, a well-known institution in Sherbrooke. It offers support to newcomers to the city. Mr. Marceau is the organization's president, and its director is Ms. Orellana, whom I know quite well. I would like to commend them on the help they give newcomers, who sometimes come here as refugees from countries fraught with economic and political difficulties. These people have a hard time learning the fundamentals that may seem obvious to long-standing Canadians. Africans sometimes arrive here in the middle of winter. Some of them have never known winter and are completely disoriented when they arrive in Sherbrooke. The Service d'aide aux Néo-Canadiens is a remarkable institution that helps newcomers every single day.

That brings me to the content of Bill C-24, which proposes substantial amendments to the Citizenship Act and others.

One of the things that stood out as I read the bill is the establishment of a two-tier citizenship system.

• (2230)

I see that the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration smiles when I talk about a two-tier system. He does not seem to believe me.

I think this bill creates an imbalance when it comes to citizenship, whether a person is born in Canada or in another country, or whether his citizenship was obtained later on by taking an oath before a judge, swearing allegiance to Canada and Queen. There is now an imbalance. Beforehand, all Canadian citizens were on the same level, whether they had obtained their citizenship at birth in Canada, or later on under different circumstances.

This bill affects, among others, people with dual citizenship who have been convicted of heinous crimes. I am not saying these crimes are not horrific. They are, and the individuals must be punished to the full extent of the law.

However, as a Canadian citizen holding only one citizenship, I will first face justice, and a judge or a jury will find me guilty or not guilty, based on the evidence adduced. I will then have to serve my sentence and I may end up spending the rest of my life in jail. That is the likely scenario for a person born in Canada.

A Canadian who obtained his citizenship later on in life and who holds dual citizenship will go through the same process and may end up being convicted by a judge. However, his sentence will be harsher than mine, because he may be stripped of his citizenship. I cannot be stripped of mine because I only have one. Under international treaties, I cannot be made a stateless citizen.

I thought this Canadian and I were equal, but he could be stripped of his Canadian citizenship, in addition to having to serve his prison sentence. This is like a double sentence, simply because he is not an ordinary Canadian citizen with only one citizenship. I am sure the hon. member will ask me a question on this issue.

I think Bill C-24 creates an imbalance in the existing system, and that is only one of the problems. That is also the main concern raised by the majority of those who spoke on this legislation.

If the bill is passed, revoking citizenship will be done more secretly and more easily than before, because we are giving this power to the minister or his agent. While it is possible to appeal such decisions, this is a fundamental change in revoking citizenship, sometimes for nebulous reasons. There is also the provision on the intent to reside in Canada, which gives the minister or his agent more power to judge the case of a particular individual who could be stripped of his citizenship, or who could be denied Canadian citizenship.

• (2235)

A number of concerns have been raised. In my opinion, as in many experts' opinion, the bill may be challenged in court. For the umpteenth time, the government will see one of its legislative measures being challenged in court, which is becoming almost a tradition with Conservative bills. The Conservatives do not seem to follow the usual process of asking the Justice minister to ascertain whether a bill is constitutional.

[English]

Mr. Costas Menegakis (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the member's speech and, of course, I take exception, because here, once again, another NDP member stands to give us a speech very similar to the previous one we heard, speaking about the issue of dual citizenship. The difference in the example he gave about himself personally being born in Canada and having only a Canadian citizenship and the person with dual citizenship is that the person with the dual citizenship, as the member ought to know, also has dual benefits in that other country. However, that person would not have acquired Canadian citizenship had he or she not stood and sworn or affirmed that he or she would faithfully observe the laws of Canada.

I submit to the hon. member that if people perform an act of treason or terror against a country, they are not fulfilling that very pledge that they made on the day they made the commitment to become a Canadian citizen. It is their responsibility to abide by that commitment that they made.

The member spoke about wait times to obtain Canadian citizenship being upwards of 30 or 31 months. I do not disagree with him on that.

The bill, however, would provide for the process to go from a three-step process to a one-step process, which would give more decision-making authority to senior officials who are familiar with files to process citizenship and would reduce that backlog from 30-31 months to under a year.

Would the member agree that this would benefit him and his constituents?

Government Orders

[*Translation*]

M. Pierre-Luc Dusseault: Mr. Speaker, with regard to my colleague's second question, I will believe it when I see it.

How long have the Conservatives been in government? Waiting times have been increasing ever since. Even before my election to Parliament, the Conservatives were promising to shorten waiting times. What happened instead, however, is that waiting times have just kept increasing.

The parliamentary secretary would have me believe that these superficial changes could, within a few weeks of a few months, bring waiting times down from 31 to 12 months. I will believe it when I see it, but I will give him the benefit of the doubt. I hope that it does work out, for the sake of everyone who is hoping for shorter processing times. The current 31-month waiting times are unacceptable and need to be cut down as much as possible.

Going back now to the first issue that my colleague raised regarding the oath of citizenship, I would like to ask him a question. He mentioned that people who come to Canada take the oath of citizenship, but someone who was born in Canada and got a French citizenship, for example, would have dual citizenship without having taken the Canadian oath, having been born here.

All that to say, this bill has a number of flaws. I hope that my colleague will address them later.

• (2240)

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé (Saint-Lambert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my colleague on his speech.

Clearly, everything points to the fact that this bill creates a two-tiered citizenship system. It introduces a kind of double punishment that allows the government to revoke the citizenship of individuals who have already been punished by the criminal justice system. Those individuals will be punished twice.

Can my colleague comment on that?

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question.

Yes, under this system, dual nationals will be punished twice as much as those who hold only Canadian citizenship. They will be stripped of something they had, and that is a double punishment. It does create a two-tiered system.

I will go back to a point I made earlier. I hope that we will get an answer from the Conservatives and that they will stand up to speak.

If I were a dual national, that would not necessarily mean that I was, for example, a Moroccan citizen who came to Canada and got Canadian citizenship. It could be the opposite. I could be a Canadian citizen who obtained citizenship elsewhere. That would make me a dual national. I would be subject to the rules for dual nationals even though, at birth, I was just a Canadian citizen.

I hope we get an answer. Many questions about this bill remain unanswered, and I hope that the Conservatives will use the speaking time they have tonight to respond to these concerns and reassure Canadians citizens and the people of Sherbrooke who are watching us and asking themselves the same questions. I hope that the

Conservatives can provide some reassurance in the next few minutes when they have a chance to speak.

Mr. Marc-André Morin (Laurentides—Labelle, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House this evening.

So far, I have found that all of this has been too complicated. Citizenship is a universal human value. It is a right in all civilized countries. Citizenship is a fundamental human right. We often send our troops to defend that right, to protect a country's citizens and their citizenship, as in Ukraine, for example. Some Ukrainians are going to find themselves with Russian passports without having asked for them.

Citizenship is part of our identity. Citizens of every country, wherever they may be in the world, know that they have a country they can depend on to help them and support them in difficult times. They know that that is an inalienable right.

There are a few exceptions. Some countries have unfair systems. For example, there are people who have been living in Switzerland for five generations who have not been able to obtain their citizenship. A public referendum is required to obtain Swiss citizenship. That is completely unfair.

The Poles have known the greatest suffering that can be inflicted on a people. They have been passed from hand to hand many times since the Middle Ages and have spent time as part of East Prussia, Russia and Ukraine. The borders were extremely fluid, which caused major problems for the Polish people.

There is the case of the Ukrainians, who lived under the rule of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Some of them came to Canada with Austro-Hungarian passports and were interned in camps during the Second World War because they were citizens of an enemy power. However, that enemy power no longer even existed because the empire had been dissolved. Canada was unable to sign a peace treaty with that country. These people, who were law-abiding citizens, were interned and forced to work under terrible conditions.

There is also the case of the Kurds in Syria. For 30 years, the Syrian government has refused to issue them identity papers and give them passports and travel documents. These people do not exist.

Our citizenship should be much simpler than that. We should meet the conditions for becoming a citizen and commit to obeying the rules for a certain time for confirmation. If all goes well, then we become a citizen. This should be irrevocable. If we commit a crime, then we should face the same punishment as other Canadian citizens. I do not see why there would be two categories.

Where there are arbitrary decisions, there is always injustice. Crime has to be dealt with by the justice system and the courts. That is what we make laws for. If we decide to punish someone by revoking their citizenship, we are adding extra punishment. That is where we start to violate section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, by imposing the equivalent of extra punishment because we do not consider these people will already have been sentenced by the justice system.

• (2245)

On top of that, they have to go back to a country they once fled, usually for their own safety.

Government Orders

When we think of people convicted abroad for crimes punishable in Canada, that means we may be putting our trust in countries that are not governed by the rule of law. For example, in China, the Uyghur have been beaten, tortured and persecuted by the Chinese government for decades. They end up in prison for completely frivolous reasons. Many have criminal records. They might suffer as a result of such a measure. We must not create more victims. There are already too many in Canada, such as the Italian and Japanese citizens who suffered during World War II.

By making arbitrary decisions and creating a very complex maze, we are making things complicated for people for no good reason. Citizenship is not just a privilege that we give to someone. For example, a British lord who renounced his British citizenship and his Canadian citizenship can become a Canadian citizen again, even when he gets out of a U.S. prison. There are limits. We have to look at whether we are giving the same value to human life and the same rights to everyone, without making distinctions or creating categories.

As for the slow-moving immigration system—and all of my colleagues will likely agree with this—the majority of the work being done in my offices consists of dealing with endless immigration cases, which go on forever. I have seen only one satisfied person in three years. That was last month. He was able to bring his wife of eight years to Canada. He was happy that day because it was the culmination of eight years of working to bring his wife to Canada.

There are plenty of little traps and arbitrary things in this bill. There is a lot of information that is to be kept secret, but that kind of thing should be left to the KGB or its modern-day equivalent. We are not in that kind of country or, at least, we never used to be and we never want to be.

I hope that my colleagues opposite will think things through. It is a waste of time to pass a bill that will very likely be rejected by the Supreme Court. Winning a vote and then screaming like a band of Vikings bursting into a church in the Middle Ages does not lend legitimacy to the bill or the process. It takes frank and honest discussion to create a legitimate law that offers a solution to a problem. The government should not be trying to set traps.

There may be some good ideas in the bill, but the Conservatives usually find the wrong way to do the right thing.

● (2250)

There are still some flaws. For example, it is good that the government is taking action against the fraudsters who exploit immigrants and use extortion. There are some good measures, but we need to discuss all of the other points more seriously.

[*English*]

Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have been sitting here for a few hours today, and it is a pleasure to do that, of course. It is interesting that the member opposite said he wants to hear a frank and honest discussion when we have heard the same two talking points. I think the New Democrats have been handing the same sheet around all day over there because it has basically been the same discussion for the entire time. One is about wait times, and the

second about citizenship and whether Canadian citizenship is a right or privilege. I am a little disappointed in the NDP.

Typically we hear this moral equivalence thing that happens over there. Tonight, one of the NDP members was giving an indication that if someone is walking down the street and says, “Oh, oh, oh”, somehow the Canadian government is going to be able to revoke that person's citizenship. Another comment was made that people may find themselves in precarious situations and lose their citizenship. A third one was that people who commit crimes might lose their citizenship.

The New Democrats talked about doubly victimizing people, but I think we need to be clear on what we are talking about. It is not a problem of someone walking the streets who all of a sudden loses his or her citizenship. We are talking about specific acts of terrorism and treason. If I go to another country and get citizenship, I make a commitment and then decide that I do not want to follow the laws of that country, that I want to betray that country or carry out terrorist acts in that country, I would suggest that I probably do not have the right to citizenship.

My question for the member opposite is this. Is it too much for the NDP to ask that someone who has sworn the oath of citizenship refrains from acts of terrorism and treason in order to maintain Canadian citizenship?

● (2255)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marc-André Morin: Mr. Speaker, it is always the same thing with the Conservatives. They try to claim that we side with criminals, terrorists and pedophiles. If someone commits a crime, they should be punished. If that person has not yet been granted citizenship or just recently became a citizen, they could even risk losing their citizenship. That could make sense in some cases. What bothers me is the fact that the government is creating two classes of Canadian citizens and that some citizens would have more rights than others. I find that worrisome.

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé (Saint-Lambert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. The minister says that this bill is meant to reiterate the government's commitment to reduce backlogs and improve processing times while strengthening the integrity of Canadian citizenship. The examples my colleague gave and the ever-increasing backlogs and processing times prove the opposite. Could my colleague give us some examples he has seen in his riding that prove how wait times have had adverse and negative consequences on his constituents?

Mr. Marc-André Morin: Mr. Speaker, we see this every day in our constituency offices. Wait times are sometimes so bad that the health certificates sent in with applications expire. This delays the process by several months. No one wins at the end of the day.

I even saw one case in which a citizen was forced to return to his country. After being attacked by fanatical Islamic terrorists, receiving death threats and being attacked in his own home, he left his country and his business. He then tried to return to settle his affairs and recover some of his property. Because he was absent for a few months, he was forced to start the process over. The last I heard, he was still facing deportation.

Government Orders

[English]

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to stand up as the deputy critic for citizenship, immigration and multiculturalism on behalf of the official opposition to speak to Bill C-24, An Act to amend the Citizenship Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts.

I would like to start by making a few introductory comments and observations about citizenship.

There are a lot of things we debate in this House that we can have varied opinions on whether they are a matter of policy and philosophy, but there are certain issues that I think are foundational. They go to the very fabric of who we are as a country. Our democratic system and electoral system is one. We saw a vigorous debate over the Conservative government's attempt to change the rules about our democratic elections in this House, and how they were forced to back down when Canadians saw the Conservatives trying to use politics to bend the rules of the system to benefit themselves. I think we are seeing a bit of the same thing with citizenship.

Citizenship is something that invokes a feeling of pride in Canadians. There are a number of values that Canadians want to see surrounding the concept of citizenship. One of those concepts is equality. Fundamentally, I think Canadians believe in the equality of all Canadians. It is something that is a benefit of citizenship, and something that once one becomes a citizen, whether it is by being born here or naturalized here, a person aspires to and receives an equality that ought not be taken away from them.

People want to see integrity in our citizenship process. They want to see fairness. Canadians are known around the world, and in our self image, we quite rightfully like to think of ourselves as being a people who believe in the fundamental concepts of fairness and due process. It is something that attracts people to this country. When I think of why people immigrate to Canada, some of what they are attracted to are the concepts of democracy, equality, and fairness.

Canadians also want due process. Fundamentally, we believe in the rule of law. I hear the phrase "rule of law" tossed around and used in this place a lot. I am not sure that we have a lot of discussion about what that means. Rule of law means that decisions that affect people's rights are not taken precipitously or capriciously. Rather, they are done by independent people in accordance with rules that are independent, objective, and impartial. They do not want politics injected.

Another reason that a lot of people like to come to Canada is because a lot of states around the world are marked by corruption. If people want to get their utilities, water or lights, hooked up, they have to know someone or to pay money to a government official. That is the most egregious example of the mixing of politics with the rule of law. That leads to the separation of politics and the judicial/quasi-judicial process.

I have heard successive Conservative ministers of immigration rise in this House repeatedly and say that it is inappropriate for them to rule on or decide individual cases. They will not even talk about them in the House. They talk about having arm's-length, independent, professional civil servants make the rulings on individual cases

that deal with immigration or citizenship. The reason I bring this up is because I think this bill contains some things that are worthy of support, but it offends a fair number of the concepts I have just raised.

About eight months ago, I had a conversation with the member for Wellington—Halton Hills. He decried the use of what he called dog-whistle politics. Dog-whistle politics are where we raise a political issue to send a message to people that is not really what we are saying, but it is the message it conveys. I hope it is not the case, but I fear that this bill has underneath it some dog-whistle politics. Messages are being sent to the Canadian public that sow fear, division, and distrust.

When we start introducing concepts that introduce two-tier citizenship, and when we are being invited to judge who is a real citizen and who is not, who has bona fides and who does not, who can be a Canadian citizen forever and who can lose it, these are fundamental questions that involve the fabric of our country.

This bill does a lot of things, some of which I will speak positively about, and some that I think are problematic.

● (2300)

On February 6, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration tabled Bill C-24, which includes sweeping changes to Canada's citizenship laws. The minister stated that it represented the first comprehensive reforms to the Citizenship Act since 1977. He claimed that it "will protect the value of Canadian citizenship for those who have it while creating a faster and more efficient process for those applying to get it."

First, it is news to me that we have not had valuation of Canadian citizenship. People in my riding of Vancouver Kingsway do now value Canadian citizenship and always have. This is a solution in search of a problem. I have never heard a Canadian in our country who has said that they do not value Canadian citizenship.

In terms of a faster and more efficient process for applying to get it, with respect, I see very little if anything in Bill C-24 that would speed up the process of citizenship, which, by the way, has been a problem under the current government and the previous Liberal government as well. Wait lists in our country across the board in the immigration system are unacceptably long, and they are getting longer.

Bill C-24 would do a number of things. It would put more power in the hands of the minister, including the authority to grant or revoke citizenship. It would provide no real solution to reduce the growing backlog and the citizenship application processing delays.

It would eliminate the use of time spent in Canada as a non-permanent resident to count toward the residency requirements before one could apply for citizenship. It includes an "intent to reside" in Canada provision whereby an official in government could make a determination of people's intentions to reside in Canada and strip them of their citizenship if they believed that the intent was not there.

Government Orders

It would prohibit the granting of citizenship to persons who had been charged outside of Canada with an offence that, if committed in Canada, would constitute an indictable offence. In other words, we can strip Canadians of their citizenship if they commit an act abroad that is an indictable offence if they have dual citizenship.

It would increase residency requirements from three out of four years to four out of six years, and it would clarify the requirement of physical residence in Canada prior to citizenship.

It includes stiffer penalties for fraud.

It would extend citizenship to lost Canadians.

It would expedite citizenship for permanent residents serving in the Canadian Forces.

It would also implement stricter rules for fraudulent immigration consultants.

It would require applicants aged 14 to 64 years old—previously 18 to 54 years old—to pass a test demonstrating an adequate knowledge of French or English.

Although it is not in Bill C-24 but concomitant with the bill, the Conservative government has tripled the application fees for citizenship.

Everyone agrees that Canadian citizenship is something of enormous value. I do not think anyone wants to see an approach that plays politics with this issue. It is something that we have seen all too frequently from the Conservative government.

With respect to the bill, it is high time that the issue of lost Canadians is addressed. This has been a very unfair situation that has gone on for far too long, and I am pleased to see it addressed in the bill.

However, other parts of the bill are, of course, increasingly and very seriously concerning. For example, the question of revoking citizenship in various scenarios has raised significant legal concerns. We are always concerned about and opposed to the concentration of more power in the hands of a minister of the crown, inherently a political figure.

We were hoping that the minister would commit to working with us to bring real improvements to our citizenship laws, but again, the government has opted to go with a bill that is, in many people's view, likely unconstitutional. The amendments that the official opposition brought to committee were, again, par for the course for the Conservative government, as every one of them was rejected out of hand.

Since March 2008, more than 25 major changes have been made to immigration methods, rules, legislation, and regulations by the government. More and more changes have been made since the Conservatives formed a majority government. These have included a moratorium on parental and grandparental sponsorships, reducing family reunification, punishing vulnerable refugees and increasing the number of temporary foreign workers to meet the requirements of the business sector in our country. However, the extensive changes to the Canadian immigration system have not made the system more effective or fair.

As an MP with a riding that is fundamentally made up of new Canadians, I say we should be making citizenship more valuable. We should be making it more streamlined and faster for those honest, hard-working people who seek it. The bill before us has been rightly described as a bill that makes citizenship harder to get and easier to lose.

People come to our country so they can get a passport, vote, and to participate fully in a democratic society. However, the bill would not do that. When we give the minister power to make decisions on a balance of probabilities that someone has obtained citizenship in a way that the minister does not like and we do not have a court process to check it, that is worrisome. It has no place in a country with the rule of law.

● (2305)

The Speaker: It being 11:10 p.m., pursuant to an order made earlier today, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the report stage of the bill now before the House.

The question is on Motion No. 1. A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 2 to 13. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Speaker: Pursuant to an order made earlier today, the division stands deferred until Tuesday, June 10, at the conclusion of the proceedings related to the business of supply. The recorded division will also apply to Motions Nos. 2 to 13.

* * *

● (2310)

CANADA-HONDURAS ECONOMIC GROWTH AND PROSPERITY ACT

The House resumed from June 5 consideration of the motion that Bill C-20, An Act to implement the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and the Republic of Honduras, the Agreement on Environmental Cooperation between Canada and the Republic of Honduras and the Agreement on Labour Cooperation between Canada and the Republic of Honduras, be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it would be a pleasure to speak to this subject, but given the horrific record of facts that I am about to share with the House, I cannot say that is the case.

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I have heard some members of the Conservative Party catcall across, asking why we do not like Hondurans. This has nothing with that. I would ask the government why it does not like democracy. Why does the government not like human rights? Why does the government not like freedom of the press? Why does the government not like keeping our society free of drugs?

Honduras is a country that had a military coup in 2009, when the military removed a democratically elected government at gunpoint and replaced it with a government that had no democratic mandate.

Honduras has widespread human rights abuses and massive corruption in both the government and the police. There is no functioning court system in Honduras. It is a narco-trafficking centre. It is considered by the U.S. State Department to be one of the most violent places on earth. It is the murder capital of the world. It is the most dangerous place on earth for journalists. Honduras has repressed the media to such an extent that PEN International has ranked it below Ukraine under Yanukovich and below Egypt today.

It is the cocaine trafficking centre of Central America, where the U.S. State Department estimates that 79% of all cocaine shipments emanating from South America land in Honduras.

It is one of the poorest nations in the western hemisphere. It has no strategic value for Canada, since the net total of all exports that Canada made to Honduras last year was \$38 million. It has extremely low environmental standards, if they exist at all. It has extremely low labour standards, in that some 40% of the population of Honduras make under the minimum wage of Honduras. It has serious mining issues.

It is very interesting that both the Conservatives and Liberals have joined together to support the bill at second reading. We heard witnesses at committee who buttressed everything I just said, and there was no contradiction by a single witness who came before committee. In other words, Honduras is one of the most repressive, undemocratic, corrupt, and dangerous places on earth, and the government wants to extend preferential trade relations to that government and the Liberals want to assist it.

I understand why the Conservatives would do that. I have a bit more difficulty, given the propaganda and rhetoric coming from them, why the Liberals would.

The hon. member for Scarborough—Guildwood has been championing a bill that is supposed to raise the standards of Canadian mining companies around the world. The Liberal Party is concerned about mining standards and it wants mining standards in third world and second world countries to be raised, including environmental standards, the rights of indigenous people, and corporate social responsibility standards, yet the Liberal Party supports a trade bill with Honduras, which probably has the most lax mining standards on the planet. I do not understand that.

I have heard the Liberals talk about human rights. They appear to be concerned about them. I will say it for the Canadian public and defend it to anybody who wants to look at the record and the facts: Honduras is one of the worst human rights violators on the planet.

I will go through the figures. Honduras is ranked 85th out of 167 on the Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index, and that is a

slide from 74th in 2008. Honduras is classified as a "hybrid regime" rather than as its previous designation as a "flawed democracy". It is getting worse. So much for rewarding a country for getting better.

The government has continued to negotiate with signing a trade agreement, giving preferential economic terms to a country that is actually sliding away from democracy.

Transparency International ranks Honduras as the most corrupt country in Central America, and it has the worst income inequality in the region. I have commented about the U.S. State Department estimating the cocaine shipments originating in South America and landing in Honduras, drugs moved from South America through countries like Honduras and other Central American states into Mexico, the United States, and Canada.

Independent observers have noted the increasing levels of violence as well as organized criminal gang activity associated with trade in illegal narcotics.

● (2315)

It is a country that is awash in drugs and drug money, which raises the question of why any Canadian government would want to liberalize investment rules to make the flow of capital easier between the two countries. In other words, we would have more drug money coming into Canada because of this trade deal with Honduras.

According to *The Economist*, "...the countries known as 'the northern triangle' of the Central American isthmus [that includes Honduras] form what is now the most violent region on earth." Let us stop for a moment and think about that. We have Syria. We have the Democratic Republic of Congo. We have Rwanda. We have Uganda. There are places on earth right now where the most horrific crimes against humanity are being committed, and Honduras is the most violent place on earth, and the Conservative government wants Canadians to extend preferential trade terms to that government.

In 2012 Honduras became the murder capital of the world, reaching a record high of 7,172 homicides, or 81 per 100,000 people. Since the 2009 *coup d'état*, violence and repression in the country have gone up and have reached an all-time high. To put that in context, Honduras has about one-fifth the population of Canada. That would be the equivalent of Canada experiencing 35,000 homicides. Can members imagine in this country if we had 35,000 homicides? That would be the equivalent per capita homicide rate in this country. That is the country the Conservatives want us to be trading more with.

In 2013, just last year, lest anyone think this is an old problem, there were on average 10 massacres per month. A massacre is defined as an instance where three or more people are murdered at one time. In the previous four years, fewer than 20% of all homicides in Honduras were even investigated, let alone prosecuted. We hear a lot of talk by the Conservatives about the rule of law. The rule of law means we have an independent police force and an independent judiciary. I have heard the Conservatives, for six years, talk about getting tough on crime, and they have signed a trade agreement with a country that does not even investigate murders. It is the most murderous country on earth. The police do not investigate and the judges do not even hear cases, and the Conservatives think we should be trading more with that country. Is that tough on crime? That is absurd.

I want to talk about journalists, because journalists in Canada should be writing about this. Freedom of the press and having an independent media is part of being a democracy. Today journalists in Honduras suffer threats, attacks, and killings. Six months ago, TV news anchor Anibal Barrow was abducted while driving in Honduras, and his dismembered remains were found weeks later. While several suspects have been charged with kidnapping, none have even been brought to trial.

Thirty-five journalists have been murdered in Honduras over the last five years. To put that in perspective, in per capita terms, that would be more than 150 journalists in Canada killed over the last five years. Can members imagine if in this country 150 journalists who were doing their jobs, holding the government to account, doing investigative work, covering politics, and covering the activities of the corporate sector were murdered, and we were finding their bodies in ditches? That is what is happening in Honduras.

This is not rhetoric. These are the facts in Honduras, backed up by every source there is. At committee we called witness after witness to testify to this, and there was not a single rebuttal. All we heard was silence, and the Conservatives and Liberals turn a blind eye to this.

Canadians want trade. We want to be trading with countries, but Canadians do not want us trading with butchering, murderous regimes. That is why Canadians would not accept a trade agreement with Yanukovich in Ukraine, but I noticed that the Liberal trade critic stood up and waxed eloquent in this House about how offended she was by the human rights situation in Ukraine and how we should stand up for human rights in Ukraine. That is the same Liberal trade critic who stood up and said that we should support a trade agreement with Honduras. I will say right now that Honduras has a far worse record on human rights than Ukraine did under Yanukovich. This is inexplicable.

In June 2013, 24 U.S. senators signed a letter expressing concern about the human rights situation in Honduras. Ninety-four members of Congress have called on the U.S. State Department to halt all military aid to Honduras in light of its violent repression of political activity. The Conservatives are signing a trade agreement with a country that has violent repression of political activity.

● (2320)

I could go on about the violence against indigenous people and the violence against the LGBTQ community, but instead I will read

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some of the quotes we heard at committee, which the Liberals and the Conservatives just want to pass over.

This is Ms. Karen Spring, from Honduras Solidarity Network. She said:

Since 2009, the violence in Honduras has increased pretty dramatically, and coupled with a high impunity rate, this has been very troubling for the human rights situation in the country. Very few crimes are investigated, and even fewer are brought before a judge. The Honduran Supreme Court has estimated that the impunity rate is at about 98%, but depending on who you ask, I've heard the impunity rate can be between 80% and up to 98%.

So, given the high impunity rate, it's really difficult for human rights concerns to be mediated, and there are really serious repercussions for human rights abuses related to Canadian investments in the region....

She goes on to talk about the communications director for the Federation of Agro-Industry Workers' Unions of Honduras:

[He is] a labour journalist who has a national radio program that's called *Trade Unionist on Air*, which he's had for 19 years, 5 days a week. He's recently been working on a union organizing drive and he makes frequent mention of a [local]... banana supplier.... Last June he started receiving death threats related to his work. Every time he went on the air and spoke about the...supplier he received death threats on his phone, and cars were circulating around his house and the radio station after his programs.

He has since gone into hiding, because his family was intimidated.

Ms. Spring went on to say that Hondurans have little faith in the institutions that are set up, that very few investigations are conducted, and that the fear people face is real. She also said:

...since 2009, 31 trade unionists have been murdered in Honduras and over 33 journalists as well.

This is what was said in committee about the 2013 elections, which the Conservative government said were fine:

The 2013 elections occurred in a really difficult human rights context, given the high impunity rate, given the high homicide rate. There was a report put out that looked at the political killings in Honduras a year and a half prior to the November 2013 elections, and it showed that there were 36 killings in total of candidates and pre-candidates who were set to participate in the November elections. There were 24 armed attacks against these candidates.

The list shows that the majority of these killings were against the political opposition party, the Libre party. This list was published by Rights Action, and...a lot of the cases were actually published by the International Federation of Human Rights [and internationally respected body]...worried about the targeted assassinations of the political opposition in the lead-up to the elections.

Last year, in the Honduran elections, 36 candidates were murdered in the 18 months prior to them. Does that sound like a democracy? Does that sound like a country Canadians would want their government extending preferential trade terms to?

We heard from PEN, the internationally respected independent organization for journalists. Here is what its representative said to the committee:

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Our report finds that journalists are targeted for their work, and that they are especially vulnerable members of the population... [F]reedom of expression in Honduras has suffered serious restrictions since the ouster of President Zelaya in June 2009. These past five years have seen a dramatic erosion in protections for expressive life in Honduras. Journalists are threatened, they're harassed, attacked, and murdered with near impunity, and sometimes in circumstances that strongly suggest the involvement of state agents.

I have heard from some of the people on the other side who would say that it is drug involvement. It is not. The evidence is that the state is involved in some of these killings.

The representative from PEN went on to say:

This has had a devastating impact on the general state of human rights and the rule of law in the country, since violence against journalists often silences coverage of topics such as corruption, organized crime, drug trafficking, and political reportage. Fearing for their personal safety, many journalists [in Honduras] either self-censor or flee the country altogether.

I have heard the Minister of Foreign Affairs in this House stand up on the international stage and rant and rave about the situation in Ukraine and how Canada and the Prime Minister stand up for human rights and democracy on the world stage. These things are a matter of principle, and they will take that position. It does not matter what the costs are. They turn around and sign a trade agreement with Honduras, which has just about the worst human rights record in the western hemisphere.

I hear laughing on the other side of the House. How do we square that? Canada either has a principled position on human rights and democracy or it does not. In the case of Honduras, it is a contradiction of massive proportions. It is hypocritical. It is opportunistic politics by the Liberals of the highest order.

● (2325)

We have an election coming up in Ontario. Premier Wynne is trying to tell New Democrats that she is progressive. If the people of Ontario knew that the Liberals in the House of Commons were supporting a trade deal with one of the most murderous, anti-democratic, human rights-violating jurisdictions on the planet, I wonder if they would still view them that way, because they are not progressive.

I will go back to what PEN said:

The taint of corruption and the culture of impunity have undermined trust among state agencies and public confidence in key institutions. Public distrust of the police is so great that only about 20% of crime is reported, and of that, less than 4% gets investigated.

I have heard Conservatives in the House talk about the lack of reporting of crime in this country. They say that crime is under-reported, and they say it is a problem in this country. Eighty per cent of the crime in Honduras is not even reported, because people cannot even trust police officers who come to their doors, because they may be on the payroll or they may be involved in the killing. What kind of culture is that?

Serious problems are evident throughout the criminal justice system. Police will say an investigation is under way when there is none. The office of the special prosecutor for human rights does not have the jurisdiction to try those responsible for the murders of journalists, and lacks resources to conduct even the most basic of investigations into human rights abuses....

She also said:

As our report sets out, only two convictions have been secured in the 38 journalist killings between 2003 and 2013—an impunity rate of 95%.

This is what PEN concluded:

To be clear: under international law, when the state is unable or unwilling to prosecute crimes, this is state complicity in human rights violations. Honduras is facing a serious human rights crisis. This is not just a matter of working with Honduras to move beyond a troubled past. Violence against journalists, complete collapse of expressive life, and impunity for violent crimes and human rights abuses remain the norm there.

Are these international journalists radicals that we should not pay attention to?

We heard from yet other witnesses:

Honduras is far worse than any of Canada's current trading partners in the region. To give you an idea of the situation in relation to others, in the global press freedom rankings of 191 countries...Canada ranked 29; Chile ranked 64; Peru ranked 89; and even Colombia, also plagued by narco-trafficking, ranked 112. Where did Honduras rank? They ranked 140, tied with Egypt, which has imprisoned two Canadian media workers in the past eight months. Since the coup in 2009, 32 journalists have been murdered in Honduras.

I want to talk a bit about mining because the Liberals have tried to convince Canadians that they are concerned about mining standards abroad. Here is the testimony we heard at committee that was not rebutted. After 2009, when the Zalaya government was trying to put a moratorium in place on new mining concessions and to bring in some mining laws, the new regime, which was installed at gunpoint by the military, got rid of that, and now it leaves the door open to open pit mining.

Water sources, except those that have been declared and registered, which are in a minority, are not protected. Mining is not prohibited in populated areas, meaning that forced expropriation and displacement of entire communities can continue to take place.

Community consultation is a theoretical right only, only after the exploration concession has been granted. Honduras has almost no environmental standards. It has almost no ability to police or regulate its mining.

I expect the member from Scarborough, who I mentioned before, to stand up in the House and say that he is opposed to this deal. If he really cares about mining standards, as he claims he does, then he will stand in the House and say, "I can't support this deal with Honduras", where we are going to see environmental degradation, violations of indigenous rights, pollution, and dangerous working conditions.

Trade deals are about extending preferential terms. The New Democrats believe that we should be extending preferential trade terms to democratic countries, modern democracies that respect human rights, environmental standards, and labour standards. We understand that many countries are not perfect, but we think Canadians want those countries to at least be on a positive trajectory in that regard.

Canadians want to see trade deals signed with countries of strategic value to our country. The testimony from economists before our committee said that Honduras has almost zero strategic importance to Canada. In fact, it already has virtually zero tariffs in Honduras, so it is going to make zero difference to the amount we export from Canada.

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I hope every member of the House who believes in democracy, human rights, and the rule of law stands with New Democrats and votes against this flawed deal. It is a poor piece of legislation.

• (2330)

Mr. Scott Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have some sincere questions to ask my hon. colleague.

He gave a good speech. It was well researched, but I have some concerns. The member first talked about trade deals with countries that are favourable to all the things that he attested we should be in favour of, such as human rights and so on and so forth.

I have been here 10 years, and I have yet to see them agree with any free trade deal agreement.

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault: Jordan.

Hon. Peter Van Loan: They supported Jordan after the fact. They voted against it first, and then they supported it.

Mr. Scott Simms: I am sorry; there was Jordan. The NDP members did not stand to vote for it. We are still not sure where they stand on that one.

Nevertheless, the nub of the issue is this: if they believe that Honduras is as bad as they claim it is—and I do not doubt it, because there are a lot of human rights violations taking place there, and I agree with the member in many respects—what exactly do we do to engage Honduras to improve the situation? Do we shut down dialogue completely?

I firmly believe that opening up trade relations has a benefit in many of these countries, a fundamental benefit that we should consider as compassionate people.

I ask the member, if there is absolutely no free trade deal agreement, where do we go from here to improve the situation in Honduras?

Mr. Don Davies: Mr. Speaker, I have great respect for the hon. member and I take his questions at face value.

The Liberal Party has its own contradictory past. I think Liberals campaigned against the free trade agreement in 1988. In 1993, they had a little red book that said they were going to renegotiate NAFTA. They never did that. That is par for the Liberal Party, which says one thing at election time and does another when it is elected. What is the Liberal Party's record on trade? I am not sure.

The hon. member is a little disingenuous. He knows for a fact that the New Democrats supported the trade deal with Jordan. Whether there was a standing vote or whether it was passed by division, the member, as a member of this House, knows it is irrelevant.

The question of who we should be engaging is a straw man argument. This Conservative argument—and I am surprised to hear a Liberal making it—is that if it is a really terrible country, we should engage with it. If that is the case, we should be signing a free trade agreement with Iran or North Korea. They have terrible human rights abuses. If engaging with those countries is the way to improve human rights, why not engage them? I do not hear anybody in those two parties suggesting that we sign a free trade agreement with those two countries.

It is because of this: when countries are so far outside of the international norm, when they are not conforming to even the basic standards of international behaviour, we should not be rewarding those countries.

When South Africa had apartheid, we did not sign a trade agreement with them to facilitate that regime. We brought in sanctions and boycotts. The government, and I will give it credit for it, has done that in Iran, when the country just refused to comply with basic norms of conduct.

I will just finish with this. This is what we heard in committee from a professor from York:

Trade and investment create economic benefits, but who ends up with those benefits? In Honduras the answer seems clear. It is now the country with the most unequal distribution of income in Latin America, and 43% of the labour force is working full time without receiving even the minimum wage. A study by the Centre for Economic and Policy Research in Washington found that in the two years after the 2009 coup, over 100% of all real income gains went to the wealthiest 10% of Hondurans...

I will stop by saying:

The de facto regime soon embarked on policies that included using the army and police in actions against citizens exercising their right to protest. Numerous suspensions of the right to assembly and protest were put in place, all of them out of compliance with the requirements of Honduran law and its constitution. Protestors were shot, beaten, and some died in open conflict with the military or police.

That is the country that—

• (2335)

The Speaker: The hon. member for British Columbia Southern Interior.

Mr. Alex Atamanenko (British Columbia Southern Interior, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his speech and his work on this file. It is certainly well researched, and he understands the issue very clearly.

The argument we hear from those who support this agreement is that we are a trading nation. We have been a trading nation and we have traded with all sorts of regimes in our history, including many repressive regimes, whether China or the former Soviet Union.

There is a distinction between trade and free trade. My colleague mentioned the idea of preferential treatment. In other words, if we sign a free trade agreement, it is preferential treatment to a country that we want to do business with as opposed to just trading.

Could the member expand a little on this point, because I think it is a bit lost on the other side?

Mr. Don Davies: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if it is lost on the other side or if it is just disingenuously portrayed by the other side, because it is quite obvious. Canada trades with all sorts of nations. We have goods coming to our country right now from China, Bangladesh, Vietnam, and Honduras. The only question about trade policy is whether we want to encourage economic relations with those countries. Trade policy is a tool that is used economically, but it is also a political tool.

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Again, if that is recognized in the House, the government has imposed trade sanctions on Iran. We are not facilitating trade with Iran; we are actually stopping trade relations with Iran.

I want to pick up the thread of my hon. colleague from the Liberal Party and quote Mr. Ricardo Grinspun, who is a York University professor from the Centre for Research on Latin American and Caribbean Studies. He said:

I have argued that the idea that the FTA will bring jobs and assure prosperity to Honduras is not a substantiated claim. Indeed, the idea that Canadians can help the most needy people in Honduras through this FTA is a public relations message, nothing more. Moreover, an FTA would provide international legitimacy to a political regime and economic model that is oligarchic, oppressive, and unjust. There are other more effective ways in which Canada could contribute to poverty alleviation, human security, and environmental sustainability in that part of the world, which we could discuss.

I go back to my hon. colleague's question. Those are the kinds of measures that we should be sending to Honduras. We should be saying to Honduras that we will work with it to improve its standards, if there is that willingness there in Honduras. However, surely we would require that country to demonstrate the commitment to international norms and standards first of at least a floor model before we start to extend benefits to it.

The government talks about the trade agreements it has signed. It has signed about six and it has all been with countries that are small or insignificant, such as Colombia, Peru, Honduras, Panama, Jordan, and the infamous Liechtenstein.

Whoever we choose to negotiate with and whoever we choose to extend preferential terms with, we on the New Democrat side believe it should mirror Canadian values. Canadian values mean we should be trading with countries that at least have a commitment to basic concepts like respecting people's right to assemble in the street, people's right to vote in elections, people's right to run in elections, having peaceful, democratic transition of power, having a functioning judicial system where crime is investigated, prosecuted and punished, where journalists can write with freedom of expression so the public can actually have a vibrant, democratic dialogue. These are basic norms.

It is surprising to me that in 2014, I have to stand in the House and defend those. I would have thought every member of the House would agree at once that these are basic concepts that Canadians demand should be in place before Canada decides to reward that place.

Again, the New Democratic Party will be the only party that will stand up for those principles, and I hope Canadians are watching.

• (2340)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé (Saint-Lambert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will try to be brief.

I want to thank my colleague for his very enlightening speech. I hope that the government got the message.

Free trade agreements play an important role in our economy, obviously. The fact remains, however, that we are dealing with a special situation here. Honduras is not a democratic country. What message would we be sending the world if we became its trading

partner? How could people struggling in a dictatorship ever trust us once they are aware of this free trade agreement?

[*English*]

Mr. Don Davies: Mr. Speaker, Canada's reputation on the world stage depends on our adherence to international norms and our consistency in respecting them. When we sign a trade agreement with a country that every country in the world knows is not conforming to those standards, as Honduras is not, it sends a mixed message and it causes other countries to have less confidence in Canada. It causes them to question what our foreign policy is.

If we are to stand on the world stage and talk about freedom, democracy, and human rights, then we have to walk the walk. We have to be consistent. The Conservatives and Liberals are not being consistent in this regard on this file, and they should be.

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the bill goes back, actually, not as a bill but, certainly, in terms of its negotiations to the time I was trade minister. That was quite some time ago. It has been a policy of this government to make the pursuit of jobs, economic growth, and long-term prosperity one of our significant priorities. In the case of an agreement like this, which has been on the books for some time, we are looking to implement it through this agreement. It is long overdue. That is one reason why we are seeking to have it passed. With that in mind, I move, pursuant to Standing Order 26, and seconded by the Chief Government Whip:

That the House continue to sit beyond the ordinary hour of daily adjournment for the purpose of considering Bill C-20.

The Speaker: Will all those members opposed to the motion please rise?

And fewer than 15 members having risen:

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Mr. Malcolm Allen (Welland, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to follow my colleague from Vancouver Kingsway, who quite passionately articulated why New Democrats believe this international trade bill is flawed.

One of the things I have said in the House many times before, going back to the last Parliament, is that we do not debate trade. That is not what the government puts in front of us. It brings forward implementation bills. It does not ask if we should have trade with a particular country, what it should look like, or whether we should talk about certain aspects of it. No. It just says, "We have a deal. Here it is. Take it. It will be good for Canadians and it will be good for Hondurans." However, everything my colleague talked about and all of the statistics he quoted said the opposite.

Honduras is a place where murder is rampant and journalists are disappearing and being killed on a scale that is unprecedented around the world, yet the government says, "We can trade a few more bushels of wheat or a few more tonnes of pork. That will be a good thing, and we won't have to worry so much about the other things in the bill. It will just be one of those things that annoy us".

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This is a government that used to say that human rights mattered. It was the Prime Minister who at one time did not want to engage with China because of the Chinese government's human rights record.

The largest market in the world was China. We all know that. It is a demographic, a pure number. When the Prime Minister first took power in 2006, he said, "We don't want to talk to the Chinese about trade because its human rights record is bad. We are simply not going to do that." He then makes a deal with Honduras.

There is a bit of a template here, and it is ironic to look at. There was Colombia, Panama, and now Honduras. It is ironic that the Liberals down at the far end actually supported all three deals. In fact, the member for Kings—Hants actually talked about being able to get President Uribe to make sure there is some sort of monitoring group so that trade unionists and journalists are not assassinated and murdered. That is when the Liberals bought in to the trade deal.

What happened with that panel? It is the same old same old. Trade unionists still get killed and murdered at a regular rate, journalists still get murdered at a regular rate, and the Conservatives say, "That is okay; they voted for it", and move forward. My colleague from Newfoundland, for whom I have great respect, said New Democrats have never voted for one before. Truth be told, we did. Of course, that happened to be the Jordan deal. It was a recorded division, so we stood and voted yes. As much as the other side says it was not a recorded division, it was the real thing. We actually stood and voted.

This idea that we cannot enter into a comprehensive trade deal that includes the rule of law and the protection of human rights is not true. In essence, it can be true and it can actually happen, but the government does not look at that. The House leader just stood and said this has been going on since he was a trade minister.

The problem is that the things that happened in Honduras when he was the trade minister have changed; they have gotten worse. Still the government is insisting on going down the road of firming up this trade agreement, passing it into law, and having a trade agreement with an authoritarian, oligarchic, elitist group of individuals who are not even a government.

• (2345)

What would the government say if 36 members of the House who were candidates in elections got assassinated? I do not think we would find ourselves in a particularly stable environment. This sort of sense that we have extended hours this morning being destabilizing is, quite frankly, not destabilizing at all. What is destabilizing is the mere fact that people die in Honduras on a regular basis and not of old age. They are murdered. There are horrendous numbers of multiple murders. Human rights and NGO groups around the world are saying it is clearly a massacre. It is not a question of someone breaking into a house and shooting mom, dad, and one child; these are targeted killings of journalists, labour leaders, and members of political parties who are running for government.

The Honduras government, with impunity, simply dismissed Supreme Court justices. I almost think some days the Conservatives would like to do the same with the Supreme Court justice down the street from us. However, they would not dare do that. That did not

stop Honduras from doing it. On a trumped-up charge, the government there just said it would remove them. As my colleague said earlier, when we are dealing with the fact that 85% to 90% of cases are never pursued, how does anyone trust the rule of law when no one will actually pursue a case? It is even worse for someone who actually wants to report a case and does not trust the authorities enough to actually make that report. Never mind the fact they do not believe it would get investigated; they think they may actually be the target, rather than the perpetrators of the crime that is being committed against them.

This is such a small trade piece as well. The reality is that if our government could open up provincial borders, it would actually get greater trade than it would with Honduras to a magnitude of probably a hundredfold. Of course, human rights would not be an issue in our country because there is rule of law here. There is not this need to constantly look at the abuses that are happening.

If only we had a trade deal that would lift all boats, that so-called rising tide that lifts all ships. Well, it did not lift the ship *Colombia*. It did not lift the ship *Panama*. The Panama agreement is with a regime the UN and NGOs agree more drug cartel money gets laundered through than practically anywhere else in the world, yet we signed a deal with that regime too.

Significant deals that they are, the problem with the government is it signs a deal with CETA, or did it? There is no implementation bill in front of us, so clearly it does not have a deal. If it had a deal, there would be an implementation bill here. What it has is a hope and a prayer. Therefore, what it does is go out and sign a deal with Honduras because it cannot get one anywhere else.

Ultimately, where are we heading with a trade regime that literally takes on trade agreements with human rights violators around the world? Is that what we say with the rule of law? One of the things we put in the agreements is the rule of law, so if our companies feel victimized in a place where they go to trade, they have an opportunity to access what they believe is the court system so they can actually get due process. Good luck in Honduras. I highly doubt any Canadian corporation that goes before its tribunal would get due process when its citizens cannot get due process.

Conservatives at one point in time used to really believe in human rights. They believed that perhaps what we ought to do is enact sanctions. My colleague talked about it earlier with Iran and North Korea. However, I would remind my friends on the other side it was a previous prime minister of their party, Brian Mulroney, who was the leader who enacted sanctions against South Africa and won. What we saw at that moment in time when the prime minister almost stood alone in the Commonwealth was he was able to have the civil society groups and trade union groups come together, marshal the forces, and help end apartheid in South Africa. Now Canada can trade with South Africa. Apartheid has ended.

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• (2350)

Many of us were watching on television screens around the world when Nelson Mandela was finally free. There was rejoicing in that country, and pride, even for New Democrats, thinking about the accomplishments of Brian Mulroney, albeit a Conservative prime minister. Even New Democrats would agree that it was a principled stand taken by the prime minister of this country that was just, was right, and for which he deserved the credit.

However, the current Prime Minister thinks it is okay to have trade deals with some of the most murderous regimes in the world, such as Colombia, Panama, and now Honduras, that those are just places to have trade deals with and that somehow it is okay. As long as we can get a couple of bucks out of the trade deal, we can ignore the other side. Maybe it will get better. We can only hope.

If the Honduran oligarchs get what they want, they do not need to make things better. Why would they need to make things better if they have the trade deal? This is not about the carrot; it is about the stick. We have to make them understand that the rule of law is necessary if they want to trade with us, that human rights are essential for their population if they want to trade with us, that murdering journalists and trade unionists and their citizens because they disagree with the government is wrong, and that if they want to trade with us it must end. No. This government decided to just have a trade deal. The idea is that if they just get a better trade deal, they will stop doing all of those things. That will not happen. It has not happened yet because, as my colleague from Vancouver Kingsway said, then we would do it with North Korea. Surely to goodness we would say, "Okay, that will make it better there and we will just do it there", but we have not, and correctly so. The government is correct to not have a free trade deal with Iran and North Korea. It is absolutely right on that, but it is wrong on this one.

We can argue free trade agreements. We can look at clauses in it we do not like, environment and trade union rights and those sorts of things. When we are dealing with a state that has the rule of law, has decent human rights protections for its population, then we are arguing about environment and trade union rights and some other things, but not about human rights.

In this case it is fundamental. It is about the human rights of the Hondurans. It is about their right to safety and liberty. It is about saying to them there are other ways to get them there, that there are other methods for us to help them build a society, build a capacity, build a sense of infrastructure within governments, and allow them a period of time to make changes to their civil justice system, to their Supreme Court system when they actually respect those judgments, and allow the capacity to build with their law enforcement agencies. There are ways for us, because of the expertise we have, to help them do that.

Therefore, it is not about isolating them in the way that happened in South Africa. That was a specific time, when a specific measure was undertaken that worked. This is not about simply saying we will let Honduras circle around the map and leave it be. We can offer the help and the hand of hope to it and say, "Here is how to build capacity, and when you build that capacity, there is an opportunity to get into a preferential trade agreement." We think that would be a valid approach, rather than the approach that is being taken, which is

just to have a trade deal and it will all work out. Then all of the other things will fall into place. The reality is that it has not worked before, so why would it work now?

My friend from Vancouver Kingsway recited a litany of statistics. They are true. They are just facts, not rhetoric or over-the-top hyperbole for the sake of saying it. This is what actually happens.

• (2355)

No member in this House thinks that is correct. We have a different viewpoint on how we would remedy it, perhaps, but surely to goodness we all understand that if a group gets what it wants, why would it change its position and way of doing things?

There is nothing in the free trade agreement that says "Thou shalt not shoot journalists." Even for Colombia, there was a sidebar piece that the Liberals put in. It said that it would be monitored to make sure it does not do that, and if it did, perhaps there would be repercussions, even though that never materialized.

It is amazing to see the government decide that it wants a free trade deal that has no significant impact as far as trade is concerned in this country. There would be a few million dollars here or there, and a few areas in the agriculture sector that might benefit a little, but there is no one beating the door down saying that they need a trade deal in Honduras.

However, there are folks in the agricultural sector who are kicking the door down asking for the CETA deal. Of course, that is not there yet. However, there is no question that is a deal for the agricultural sector. The agricultural sector has been clear about it. The problem now is that they do not know what it is, because there is nothing that we have yet. There is no ink to paper and no deal in front of this House. Is there a deal, or has it evaporated?

It is almost flabbergasting. As Dr. Ricardo Grinspun said, "...the idea that Canadians can help the most needy people in Honduras through this FTA is a public relations message, nothing more. Moreover, the FTA would provide international legitimacy..."

Probably one of the most egregious things is that it would provide international legitimacy for a group of individuals who think they have a right to run a country by force. We would give them international legitimacy by saying that we have a deal with them. They will go out to their other friends, if they can find any in this world, and say that Canada made a deal with them. Canada believes in the rule of law, and it has a Parliament, a mature democratic system, a Supreme Court and judicial system.

Honduras officials would use that elsewhere in the world and say that Canada thinks they are legitimate, as it gave them a deal. It only gives free trade deals to their best friends and the folks who participate in the same way that it does with the rule of law and protection of human rights. They would say to ignore what they do. They know it is ugly, but Canada thinks it is okay. Anyone who knows how to bargain for an agreement knows that is exactly what one would do. It is what other governments do.

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What do we do? We worry about the CETA deal, which the Conservative government supposedly has. They say that it has to run to get the deal because the Americans are coming next.

Will Honduras seek deals elsewhere after it gets this one? Yes. Will its government officials use us as an example and say that they think we are a good place? Yes. There is no question that they will, and why would they not? Why would they not use the credibility that we give them through this deal to try to tell the world that they are a legitimate government because the Canadians think so? I think that is what we should expect, but why would we want to be the ones to give them that credibility?

The statistics that we quote to the government it already knows. Those statistics are not foreign to them. They know that.

The issue then becomes, why Honduras? Why now? Why not later, at a time when it has a rule of law that actually works, and respect for human rights and democracy in its Parliament? Why not when it enacts a democratic electoral system that does not put people under threat and does not kill them, so that they can run freely for office without feeling the repercussion of someone coming through their door and shooting them?

• (2400)

In this House, it is one thing to feel that during our election process we might bump a bit up against one another or we might go to a debate that could be passionate, but none of us has ever worried about going to a debate in case somebody shoots us. They do, and we will give that regime credibility and legitimacy, and that is a shame.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marc-André Morin (Laurentides—Labelle, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there is a somewhat shameful aspect to this agreement. Becoming a partner of the regime means becoming its willing accomplice, in a way. Indeed, of all royalties our mining companies will be paying, 25% will go directly to security. I do not know the exact amount involved, but we can assume these are significant amounts, since they will be used to purchase vehicles and weapons, as well as pay staff. Are the companies going to war or digging a mine?

I would ask my colleague to comment on that.

• (2405)

[*English*]

Mr. Malcolm Allen: Mr. Speaker, it is baffling what Honduras is and why we want to have a trade agreement with it. Usually I can be very passionate on this side about debate, in the sense of taking the government to task, but I am actually saddened, to be truthful, that we would engage with this country when we know full well its record.

I could amp up the rhetoric and get angry, but I am to a point now where I am actually saddened by the situation. There are members on the other side who know this to be wrong. I am sure they do, notwithstanding the fact that it is a trade deal. The government side likes free trade deals. There is no argument about that. Its position is well known, and the position of the Liberal Party, in conjunction with the government, is well known: it supports free trade agreements. No one disputes that.

But surely there is a limit when it comes to trading. Surely there is a point where one says that there has to be acceptable behaviour, and surely we do not believe that Honduras' behaviour is acceptable. There cannot be a member in this House who believes it is okay that 36 journalists in the last 18 months have been shot. Surely no one agrees with that, never mind the thousands of others who have died along the way. No one can agree. It is true.

Yet clearly the government wants to pursue this unconscionable agenda. When it comes to this particular piece, I am not sure exactly why it would not want to just let this one slide until Honduras can build capacity.

Mr. Costas Menegakis (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the member's speech and the way he was responding to those questions. He says he is baffled; we are baffled. We are baffled when we look over at the NDP, which has opposed virtually every single free trade agreement that has come before this House. Every time a free trade agreement comes up for debate and discussion, the NDP finds an angle to dispute.

I see the member for Sherbrooke over there chirping, "You're wrong." He is referring, of course, to the one agreement the NDP agreed to, which was Canada-Jordan. However, it opposed Canada-U.S. It opposed NAFTA.

Hon. John Baird: It supported interprovincial trade.

Mr. Costas Menegakis: Exactly, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member reminds me the NDP supported provincial trade.

The NDP opposes everything. It absolutely opposes every trade agreement. The NDP is fundamentally opposed to trade with every nation in the world. Maybe the member can tell us that.

This time he is finding an angle for the NDP to oppose the Canada-Honduras agreement. Why did it oppose NAFTA? Why did it oppose Canada-Israel? Why did it oppose every other free trade agreement that came before this House?

We all know the answer. Maybe he will 'fess up to it. It is because the union bosses over there in the NDP do not want them. Just be honest and tell people.

Mr. Malcolm Allen: Mr. Speaker, I can tell them that my union boss would say he does not understand why that hon. colleague does not want to support human rights. I am baffled, quite frankly, by why that member would stand on his feet and wonder why we are baffled about defending human rights. If that is what it is about in this House, my friend, about why you cannot defend human rights, then I am truly baffled.

The Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member has been in this House for a while. He knows he would not accuse the Speaker of doing anything like that, so he should refer to his colleagues in the third person and not directly. I am not sure if he had more to say on that question.

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• (2410)

Mr. Malcolm Allen: Always.

The Speaker: I will give the member for Welland the floor back.

Mr. Malcolm Allen: Mr. Speaker, I am baffled by my colleague's approach across the way when it comes to human rights. If human rights baffle the Conservatives, I am not sure why they should be allowed to stay in government past 2015.

That is why it will probably get thrown out at the end of the day. It is not about whether they have an excuse to vote against free trade. It is about whether fundamentally they think that free trade agreements should go hand in hand with the rule of law and human rights, or whether human rights should be ignored and they should sign a free trade agreement. It is either/or, and I am not really sure.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to ask my colleague a question.

He mentioned the hypocrisy of the Conservatives and the Liberals, who have now joined them, when it comes to sanctions imposed against certain countries. I am particularly thinking of the sanctions against Russia as well as the economic sanctions against Iran. My colleague also mentioned North Korea.

Canada imposes economic sanctions on states that violate human rights, democratic principles or international rights. That is why the government applied sanctions against Russia, a sovereign country.

In one case, the government chose to impose sanctions on a country where human rights and democratic rights are violated, but not in this other case: it would actually prefer to enter into a trade agreement with that second country. Why such a double standard, why such hypocrisy?

[*English*]

Mr. Malcolm Allen: Mr. Speaker, it is indeed unusual or hypocritical that the government will impose sanctions here but not in Honduras. The members of the government can justifiably say that we did it with Ukraine years ago, and we have done it now with Russia and Iran and North Korea. I do not think that anybody disagrees in this House. When they took the position on Ukraine, we agreed. We said that they were right when it came to Russia. When it came to the annexation of Crimea, we on this side agreed with them.

What we are saying is to take a hard look at Honduras. We are saying to look at exactly what Honduras does, not from the perspective that they let mining companies in and the trade piece, but what Hondurans do to their own people. This is a place where the murder of journalists and citizens and parliamentarians goes on all the time, to a degree that is far greater than here. I am not sure why members on the other side would think that is not something we have to try to end through other than a trade agreement, but by helping civil society and helping them have the capacity to build a better and just Honduras.

Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, these folks would have a whole lot more credibility if they ever supported a free trade agreement. I think they can name one that they have voted for in the last 20 years. There is always an excuse as to why they are opposed

to free trade. This time, they are trying to use human rights as the excuse.

I would like to ask this. What was the excuse when it came to Liechtenstein and Switzerland and they opposed those trade agreements? They oppose trade at every point. It is a different excuse at each free trade agreement. They do not support trade because they do not like it; they do not think that it works.

However, we know that it is the cornerstone of what makes our economy work. Canada needs to trade around the world. We are glad we are able to bring these agreements into place because it has improved our economy; it has helped us to survive the last several years of worldwide recession. Why is the NDP so backward on trade in general?

Mr. Malcolm Allen: Mr. Speaker, it seems the member believes that if a trade deal is good for Canada, we can trample on human rights around the world. It does not matter. If that is the standard the government applies, that somehow human rights are an excuse, it is a sad day in the House.

Clearly, human rights should be paramount to a trade deal, not secondary to it. The parliamentary secretary believes it is not really that important for human rights to be respected in Honduras as long as we can sell a couple of bushels of wheat.

It truly is a sad day for democracy in our country, and a sad day for the government. That it would put money ahead of people's lives is what is truly sad.

• (2415)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have the great honour to rise in the House on behalf of the people of Sherbrooke to defend human rights around the world but, today especially, to discuss the implications of Bill C-20, the trade agreement with Honduras.

As we know, many statistics have been provided by various organizations on what is happening in Honduras. I will start my speech by presenting these statistics, which are quite alarming. I will then talk some more about whether or not we need more substantial economic ties with Honduras.

According to the 2012 democracy index published by the Economist Intelligence Unit, Honduras is now ranked 85th out of 167 countries, whereas it was ranked 65th in 2008. Today, Honduras is considered as a hybrid regime whereas it was previously considered to be an imperfect democracy. Therefore, conditions in Honduras have worsened. Independent observers have noted an intensification of violence and higher activity by organized crime and gangs associated with illegal drug trafficking. Countries such as Honduras and other Central American countries are transit hubs for drugs from South America on their way to Mexico and the United States.

According to the U.S. State Department, approximately 79% of cocaine shipments from South America end up in Honduras.

I will continue because there are many more statistics about this country.

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According to *The Economist*, the countries in the northern triangle of Central America, including Honduras, form what is now the most violent region on earth.

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, there were 92 murders for every 100,000 inhabitants in Honduras in 2011, making it the most violent country in Latin America.

According to the United Nations, Honduras is also widely considered as the murder capital of the world with a record number of 7,172 homicides in 2012.

Since the 2009 coup, violence and repression have grown as never before. In 2013, there were on average 10 massacres per month, according to InSight Crime, a website dedicated to investigations that defines “massacre” as the murder of at least three people at the same time. In the past four years, less than 20% of homicides were investigated, and even fewer cases were prosecuted.

According to the Americas Policy Group, the considerable impunity masks political violence.

Since 2010, there have been more than 200 politically motivated murders. Honduras is now considered to be one of the most dangerous places on earth for journalists.

According to a 2013 Human Rights Watch report, Honduras is the country with the highest rate of journalists killed per capita. Twenty-three journalists were killed there in the past three years alone.

According to the 2014 report by PEN International, at least 34 journalists have been killed since the coup in 2009, and there is almost complete impunity for the perpetrators.

In June 2013, 24 U.S. senators signed a letter expressing concern about the human rights situation in Honduras and requested that Secretary of State John Kerry make every effort possible to help ensure that the Honduran November 2013 elections were free, fair and peaceful.

A total of 94 members of congress called on the U.S. State Department to halt all military aid to Honduras in light of its violent repression.

The leading Honduran human rights group has revealed that at least 16 activists and candidates for the main opposition party were assassinated since June 2012, and 15 more have been attacked.

● (2420)

What is more, on August 25, 2013, three Tolupan indigenous leaders were shot and killed. There are extensive documented cases of police corruption. Between January 2011 and November 2012 alone, the police carried out 149 summary executions. The perpetrators of these crimes enjoy almost complete impunity.

According to Honduran government statistics released by PEN International, police investigate less than 1% of crimes in Honduras. Imagine if that were the case in Canada.

I also consulted Amnesty International's website; the organization releases reports almost every month. Here are some headlines: “Honduras: Children's rights defender beaten, detained”, published May 12, 2014; “Honduran media worker murdered at his home”, published April 17, 2014; “Honduras: Further information: Brother

of killed journalist at risk”, published March 4, 2014; “Honduras: Sex workers targeted and killed in Honduras”, published January 10, 2014; “Honduras: Honduran journalist shot and killed”, published in December 2013.

Nearly every month Amnesty International publishes reports about human rights violations in Honduras. We are not inventing these statistics. These facts have been documented; they are clear. This is real. The Canadian government says it wants closer trade ties with a country that the international community considers to be a thug when it comes to its own citizens' rights, democratic rights that everyone around the globe should have.

Everyone knows that we are going to oppose Bill C-20 for a number of reasons. I will speak more about those reasons later in my speech. However, it is quite clear why I will be opposing Bill C-20, which is designed to strengthen economic and trade ties with Honduras.

That country is currently considered one of the worst in the world in terms of human rights violations. Despite that, police, authorities and all those involved are complacent and let things slide. I do not understand why the government wants to send the international community the message that we will do business with such an irresponsible and rogue country.

What is more, the Canadian government is opting to do the exact opposite of other countries. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, who I am sure is listening closely to what I am saying, was a staunch advocate for Ukraine, and I hope he still is today. When certain regions of the country were invaded by Russia, he came to Ukraine's defence. Standing alongside the Prime Minister, he announced economic and political sanctions against Russia for its actions in Ukraine. That was the right thing to do.

Every MP here understands the importance of those kinds of gestures on the international political scene. As a country with a relatively significant role in international relations, we must opt for such measures. It has an important impact on international policy.

● (2425)

Economic sanctions were also imposed in other cases. Earlier, we mentioned Iran as a country on which we imposed economic and political sanctions. In the past, and perhaps today also, we talked about sanctions against North Korea. That is also a very oppressive and undemocratic regime. In such cases, Canada sometimes decides to impose economic and political sanctions. However, when we are dealing with Honduras, a country with one of the worst human rights records, there is no problem. Canada signs an economic and trade agreement as if nothing was happening in that country and everything was fine.

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The Leader of the Government in the House of Commons said we have been talking about it for years. He was Minister of International Trade years ago, and we have been talking about this issue for a long time. I said at the beginning that the 2009 coup changed a lot of things in Honduras. The economic and political situation may not have been the same when he was responsible for this file. It has probably changed a lot since that time. It is important to consider all the human rights violations in Honduras. I do not understand why we are now signing an economic agreement with such a rogue state when it comes to human rights. Therefore, we are going to oppose this bill at third reading.

I thank the hon. member for Vancouver Kingsway, who worked very hard on this bill. He did a superb job, particularly in committee, but also in the House, pleading for human rights, which should be defended around the world, including in Honduras.

I do not understand how the government can claim to be a champion of human rights when it is signing an economic and trade agreement with a country like Honduras. These two things cannot be reconciled. I do not understand how the Minister of Foreign Affairs, for example, can say that we respect and protect human rights around the world when we are concluding such an agreement with Honduras. I do not understand how the minister can reconcile these two things, because they are totally incompatible. All the statistics and all the facts prove it.

There are always three fundamental criteria for assessing trade agreements. Earlier, we were criticized for not supporting any economic agreements. We did support the agreement with Jordan. As a rule, we support trade with Europe. Europe has very high standards for human and workers' rights. We will take an official stand when we see the text of the economic agreement with Europe. However, we are not going to sign a blank cheque, as the Liberals did, regarding an economic agreement.

I want to get back to the three fundamental criteria for assessing trade agreements. Does the proposed partner respect democracy and human rights? Does it have adequate environmental and labour standards? Does it have values similar to Canadian values? If not, the country should not be one of Canada's economic and trade partners.

We can also look at whether the proposed partner is in the process of achieving these objectives. Honduras could have been in the process of achieving some of them. Canada could have decided to encourage this and to increase trade with this country.

● (2430)

However, it is clear that Honduras is not in the process of making improvements or achieving the Canadian values of respect for democracy, human rights and labour rights. Although it is possible to sign agreements with countries that are achieving these objectives, Honduras is headed in the opposite direction. International organizations that are present in many countries to ensure that they respect human rights have had some harsh words to say about Honduras.

In recent years, Honduras's rating has been declining. As I mentioned, the 2009 coup d'état caused a turnaround in the economic and political situation in Honduras.

That brings me to the second criterion for assessing trade agreements: is the proposed partner's economy of significant or strategic value to Canada? That is a very simple, yet important question. Does the country with which we are going to do business have a significant or strategic economic value to Canada?

Hon. members will agree that that is not at all the case with Honduras. Right now, this country ranks 104th on the list of Canada's export markets. In 2012, Canada exported only \$38 million in goods to Honduras and imported \$218 million, which represents a significant trade deficit. There is already talk of a significant trade deficit in Canada. With this type of agreement, which holds no strategic economic importance for Canada, our trade deficit will increase.

Canada is the second-largest foreign investor in Honduras. According to internal analyses conducted by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, the Canadian economy will benefit very little from this agreement.

That answers the second question we must ask when determining whether a trade agreement is needed or whether it will be advantageous to Canada: is the proposed partner's economy of significant or strategic value to Canada? In this case, the answer is no, it is not.

The third question we need to ask when evaluating a trade agreement is this: are the terms of the proposed agreement satisfactory? That is the basis for evaluating a trade agreement. Are the terms of the agreement satisfactory? This question defines our way of looking at trade agreements.

The government often asks us why we never support these bills. However, we have supported some in the past. Taking into consideration these three criteria, the third criterion still does not allow us to approve the trade agreement with Europe because we have not yet seen the terms of that agreement. The third criterion involves determining whether the terms of the agreement are satisfactory. If we have not seen the terms, we cannot say whether or not they are satisfactory.

In closing, I would like to once more point out the hypocrisy of the Conservatives and the Liberals, who have the same position. On one hand, they are saying that they want human rights to be respected throughout the world and that they are prepared to impose economic and political sanctions on countries where those rights are not respected. Canada is always prepared to defend those countries.

● (2435)

Canada decided to welcome them with open arms and sign trade agreements, but what it is really doing is supporting countries that do not respect human rights. It is saying yes to Honduras, which is one of the worst countries in the world. None of this makes sense. The government's logic is impossible to follow, as is that of their supporters on this, the Liberals. They do not seem to understand how bad this could turn out to be for the Honduran people.

I would be happy to answer my colleagues' questions.

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Mr. Hoang Mai (Brossard—La Prairie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am a little disappointed because I thought the Conservatives would ask a question and get involved in the debate. Unfortunately, that is not the case.

I would like to begin by congratulating my colleague from Sherbrooke, Canada's youngest MP. That is a historical fact. Despite his youth, I am always impressed by his intelligence.

I would like to comment on the last point he raised about how both the Conservatives and the Liberals claim to support human rights. That is just lip service because the facts show just the opposite, as demonstrated by the free trade agreement with Honduras. The Liberals are supporting it despite that country's dismal human rights record.

I would like my colleague to comment on the fact that this is not the first time that the Conservatives have introduced a badly negotiated bill that does not prioritize human rights or the environment, nor is this the first time the Liberals have supported them.

I would like to know what my colleague thinks of that.

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault: Mr. Speaker, that question has many elements.

I would have liked my Conservative colleagues to ask me some questions. I would have been pleased to hear what they had to say about this. However, they wanted to continue the debate until the bill is disposed of. However long it takes, I will defend human rights around the world at any hour of the day on behalf of the people of Sherbrooke.

Unfortunately, the Conservatives are not showing up for work. We saw that this evening. Not one Conservative spoke to Bill C-24, which we debated a little earlier. As far as Bill C-20 is concerned, not one Conservative will defend their bill.

It is unfortunate, because I would have liked to have a debate of ideas on Bill C-20, but clearly, when the Conservatives adopted the motion to extend sitting hours until midnight, it was a licence for laziness. We see that today. The Conservatives are barely asking any questions, and they do not have the nerve to defend their bills. Then they will go back to their ridings, claiming that they worked late and hard and saying that they passed many bills. In fact, they did nothing. So far, they have missed almost 70 opportunities to speak and stand up for their constituents.

I would be disappointed if I lived in a Conservative riding and saw my MP unable to speak in the House and defend my interests. I would really be very disappointed for that and many other reasons.

Obviously, the Liberals, who are complacent about this bill—

The Speaker: Are there any questions and comments?

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration.

[English]

Mr. Costas Menegakis (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am a little surprised at the hon. member's comments about the

Conservative members. It was just a short while ago that the government House leader stood and asked to extend the hours because we are here to work. We want to hear the debate, ask questions, and find out why the NDP is again so adamant against supporting a free trade agreement. Sure enough, New Democrats said they did not want to stay; they wanted to leave. However, much to their surprise, there are a lot more Conservatives here than NDP members. Therefore, we were able to pass it, and that is why we are here at this late hour, 12:40 in the morning, debating the bill. It is a little disingenuous to say that the Conservatives are not here to work because we are certainly here.

My question for the member on this specific bill is simply this. I asked it before and did not get an answer from the member for Welland. I am going to ask the member the same question. With the exception of the Canada-Jordan Free Trade Agreement, the NDP has opposed every single trade agreement, including Canada-United States—

● (2440)

Hon. Peter Van Loan: They opposed Canada-Jordan too.

Mr. Costas Menegakis: Initially, they opposed Canada-Jordan too, Mr. Speaker. They are against absolutely everything. Why is it that they have this fundamental policy in their party to oppose expanding markets around the world for Canadians? They stand and vote against it time and time again. Trade is good for Canada. Expanding markets for Canadians and Canadian companies is good for Canada.

I want to know from the member opposite why it is that New Democrats oppose every single trade agreement, including Canada-U.S. Surely, he is not going to stand now and say he has human rights issues with the United States of America. That is my question.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his question.

I am somewhat disappointed that he would ask me this question, because I spent most of my allotted time, 15 of my 20 minutes, answering that exact same question that he just put to one of my colleagues. I did focus on the three criteria to use to determine if the trade deal would benefit Canada. I can go over them again, if that is what he wants.

First, does the proposed partner respect democracy, human rights, adequate environmental and labour standards, and Canadian values? If not, is the partner on a positive trajectory toward these goals?

Second, is the proposed partner's economy of significant or strategic value to Canada?

Third, are the terms of the proposed agreement satisfactory?

Where this agreement with Honduras is concerned, the answer to all three questions is no. The reason why we oppose this bill is pretty obvious. We did support other economic and trade agreements. We supported the trade deal with Jordan because it met those three criteria. On the trade agreement between Canada and Europe, we are still waiting to find out the answer to the third question: are the terms of the proposed agreement satisfactory?

Government Orders

We have yet to see the terms of the deal. We cannot take a stand without seeing the details of the agreement. In principle, we have nothing against increased trade between Canada and Europe, but at this point in time the Conservatives are refusing to give us any details.

Our position is clear. The problem stems from the members opposite, who cannot bear to hear the truth.

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the member for Sherbrooke on his reasonable and reasoned speech. I think that the government needs to consider the fundamental rights issues, rather than looking at reality with blinders on and focusing solely on trade interests.

The government of Honduras is the result of a coup. It has very bad human rights practices. Honduras is also a country with a lot of political violence. There have been 200 politically motivated killings in Honduras since 2010. We have a free trade agreement that is going to allow companies to sue the government.

Given the social tension that exists in Honduras, will this type of mechanism not risk exacerbating the repression? Will it not also endanger human rights activists, environmental activists and other activists who are trying to ensure that Honduras has a healthy, well-managed local economy that provides an attractive environment for investment?

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his question.

There are very significant concerns about human rights. There are people who are working to improve the situation in Honduras but it is very dangerous for them. It does not make any sense for the Government of Canada to say that it wants to increase trade with one of the world's most violent countries.

On one hand, the government has decided to impose economic and political sanctions on countries that do not respect human rights or honour international treaties, such as Russia, Iran and North Korea. On the other, it has decided to sign a trade agreement with Honduras, the worst country in the world. I do not understand it at all.

I wish nothing more than for the situation in Honduras to improve for the sake of its citizens. They are entitled to a fair and transparent government that respects human rights, as well as to a fair and equitable justice system. I do hope things will improve in Honduras, but I do not believe it is in Canada's best interests to sign a trade agreement with a country while turning a blind eye to everything that is happening there.

• (2445)

Mr. Hoang Mai (Brossard—La Prairie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House to speak to Bill C-20. I would like to thank my colleagues for being here and for allowing me to speak to this very important issue.

Incidentally, I would like to commend the member for Richmond Hill. He actually asked a few questions tonight. He took part in the debate, although I did not hear him speak. I would have liked to hear his take on things in order to ask him questions. It is all well and good to ask questions, but I would remind him that he is a government MP. As such, he could answer questions as well.

Unfortunately, we have not heard his story. More accurately, his story seems to have evolved somewhat over the course of the evening.

I have here the *Hansard* from March 5, 2012. I was an MP. On page 892, we were talking about Bill C-23, An Act to implement the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Agreement on the Environment between Canada and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Agreement on Labour Cooperation between Canada and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. I invite my colleague to read it. I cannot read all of the names that are included because we are not allowed to name members who are present, but the NDP was there and voted in favour of the bill. I would also invite the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons to read this and take note of it, because I hear time and time again that the NDP has never supported a free trade agreement. However, it is here, in black and white.

Even though we keep explaining it to the Conservatives, it seems they do not understand. We keep saying that when the government enters into its free trade agreements, it is not negotiating them well and it is not doing a good job choosing its partners. The objective is clear: move on to another scandal, talk about something other than the scandals and the corruption on that side. The government is signing all kinds of free trade agreements and is very proud of that fact. However, we must look at the facts. I remember talking about the free trade agreement with Panama. In that case, there were problems with tax evasion. In this case, with Honduras, there are human rights issues.

We are hearing rather peculiar questions from the other side. The Conservatives appear to be saying that human rights may not be that important after all, which means that they can be pushed aside. Of course, when the Conservatives go back to their ridings and talk with their constituents, they claim to support human rights, but when push comes to shove, during negotiations and discussions with a partner, they simply push these rights aside. I want to stress how important it is to consider human rights during negotiations. According to the Conservatives and the Liberals, once we sign a free trade agreement, the market will open up and everyone will be happy. They mean, of course, that everyone will be rich and happy.

This is not what happens in real life. I would like to remind my colleagues opposite of the agreement Canada signed with Colombia. Reports were produced afterwards. The Conservatives argue that by signing a free trade agreement, we are helping people in the other country. We have seen that the agreement with Colombia did not help at all, just the opposite, in fact.

What we are saying is that when the Conservatives go negotiating agreements left and right, they have to learn from their mistakes. They are poor administrators. They do not know how to negotiate agreements properly, and that is why those of us on this side of the House are opposed to those agreements. We have given them solutions and suggestions. We have made proposals and put forward amendments. Since they have a majority, they have always rejected our ideas.

It is important to me to be here tonight, to talk to them and tell them what they can do because more free trade agreements, such as the trans-Pacific partnership agreement, are on the way.

• (2450)

That is still under negotiation. Unfortunately, those of us on this side of the House do not have much information because the government is very secretive and lacks transparency, as usual. I suggest that my colleagues take a look at what happens in the United States. Their politicians have access to agreements and can read them. This is a time when they can negotiate something in return for the agreement.

One good example is Vietnam. I talked about this at second reading. Vietnam is part of the trans-Pacific partnership. The U.S. House of Representatives is putting pressure on its negotiators to ensure that they demand improvements in the realm of human rights and workers' rights in Vietnam before signing the agreement. That is meaningful action.

This should be a lesson to the Conservatives as well as the Liberals. We need to agree that a free trade agreement with Honduras is technically not that significant. It will not do a great deal for Canada as a trading partner. That is how they see it in the United States. They give a country a free trade agreement to help it improve its human rights record.

No one in this House can say that respect for human rights is not an issue in Honduras. Clearly, when a government rises to power after a coup and when journalists and opposition politicians are murdered, we know there are problems. Not once have I heard today, from either the Conservatives or the Liberals, that they disagree with what the NDP has said. They agree with us that there are problems in Honduras. However, the response of the Liberals and the Conservatives to these problems is to throw the dice and hope it all works out.

In contrast, the NDP says that we should take the lead. We are in a position to negotiate and demand change. It was for that reason that I entered politics. I wanted to change things. Quite frankly, I know that some of our Conservative colleagues also want to change things for the better. Unfortunately, I have not heard much from them to this point. I heard some questions, but I did not hear them defending their position.

I would like to have a debate with the Conservatives to know exactly how they think that signing this agreement will improve the plight of Hondurans and help improve respect for human rights.

[English]

The Speaker: Order, please. Pursuant to an order made on Tuesday, June 3, 2014, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the third reading stage of the bill now before the House.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

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The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Speaker: Pursuant to an order made earlier today, the division stands deferred until Tuesday, June 10, 2014, at the conclusion of the proceedings related to the business of supply.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

• (2455)

[Translation]

CANADIAN HERITAGE

Mr. Jonathan Tremblay (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we have been waiting for four months to hear whether the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages plans to sign the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Twice I was told that the minister was definitely looking into the matter and would follow up. The convention has been around for 11 years. On October 17, 2003, in Paris, UNESCO adopted the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. That was some 11 years ago.

Where did the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages stand on this issue at the time and where does she stand now? How much more time does she need to reflect on this?

I have here the convention that was tabled in 2003. I can provide it to the minister, if that would help. It is only 14 pages long. It should not take too long to read.

Signing the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage would not commit Canada to investing billions of dollars in a year. It would just show that our great, rich heritage is dear to us, and that we want to protect, promote and rediscover what our ancestors have handed down to us.

It is interesting to note that referencing intangible Canadian heritage is working just fine in Canada. A number of people, researchers, agencies and even governments, including the Government of Quebec, have already done excellent work that just needs to be protected. In 2014, the *Registre du patrimoine culturel du Québec* incorporated intangible heritage.

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Nonetheless, the federal government must sign the convention. Ice canoeing and—I hope I am pronouncing this correctly—katajjanik, Inuit throat singing, are the two first examples that were incorporated. Intangible heritage is often passed down orally. That is one of the reasons, combined with globalization, which is affecting culture, that protecting this heritage and this wealth is so important.

On a lighter note, I just want to say that ice canoeing is part of my heritage and my family's history. My grandfather, Thomas Tremblay, was one of the canoeists who would cross the river and the ice to pick up the mail in Saint-Joseph-de-la-Rive and bring it to Isle-aux-Coudres.

A Radio-Canada film called *Le canot à Renald à Thomas* follows my uncle and grandfather as they build a canoe from start to finish, including finding the right tree in the forest. The film is about 40 minutes long and is easy to find online.

That is just a little story, but similar ones can be found in all kinds of families across Canada. However, these stories are often not known or protected, which is why it is important for us to sign the convention.

My question is clear, and the answer can be given in a fraction of a second. Does the minister plan on signing the convention, yes or no?
[English]

Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to be here at this hour of the morning. We all know how important our cultural heritage is to me.

The government is actively engaged in the preservation of Canada's tangible and intangible cultural heritage in a way that delivers real and measurable results for taxpayers.

“Tangible heritage” refers to things like objects and buildings. What is covered by the term “intangible heritage” is much wider and much less well defined. It can include anything from languages and traditional craftsmanship to performing arts, social practices, rituals and festive events.

Our government directly supports both tangible and intangible heritage through our federal cultural institutions and agencies, such as the national museums and Parks Canada.

The government also supports the efforts of Canada's heritage community to preserve and present our heritage, both tangible and intangible. One example of support for the preservation of intangible heritage is funding we provide for aboriginal languages and for arts and heritage festivals.

Efforts to preserve and celebrate Canada's intangible cultural heritage are under way and growing from coast to coast to coast.

Our government will continue to safeguard our cultural heritage through initiatives that are working, while ensuring that taxpayer dollars are used in a responsible manner.

Instead of support measures that are delivering tangible results, the member opposite seems to be suggesting that we fund new and unnecessary infrastructure, as well as costly inventory-related tasks that will do nothing to preserve and promote Canada's rich cultural history.

Canada is a member of some but not all of the conventions that exist on various topics, including those related to heritage. Our government carefully analyzes each of them to determine whether they are the right fit for Canada and whether they will realize real benefits for Canadians that justify the cost of their implementation.

In the case of the 2003 UNESCO convention, Canada's position from the beginning was that approaches such as binding conventions that worked well for other types of heritage might not be as appropriate for intangible cultural heritage, which naturally evolves and changes over time.

Canada advocated for an approach that promoted best practices and enabling mechanisms for communities, tradition bearers and practitioners, rather than a binding convention. In the end, the convention that was adopted provided little flexibility for Canada to determine the approach best suited for our context.

Our government will continue to support a made-in-Canada approach that works best for us and our heritage. I can tell members that we have no plans to sign the 2003 UNESCO convention on intangible cultural heritage. This position has been well-known, and it has been clear since 2003.

● (2500)

[Translation]

Mr. Jonathan Tremblay: Mr. Speaker, did I understand that the Government of Canada will not sign the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage?

[English]

Mr. David Anderson: Mr. Speaker, as I said, our government will continue to safeguard our cultural heritage through initiatives that are working and we are going to continue to deliver tangible results for taxpayers.

We are not alone in the fact that we have not joined the convention. States that share the same concerns that we do, the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand, have also not become parties to the conventions for Canada.

We will continue to support preservation and celebration of our heritage, but we will do so in a way best suited for the Canadian context.

The Speaker: Pursuant to an order made on Tuesday, May 27, the motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly the House stands adjourned until later this day, at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24.

(The House adjourned at 1:02 a.m.)

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