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(HANSARD)

Tuesday, October 28, 2014

Speaker: The Honourable Andrew Scheer

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, October 28, 2014

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1005)

[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 17 petitions.

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COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan (Scarborough—Rouge River, NDP) moved that the second report of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration presented on Monday, March 24, 2014 be concurred in.

The Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.
(Motion agreed to)

* * *

PETITIONS

ROUGE NATIONAL PARK

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan (Scarborough—Rouge River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I stand today to present petitions on behalf of residents of the GTA with respect to the creation of Rouge national park. We know that there is a 100-square-kilometre public land assembly that surrounds the Rouge River and Duffins Creek watersheds in Toronto, Markham, and Pickering. This publicly owned federal,

provincial, and municipal land is predominantly designated as a provincial Greenbelt natural heritage system. It is the ancestral home of the Mississauga, Huron, Wendat, and Seneca first nations and their sacred burial and village sites.

The petitioners are requesting that the Government of Canada protect the irreplaceable 100-square-kilometre public land assembly within a healthy and sustainable Rouge national park and ensure that all people and organizations within the community are consulted in the creation of the Rouge national park.

IMPAIRED DRIVING

Mr. Leon Benoit (Vegreville—Wainwright, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions I would like to present on behalf of constituents today. The first deals with impaired driving. Petitioners call for new mandatory minimum sentencing for those persons convicted of impaired driving causing death. They also want the Criminal Code of Canada to be changed to redefine the offence of impaired driving causing death as vehicular manslaughter.

SEX SELECTION

Mr. Leon Benoit (Vegreville—Wainwright, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the second petition deals with sex-selective pregnancy termination. Petitioners call on Parliament to condemn discrimination against girls occurring through gender selection pregnancy termination.

[Translation]

CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Mr. Réjean Genest (Shefford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition about strengthening our communities by reuniting families through the Canadian immigration system.

The petition reads as follows:

We, the undersigned residents of Canada, draw the attention of the House to the following:

WHEREAS the Conservative government's radical overhaul of Canada's immigration system is turning Canada into a less welcoming country;

WHEREAS these changes weaken our communities by limiting possibilities for families to reunite in Canada with overseas spouses, children, parents and grandparents;

WHEREAS families seeking to reunite on Canadian soil face unacceptable barriers and wait times as long as nine years;

WHEREAS this government's misguided response to growing backlogs has been to impose a two-year freeze on reunification applications for parents and grandparents;

THEREFORE we the undersigned call on the Government of Canada to make reuniting families a central priority in Canada's immigration system.

Government Orders

[English]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

● (1010)

[Translation]

CANADA-KOREA ECONOMIC GROWTH AND PROSPERITY ACT

The House resumed from October 27 consideration of the motion that Bill C-41, An Act to implement the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and the Republic of Korea, be read the third time and passed.

The Speaker: The hon. member for Rivière-des-Mille-Îles has 13 minutes left for her speech.

Ms. Laurin Liu (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to have this opportunity to continue speaking to Bill C-41, the Canada-South Korea free trade agreement.

It is my great pleasure and honour to support this bill and this free trade agreement, the crux of which is tariff lines between Canada and South Korea. The NDP believes that this free trade agreement will benefit Canadian industries and that it can produce plenty of positive economic spinoffs for Canadian industries, such as aerospace.

First, I want to point out that Korea is one of Canada's biggest trading partners. It is Canada's seventh-largest trading partner, the third-largest in Asia after China and Japan. In 2003, Canadian exports to South Korea totalled \$33.4 billion while Korean exports to Canada totalled \$7.3 billion.

The NDP supports a balanced and sensible approach to free trade agreements. We believe it is critical to review each individual agreement to determine its benefits. The NDP believes that Canada must negotiate free trade agreements with trading partners that respect democracy and human rights and have adequate environmental and labour rights standards. That is the case in South Korea.

In addition, the trading partner's economy must be of significant or strategic value to Canada. As I explained in my speech, this free trade agreement with Korea passes that test. We also have to ensure that the terms of the proposed agreement are satisfactory. I know that a number of stakeholders, including most Canadian industrial sectors, have said this is an excellent agreement. That cannot be said of all of the free trade agreements negotiated by the Conservative government over the past few months and years.

The NDP understands the importance of implementing this free trade agreement as of January 1. In fact, Korea already has free trade agreements with the European Union and the United States. Since those countries implemented their free trade agreements with Korea,

Canadian exporters have been losing significant market share. What is more, each year, Korean tariffs come down for EU and U.S. exporters as a result of those agreements. This is estimated to cost Canadian producers hundreds of millions of dollars annually. We therefore understand how urgent it is to implement this free trade agreement as soon as possible. The losses have been particularly heavy in the agri-foods, seafood and aerospace sectors. I would like to emphasize the aerospace sector in particular since it is essential to the economic well-being of the riding of Rivière-des-Mille-Îles.

It is also important to note that there are high rates of unionization in these sectors. We therefore strongly believe that this free trade agreement with Korea will encourage the creation of stable, unionized jobs, which will help Canadians make ends meet.

● (1015)

Canada's largest private-sector union, the United Food and Commercial Workers, has publicly supported the Korean free trade agreement. This union represents tens of thousands of workers in the food processing, seafood, milling, agricultural and distilling sectors.

I am very proud to be a member of the Standing Committee on International Trade, where I have been able to work with our critic for international trade. We worked extremely hard to improve Bill C-41. Although we support the bill and although it will be beneficial to Canada, we believe that it is not perfect and that it can be improved.

The NDP proposed three amendments to the Standing Committee on International Trade, which were defeated not only by the Conservatives, who hold a majority on the committee, but also by the Liberal member who sits on that committee.

One of the amendments that the NDP critic proposed to improve the bill sought to eliminate the investor state dispute settlement mechanism. The NDP believes that this is a rather controversial aspect of the bill because we are talking about a free trade agreement between two democratic countries with solid and stable legal systems.

The Conservative government has a history of negotiating free trade agreements that contain these investor state dispute settlement mechanisms. These free trade agreements are even a cornerstone of this government. However, we do not believe that such a measure is necessary in a free trade agreement with South Korea.

As we have seen in the news in recent weeks, many countries did not agree with this investor state dispute settlement mechanism. Germany, for one, has spoken out against these mechanisms in free trade agreements.

Government Orders

The main opposition party in South Korea also opposes this mechanism, and an NDP government would negotiate with South Korea in order to get rid of it. This mechanism definitely does not have unanimous support in the international community.

The good thing about this free trade agreement is that it is not binding on the governments for 31 years, like the Canada-China investment agreement, or FIPA. Unlike that investment protection agreement, the free trade agreement with South Korea has guaranteed transparency rules for investor state dispute settlement tribunals, and the hearings must be held in public. That is at least one good thing about this bill.

I would like to digress for a moment and talk about intellectual property. I would like to quote an expert in this area who is often quoted in this House, Michael Geist. He also often appears as a witness before parliamentary committees.

I encourage any Canadians who might be interested, including my constituents in Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, to look for and read what he has written on the Canada-South Korea free trade agreement.

• (1020)

Unfortunately, I do not have time to read the text in full, but this illustrates at least that the section on intellectual property has some positive aspects that we can support.

I will quote from what Michael Geist wrote.

[*English*]

He said:

The IP chapter is significant for what it does not include. Unlike many other trade deals—particularly those involving the U.S., European Union, and Australia—the Canada-South Korea deal is content to leave domestic intellectual property rules largely untouched. The approach is to reaffirm the importance of intellectual property and ensure that both countries meet their international obligations, but not to use trade agreements as a backdoor mechanism to increase IP protections.

[*Translation*]

Later in his article he says:

[*English*]

...the Canada—South Korea agreement may provide a model for many other countries that wish to include intellectual property provisions in their trade agreements but are content to require each party to meet international standards rather than the domestic rules of one of the parties. The U.S. and E.U. approach has been to export their rules to other countries, but Canada and South Korea have demonstrated that respect for domestic choices and compliance [to] international obligations is a better alternative.

[*Translation*]

The free trade agreement between Canada and Korea is interesting in its approach to intellectual property.

Since I have just a minute left, I would like to reiterate that the NDP has a balanced approach to free trade agreements. We will look at the text of the free trade agreement with the European Union and consult Canadians before deciding whether or not we will support it. Nonetheless, the free trade agreement between Canada and Korea is a positive, model agreement. I am proud to support it.

Our approach is not like that of the Conservative government at all. The government wants to negotiate free trade agreements with every country, regardless of their record on respecting human rights

and without any concern for the benefits to Canada. We must choose our trade partners carefully, and that is what an NDP government will do.

[*English*]

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for her comments, and thank her and her party for their intended support of this bill, because it is very important.

There was one point in her comments where there may have been a translation issue. I am not sure. However, she referred to the Canada-China free trade agreement. I would just like to inform the House and Canadians that we do not have a free trade agreement with China. We have a foreign investment protection agreement, which is very crucial for potential investors in a foreign economy.

For that reason, I wonder if my colleague could explain why she would not have stood up for those foreign investors who intend to invest in South Korea, by having her committee try to remove that section from this bill. It is a very crucial section for those who intend to invest in South Korea.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Laurin Liu: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure I fully understood the question. I think he was talking about the fact that I mentioned the Canada-China foreign investment promotion and protection agreement. The NDP is opposed to this agreement between Canada and China.

He is right. That is not a free trade agreement, but rather an agreement that protects Chinese investments in Canada and allows Chinese companies to take over and control Canada's natural resources. That is why the NDP is against this investment protection agreement with China.

He also raised the matter of the investor state dispute settlement mechanism. This should be debated. International stakeholders demonstrated that this mechanism was not necessary between two countries that have sound justice systems like Canada and Korea.

As far as free trade agreements between these two countries are concerned, we can rely on our solid and transparent justice systems. This mechanism is therefore not necessary in this free trade agreement. In future, the NDP will exclude this mechanism when it negotiates free trade agreements.

• (1025)

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is important that we catch this particular point: in 2003 South Korea made the determination that it wanted to enter into free trade agreements throughout the world.

Government Orders

Canada has been somewhat slack in not giving this file the attention it deserved. In fact, it was former prime minister Paul Martin who really initiated the discussions with South Korea back in 2004, just a year after South Korea had expressed its interest. It has taken the current Conservative government almost a decade to take that interest South Korea had and put it into a free trade agreement.

Now, do not get me wrong. The Liberal Party has consistently, from Korea's initial interest back in 2003, wanted to see a free trade agreement. We have supported the bill in second reading.

To that extent, I think it is noteworthy to recognize that the NDP has taken a different road, a road to support free trade agreements. This is something that is very new here in Ottawa. It is a new policy shift for the New Democrats.

I wonder if my NDP colleague could provide some comment as to why there has been that shift in NDP policy in favour of free trade agreements. Can we now anticipate, for example, that NDP members will support the economic trade agreement with the European Union?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Laurin Liu: Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to disagree with the Liberal Party's approach to free trade because a few months ago that party supported a free trade agreement with Honduras.

It is shameful that the Liberal Party is prepared to negotiate a free trade agreement with an undemocratic country where journalists are murdered and workers are not safe. That economy is of very little strategic importance to Canada.

However, the Liberals followed the Conservatives and supported that free trade agreement, which, in fact, will not improve the human rights situation in that country. Quite frankly, I do not believe that that position is in any way good for the Canadian economy or for our international reputation.

If the NDP is voted in as the government next year, we will strengthen trade ties with countries in the Asia-Pacific region. We recognize that this will be vital to Canada's prosperity in the 21st century.

I hope that the NDP will form the government and that the Liberal Party will support us.

[*English*]

Mr. Jasbir Sandhu (Surrey North, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we do not need to take any lessons from the Liberal Party. Its Liberal leader actually got up in this House and applauded the deal with the European Union when he had not even seen the text of it or did not know what the deal was. This is the position the Liberal Party takes, that it does not even see the details of the deal before supporting it. We are much better than that. We are a principled party that looks at the details and whether they would benefit all Canadians, all sectors of our economy, and create local jobs.

The Conservative record on trade has been very poor. When the Conservatives came to power back in 2006, we had a trade surplus of, I believe, about \$16 billion. However, we now have a trade deficit of over \$60 billion, which has accumulated over that period of time.

Could the member talk about how we can improve on creating local jobs and help expand, not only sending oil and raw materials to other countries but creating local manufacturing jobs, with these trade agreements?

• (1030)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Laurin Liu: Mr. Speaker, my colleague is quite right about the numbers. Unfortunately, the Conservatives have a terrible track record when it comes to international trade.

He also mentioned the Liberal Party's position on the free trade agreement with the European Union. I would like to quote the Liberal trade critic concerning that agreement:

We have been supportive of the deal from the start. It's important to say this is a great step, but also we really need to start seeing some details. At some point though we need to see what it is we're actually supporting.

The Liberals were prepared to support an agreement without having all the details, without doing their homework and without doing what had to be done to ensure that it really was a good agreement.

The NDP is ready to do the work and to study the agreements. We even travelled across the country to consult Canadians about this free trade agreement. It is critical that we do this work.

I would like to get back to the question my colleague asked about how we can support the manufacturing sector and increase exports. According to the witnesses who appeared before the Standing Committee on International Trade, free trade agreements are an excellent step, and we must negotiate them. However, we need to do more and we need to encourage small and medium-sized businesses to export, because it is often more difficult for them to export products to other countries or economies.

We need to ensure that there are services to help these businesses get information on the other countries they may be exporting to. In addition, and to mark Small Business Week, we need to put an emphasis on small business and on helping them export.

[*English*]

Mr. John Carmichael (Don Valley West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to be sharing my time with the member for Kelowna—Lake Country.

It is my pleasure to reiterate the importance of Canada's free trade agreement with Korea. No government in Canada's history has been more committed to the creation of jobs and prosperity for Canadian businesses, workers, and their families. Deepening Canada's trading relationships in dynamic and high-growth markets around the world is key to these efforts. Our government understands the importance of trade to our economy. It represents one out of every five jobs in Canada and accounts for more than 60% of our country's annual income.

The Canada-Korea free trade agreement is an ambitious state-of-the-art agreement covering virtually all sectors and aspects of trade between Canada and Korea. It would also be Canada's first free trade agreement with an Asian market.

Government Orders

When President Park of the Republic of Korea visited Canada in September, she and the Prime Minister also announced their intention to develop an agreement on science, technology, and innovation co-operation between our two countries. I would like to focus my remarks on this important development in the Canada-Korea relationship.

Canada is globally renowned for its strength in innovation, its R and D capacity, and its highly trained workforce. Research and development is crucial for Canada's success as a trading nation. It plays a key role in shaping the economy and creating the jobs of the future. It creates new goods and services that improve the standard of living for Canadians and for communities around the world.

The Canadian science, technology, and innovation landscape is rich and diverse. Our Conservative government understands the importance of science, technology, and innovation in addressing key societal challenges. Indeed, all Canadians know our future growth and place in the world will increasingly be driven by our ability to innovate.

Let me provide some insights into how innovation is linked to economic development. The Science, Technology and Innovation Council of Canada describes science and technology, and specifically research and development, as involving the "creation of new knowledge". Innovation requires that knowledge or technology introduced into the marketplace or into an organization creates value. Being able to translate ideas from the lab to the marketplace is extremely important for Canada.

To remain successful in the highly competitive global economy, Canada must continue to improve its approach for developing high-quality, talented people performing world-leading research and generating new breakthrough ideas. Our government recognizes that protectionist restrictions stifle our exporters and undermine Canada's competitiveness, which in turn adversely affects middle-class Canadian families. International collaboration in science, technology, and innovation is increasingly important to our ability to stay at the leading edge.

Canada generates about 4.1% of global knowledge, despite accounting for just 0.5% of the world's population. That is courtesy of the Council of Canadian Academies, *The State of Science and Technology in Canada, 2012*. Clearly, we are punching above our weight, and our linkages with international innovation leaders are crucial to maintaining our advantage.

Korea is an ideal partner for Canada in science, technology, and innovation co-operation. Strengthening relations with Korea through a formal agreement would allow Canada to build a lasting strategic framework with one of the world's most innovative economies. Korea is not only a top funder of research and development projects, but an expert in introducing new technologies into the marketplace. These are the types of partners Canada needs to advance our expertise in innovation.

In addition to supporting the relationship between the two countries, a science, technology, and innovation agreement would complement the Canada-Korea free trade agreement by enhancing opportunities for Canadian industry to gain access to cutting-edge research networks and technology in Korea.

• (1035)

A preliminary analysis suggests that the most promising sectors for co-operation align with those that would be supported by Canada's free trade agreement with Korea, namely aerospace; automotive; energy, including sustainable technologies; advanced manufacturing; health and life sciences, including pharmaceuticals and medical devices; and information communication technology, or ICTs.

If the House will permit me, I would like to discuss the benefits that would accrue to Canadians from strengthening the Canada-Korea science, technology, and innovation relationship.

A science, technology, and innovation or STI agreement would be supported by robust CKFTA outcomes in the areas of services, investment, temporary entry, and intellectual property.

The services and investment provisions would provide Canadian suppliers of professional services such as R and D with greater and more predictable access to the Korean market and would encourage additional investment in the science, technology, and innovation sectors.

Temporary entry provisions would provide new preferential access to the Korean market, facilitating movement between Canada and South Korea for business visitors.

The free trade agreement's commitment to strong intellectual property rights and rules for their enforcement would provide Canadians who develop and market innovative and creative products with access to the Korean market. An STI agreement would be an effective tool to assist Canadian companies to increase exports of value-added industrial and advanced manufacturing products, making Korea an attractive market not only for our traditional energy and agricultural exports but also for science, technology, and innovation exports. An STI agreement would also benefit Canada by facilitating increased access for Canadian small and medium-sized enterprises, or SMEs, as well as research institutes and universities to Korea's innovative ecosystem and global value chains. Canada's R and D largely depends on our universities. Korea relies much more on industry. The Korean R and D approach can help Canada commercialize research and scale products.

Government Orders

Finally, an STI agreement with Korea would strengthen people-to-people ties by providing a forum for government, researchers, industry, and key Canadian stakeholders to develop opportunities to collaborate and leverage the latest R and D and technological advancements in strategic sectors. It would increase knowledge of innovation systems by providing a forum for both countries to learn about respective STI policies, programs, and government funding structures, providing further insights into innovation, growth, and export strategies.

We stand with Canadians, incredibly disappointed that New Democrats tried to completely gut the bill at the trade committee, where they tabled amendments to remove the investor protection provisions, which are the cornerstones of modern trade and investment agreements. This is just as harmful as the neglect of international trade under the Liberals, who took Canada virtually out of the game of trade negotiations and put Canadian workers and businesses at severe risk of falling behind in this era of global markets.

Fortunately, our Conservative government is committed to protecting and strengthening the long-term financial security of hard-working Canadians. Thanks to the actions under our government's free trade leadership, Canadian workers, businesses, and exporters now have preferred access and a real competitive edge in more markets around the world than at any other time in our history.

The Canada-Korea free trade agreement is yet another example of how we are getting the job done. This agreement would strengthen our trade and investment ties across the Pacific, increase the prosperity of both our countries, and create jobs and enhanced opportunities for Canadian businesses.

With that, I call for the prompt implementation of the Canada-Korea free trade agreement for the benefit of Canada and all Canadians.

• (1040)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Ève Pécelet (La Pointe-de-l'Île, NDP): Mr. Speaker, could my colleague tell me exactly what Canada stands to gain from this investor state dispute settlement mechanism?

[*English*]

After signing the investor state dispute settlement section, chapter of 11 of NAFTA, the Canadian government had to pay hundreds of millions of dollars to American companies and lost the capacity and the possibility to legislate environmental policies or investment policies.

I would like the member to tell us what exactly we are going to get from this kind of mechanism in another trade agreement. Are we going to have to pay hundreds of millions of dollars to Korean companies, as we did for American companies? I would like the member to tell us what we are going to get from these kinds of mechanisms.

Mr. John Carmichael: Mr. Speaker, this government is committed to creating free trade opportunities for Canadian businesses around the world. In fact, in the past seven years, some 43 new trade agreements have been signed globally by the

government. That is something that I think all Canadians should not only be proud of but should also see as opportunities for growth.

The Canada-Korea free trade agreement is going to create thousands of jobs for hard-working Canadians by increasing Canada's exports to South Korea by 32% and boosting Canada's economy by \$1.7 billion. This is opportunity.

In much the same way as we recently discussed in relation to the Canada-European trade agreement, this agreement would open up job opportunities to Canadians in Korea, it will bring Korean companies to Canada, and it will give access to Canadian manufacturers and service companies to some 70 million Koreans. As we discussed in relation to the European free trade agreement, there will be some 500 million new customers for Canadian businesses.

This is an opportunity that opens up business opportunities for Canadian business on a level playing field between Canada and Korea, and it is something that I think is good for all Canadians.

• (1045)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what we have witnessed is a great deal of Conservative spin coming right from the Prime Minister's Office.

Nothing could be further from the truth than to say the Conservative government is a leader when it comes to trade. In reality, when it comes to trade, the government has lost more trade opportunities than any other political entity in the history of Canada.

The member made references to 43 trade agreements, but 28 of those countries are all part of one, the European Union. When the member says 43, he has to watch the way he twists the words around.

When it comes to the Canada-Korea deal, this is a deal Korea expressed an interest in back in 2003. One year later, Paul Martin said that we should act on this opportunity. It took this government years and years of being pulled by the South Korean government, and now we finally have an agreement before us.

How many opportunities and jobs does the member feel Canadians have lost because of the government's inability to negotiate a freer trade agreement with South Korea years ago?

Mr. John Carmichael: Mr. Speaker, if we are going to talk spin, clearly my friend opposite has strayed far from the topic at hand today.

Let us just talk about this. In the tenure of the Liberal Party as government for this country, it signed three free trade agreements. We have signed 43. If we lump in 28 from the European Union, that is fine. Canadian businesses now have access to 500 million consumers.

We are not losing opportunities. We are gaining them every day through an international trade component led by this government that is getting the job done for Canadians and for Canadian growth and Canadian prosperity.

Government Orders

Hon. Ron Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak to this important free trade agreement and to share my time with the hard-working member for Don Valley West.

I will start off by reconfirming that there is no government in Canada's history that has been more committed to the creation of jobs and prosperity for Canadian businesses, workers, and their families. The Minister of International Trade has been spending many days away from home trying to secure new markets and to deepen Canada's trading relationships in dynamic and high-growth markets around the world. I think it is key to these efforts.

The Canada-Korea free trade agreement, Canada's first FTA with an Asia-Pacific nation, is an ambitious, state-of-the-art agreement covering virtually all sectors and aspects of free trade.

Today I will speak specifically to the foundation of the agreement, which is the extensive and profound people-to-people ties that bind Canada and South Korea. I think that is a very important aspect that has not really been talked about.

It is an increasingly interconnected world. People-to-people ties are crucial to ensuring long-term success in the competitive global economy. It is all about relationships, and this free trade agreement is a classic example. It is a landmark achievement that would result in mutual benefits and prosperity for both of our countries and that would lay the foundation to unlock the full potential of our political, economic, and secure relations.

Canada can leverage its rich history and flourishing people-to-people ties with South Korea to build on this free trade agreement and pave the pathway to jobs and prosperity for generations to come.

Canada and South Korea have had formal diplomatic relations for over 50 years, yet the connections between our two peoples extend back more than a century. Prior to the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1963, Canada came to South Korea's aid in the Korean War, contributing the third-largest contingent of troops to UN forces. More than 26,000 Canadian soldiers stood shoulder to shoulder with their Korean brothers and sisters against the spread of tyranny. Unfortunately, more than 500 individuals ultimately gave their lives. George Barr, from the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 26 in my riding, and others across Canada, have been incredible ambassadors for the Canada-Korea relationship. The memories of helping folks in Korea and Canada continue to strengthen that bond.

Korean President Park was here last month for her official state visit, and she laid a wreath in memory at the National War Memorial. It was one of the highlights of her visit and was a testament to the importance of the shared history of our two nations.

When I had the honour of travelling with the Prime Minister and the delegation in March for the initial signing of the agreement in Seoul, the Prime Minister and the delegation laid a wreath at the Seoul National Cemetery, as well.

I would like to take a moment to think about Corporal Cirillo. His funeral procession is taking place in Hamilton right now. I am thinking about soldiers, the men and women who sacrifice their lives, and our thoughts and prayers go out to their families as well.

After the Korean War, almost 7,000 additional Canadian soldiers served as peacekeepers in South Korea between 1953 and 1957. Canada also participated in supervising South Korea's first elections in 1948 as part of the United Nations temporary commission on Korea. Aside from the United States, Canada is the only other state that has permanent military representation, with the United Nations Command, otherwise known as the UNC, in Korea.

Canada continues to participate in the UNC Military Armistice Commission that supervises the armistice. Last year, a delegation of Canadian veterans, led by the current Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, the member for Lévis—Bellechasse, travelled to South Korea to mark the 60th anniversary of the Korean War armistice on July 27, 2013.

Building on our proud and shared history, our bilateral relationship is further championed and advanced by our strong, growing, people-to-people ties. Canada is home to some 200,000 people who identify themselves as being of Korean origin. It is the fourth-largest Korean diaspora in the world. Over 23,000 Canadians are currently residing in South Korea, including around 3,200 language teachers.

Last year, our government designated the year 2013 the Year of Korea in Canada. It marked the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Canada and Korea and celebrated the contributions of the Korean diaspora to Canadian society.

● (1050)

The Year of Korea in Canada featured a number of cultural and artistic events. I am sure many members had the opportunity to take them in. There were great festivities across the country that gave Canadians the opportunity to learn more about Korean culture, tradition, and diversity.

The Canada-Korea Interparliamentary Friendship Group is co-chaired by Senator Yonah Martin, Canada's first and only Korean senator, an incredible, hard-working individual. She shares that responsibility with our acting Speaker, the member for Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, who has held three successful Canada-Korea dialogue series on the Hill, the last of which was held in June this year. It was attended by more than 100 participants.

Senator Martin, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, and the member for Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock also travelled to Seoul, Korea, in September to meet with senior government officials, Korean national assembly members, and business officials to discuss the wide-ranging benefits of the trade agreement to continue to move this agreement forward.

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Some Canadians were a bit disappointed with the NDP at committee recently when members tried to remove what I believe is one of the cornerstones of a modern trade agreement, the investor protection provisions. The Liberals talked about this trade agreement in 2003, but it was our Prime Minister and the Minister of International Trade who were actually able to get this over the goal line.

The opposition had taken us virtually out of the game of international trade. It was not a priority for them, and I understand their reasons. However, our government wants to create jobs and open doors and opportunities to put Canadian workers and businesses first. The opposition put us at severe risk of falling behind in the era of global markets, but that has changed in a positive manner. Fortunately for Canadians, our Conservative government is committed to protecting and strengthening the long-term financial security of hard-working Canadians.

Last month, during President Park's visit to Canada, our government announced its intent to develop a science, technology, and innovation agreement with South Korea, providing Canada with the opportunity to further strengthen the people-to-people ties and to build a lasting strategic framework with one of the world's most innovative economies and top funders of research and development.

The agreement would provide Canadian stakeholders with opportunities to create new partnerships and enhance business-to-business linkages through a mechanism that would directly support bilateral, industry-led research and development funding projects in strategic areas.

As well, I am proud to say that our education ties are extensive and growing. I am sure members from all parties have constituents who have gone to South Korea. It is Canada's third-largest source of international students. We have had constituents going there to teach, and we have had more than 19,000 young and talented students choose Canada as the destination of choice to pursue their education. Based on the average estimated expenditure by international students in Canada per year, that would translate to Korean students contributing over \$500 million to the Canadian economy. Many high-calibre international students choose to stay in Canada post-graduation, leading to the enrichment of human capital in Canada. Those who go back to Korea are some of Canada's best ambassadors.

There are over 100 active agreements among institutions in Canada and South Korea facilitating the exchange of students, faculty, staff, and curricula and providing joint research and degree programs. That is very important. The Government of Canada has a number of memoranda of understanding with South Korea, including in the areas of industrial science, engineering and technology, research, co-operation, clean technologies, energy, and Arctic research and development.

On tourism, over 140,000 Korean tourists visited Canada in 2013. It is the eighth-largest source of tourists to Canada, which is very important to my riding of Kelowna—Lake Country. They spent almost \$250 million in the Canadian economy. South Korea is one of the Canadian Tourism Commission's top-ten priority leisure markets. In 2013, the annual growth in the number of Korean tourists to Canada stood at 3.3%. An estimated four million Korean travellers are actively considering a Canadian holiday in the next two years.

On September 22, the Prime Minister and Korean President Park witnessed the signing of an open-skies air transport agreement between Canada and Korea, another significant milestone moving forward.

Ultimately our goal is to create jobs and growth for the benefit of Canadian businesses, workers, and their families. That is why we will continue to deliver pro-export leadership.

● (1055)

Mr. Alex Atamanenko (British Columbia Southern Interior, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his comments. As members probably know, his riding borders mine, and we work together on a number of issues.

I would just like to get a straight answer, if I can. We have brought up investor state rights, and I am hearing from the other side that wanting to have an amendment to this agreement to take out investor state rights is somehow contrary to trade or means wanting to block the agreement.

I have been following the whole idea of investor state rights ever since NAFTA. It seems ludicrous to me that any government would allow a foreign company to sue the government because it might feel that it was not treated fairly by certain environmental legislation or laws that were put in place by people at the municipal, provincial, or federal level.

I would like clarification. Why is it so important to have these investor state rights, when we have a legal system in both of our countries that can do the job, that will give our tax dollars to foreign companies, should they choose to sue us, either to defend the federal government or to make a payout? To me it does not make any sense. Why do we need to have this provision in an agreement between two civilized countries that would take our tax dollars to pay their corporations? Something is not quite right here, and I would like a definite explanation.

● (1100)

Hon. Ron Cannan: Mr. Speaker, I too would like to thank my hon. colleague from the British Columbia Southern Interior. I know that he is not going to be running next year, so I wish him all the best in his retirement. We have had many opportunities to spend hours in the air together and chat as we have crossed back and forth to our ridings.

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Philosophically, the aspect the New Democrats need to understand is investor protection. Our government believes that it is important that Canadians investing in another country are protected through a neutral third party, just as another country's investors who are investing in Canada would expect to be protected by the rule of law. What we would have is an independent third party that would protect the investments and look at them from an objective, neutral perspective. That is the challenge. Anyone doing business would expect to be treated fairly. I do not think it is unreasonable to have the expectation, whether it is Canadian investors investing in another country or people from another country investing in Canada, that they will be treated with respect and objectively and with fairness.

That is what we would have with the investor state provision. It has been around. It has been a cornerstone of trade agreements since NAFTA. It is an important cornerstone of modern trade agreements that we recognize around the world.

Mr. Marc Garneau (Westmount—Ville-Marie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Kelowna—Lake Country for his comment, and I would like to ask a question. We in the Liberal Party support free trade. There is sometimes a focus on declaring victory as soon there is the free trade deal, as though that in itself is the end point. It is more complicated than that. In the end, does it turn out to be a good deal for Canada?

Things like trade balances sometimes give us a bit of a clue as to whether it has been successful for Canada. On the issue of the trade balance, sometimes the figures are a bit discouraging. I am not saying that they are all-important. In the end, if we increase our trade, even though we may still have a trade imbalance with the country we are dealing with, that is still a positive thing.

The government talks about all the free trade deals it has negotiated. Has it analyzed whether, in the end, they are turning out to be a good deal for Canada, in terms of the deals that have been negotiated? I certainly hope they are.

Have we negotiated hard enough that this would actually profit Canada as much as we would like it to?

Hon. Ron Cannan: Mr. Speaker, I too would like to thank my hon. colleague for his contributions prior to being in the House and in the House, as well as taking the opportunity to visit my riding and sample some of the fruits of the labour.

We enjoy the fact that aspects of this agreement are going to benefit my constituents of Kelowna—Lake Country as the export of ice wine is one of the great opportunities for Canadian vintners across the country. I was told that Korea has the highest price point for red wine in the world. The agricultural community has been screaming that we need to get this bill through as fast as possible. It would absolutely be a big win for agriculture. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business is also speaking out strongly in favour of it.

The largest private sector employer in my riding is the aviation industry, Kelowna Flightcraft. Here is a quick quote from Jim Quick, who is the president and CEO of the Aerospace Industries Association of Canada:

Our industry depends on exports and access to international markets to remain competitive and continue creating jobs and revenues here at home.... This agreement

is imperative to restoring a level playing field for Canadian firms in the [southern] Korean market.

This is especially important given the considerable growth in the aerospace industry we will see in the Asia-Pacific region in coming years. He continued:

We congratulate the government on this achievement, and thank [its representatives] for their ongoing commitment to boosting Canadian competitiveness in international markets.

That is 50 million-plus people to feed, opportunities galore, and a great win for Canada and Korea. We look forward to implementing this agreement as soon as possible.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Ève Pécelet (La Pointe-de-l'Île, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise once again in the House to speak to Bill C-41 on the free trade agreement with South Korea. I will share my time with the member for Thunder Bay—Rainy River.

I have been a member of the House of Commons Standing Committee on International Trade for over a year, so I can say that I understand the issues raised by my Conservative colleagues, since the NDP has been trying for years to convince the government to adopt a fair and balanced approach to international trade negotiations.

Since the Conservatives came to power, they have adopted a rather simplistic approach to international trade. First, they completely discarded the notion of multilateralism, which is extremely important in a globalized economy like ours. They decided to adopt a bilateral approach and to sign free trade agreements with as many countries as possible. It almost seems as though we are in a time-limited relay race, as though the government has to sign as many free trade agreements with every country in the world before a certain date.

However, free trade in and of itself is not harmful. It is an extremely important aspect of our global economy. Nevertheless, it is just as important to take a fair and balanced approach and to gauge the interests of our own industries versus Canada's competitiveness on the international scene.

The Conservatives must understand that their simplistic approach to international trade is harming our businesses, not making them more competitive. When so many bilateral free trade agreements are being signed with other countries, there has to be a complementary approach at the national level. We need to give our businesses the support they need to remain competitive and ensure that there is reciprocity between the two states.

To summarize my opening comments, the free trade agreement with South Korea will be good for our economy and for all Canadians. However, as is the case with any approach, if we do not provide the necessary support to our own industries, unfortunately, they will lose out in the long term. We saw that happen when thousands of jobs were lost in our auto sector and manufacturing industry.

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In my riding, the manufacturing industry has suffered a great deal because of lack of support from successive governments. Several hundreds, if not thousands, of manufacturing jobs have been lost in Quebec. It is wrong to think that signing dozens of free trade agreements can erase all that. The government's role is to negotiate free trade agreements, of course, but it must also provide Canadian industries with the support and tools they need to remain competitive on the international scene.

The NDP will be supporting the free trade agreement. It is really unfortunate that the government decided to vote against our amendments. We proposed three, as the hon. member for Rivière-des-Mille-Îles said, and they were all rejected by the Conservative majority on the Standing Committee on International Trade. That situation is all too familiar for me. This is not the first time we have tried to work with the Conservatives and had them leave us in the dark and reject all of our attempts to improve legislation that has been introduced in the House of Commons.

● (1105)

Yes, on the whole, the free trade agreement will be good for Canada.

Since 1987, South Korea has become a democratic, multi-party democracy. It respects the fundamental values of democracy and human rights, and its labour rights standards are adequate. In terms of environmental protection, I would say that the Conservative government could learn a thing or two from South Korea. A few years ago, that country adopted a renewable energy and environmental protection policy that has made it a world leader in green energy. It seems to me that the Conservatives could learn a few things from our friends in South Korea, who have made the environment a priority.

South Korea's economy is extremely active and is very important to Canada. I believe that our exports to and imports from South Korea are comparable to our trade with European nations. It is therefore of strategic value to Canadians.

Having studied all of these criteria, the NDP decided to support this bill. As my colleagues have mentioned a few times, our agriculture, automotive and aerospace industries will benefit significantly from this free trade agreement. However, there is always a "but": a free trade agreement will stimulate the economy, but only up to a point because our industries will now compete with other industries. If the government does not give them the tools and support they need, our industries could suffer in the long term, unfortunately.

A free trade agreement can be part of a strategy, but unfortunately, if we look at the big picture, the government has failed in its duty toward our Canadian industries, particularly the automobile and manufacturing industries, because it has not provided them with the support they need, nor has it implemented adequate industrial and economic stimulation policies for our industries, which are now suffering as a result.

My riding in eastern Montreal, La Pointe-de-l'Île, is home to many manufacturing industries that would benefit greatly from some help from the federal government. Unfortunately, they have been forgotten. Perhaps the government has won the race to see how

many free trade agreements it could sign, but it has failed in its duty to protect Canadian jobs, including jobs in Quebec and in my riding in particular, La Pointe-de-l'Île.

This brings me to my final point. The Conservatives like to point fingers at us. They are saying that it does not make sense that the NDP wants to get rid of the part on investor state dispute settlement. I would like to remind all Canadians who are listening that their tax dollars—hundreds of millions of dollars, in fact—have been given to American companies because they challenged our regulations on the environment and on public health. These kinds of provisions do not need to be included in any free trade agreement, because unfortunately, our capacity and our sovereignty as a nation and as a House of Commons to make regulations to protect the environment and public health have been up for negotiation. Chapter 11 of NAFTA has given us ample evidence of this. Indeed, Canada has had to pay hundreds of millions of dollars in taxpayers' money to American companies because they did not agree with our environmental protection measures.

● (1110)

It is all well and good to point fingers at the NDP, but unfortunately, the facts and figures show that these kinds of provisions are not good for Canadians.

[*English*]

Hon. Gail Shea (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to hear the NDP will be supporting this trade agreement, because it is very important for the seafood sector. Of course, her home province of Quebec is a significant seafood producer.

On a recent trip to South Korea, I learned that price point factors very significantly with consumers in Korea when purchasing goods. Obviously, as a seafood producer without a trade agreement with Korea, we find our competitors enjoy much more sales in that marketplace than Canada does. Of course, one of those countries is the United States. What I did hear as well, loud and clear, is that Canadian seafood has a reputation for having the highest quality available anywhere in the world.

Expanding our market is crucial to providing a better return to Canadian fishers. Some would have heard me say in the House earlier this year that Canadian lobster landings have increased by 93% in the last six or seven years. The supply is growing faster than demand, which is contributing to depressed prices. Therefore, we know how important it is to expand these markets, because every new consumer we reach creates more demand for our delicious fish and seafood.

I would like to ask the hon. member several questions. What is the size of the potential new market for Canadian fish and seafood? What are the current tariffs in the fish and seafood sector? Could she comment on what this deal means for Quebec fishermen?

Government Orders

• (1115)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Ève Pécelet: Mr. Speaker, I totally agree with my colleague. This free trade agreement will benefit our seafood producers. We are on the same wavelength. I think that the tariffs are roughly 47% on Canadian seafood, which is a rather significant barrier. Obviously, eliminating these tariff barriers will help open the market to our seafood producers.

I know that a number of associations, including the Lobster Council of Canada—my colleague mentioned this—and also the Seafood Producers Association of British Columbia supported this bill. The same goes for the Atlantic provinces and Quebec.

This bill must move forward in order to support our industries. Nonetheless, I would remind my colleague, who is a minister, that she has to understand that the government has a responsibility to support our industries at the local level. It is good to open barriers and create new markets, but if our industries cannot remain competitive and do not get help from the federal government, then the free trade agreement serves no purpose.

[*English*]

Mr. Jasbir Sandhu (Surrey North, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Conservative speaker after speaker has gotten up in the House and talked about investment in research and technology and how Korea has invested over the years in science and technology. That is one of the reasons it has emerged as a tiger in Asia. They talk about investment in science and technology. Could the member tell me what the Conservative record is in regard to investing in science and technology?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Ève Pécelet: Mr. Speaker, my colleague put his finger on the problem, which is the principle.

The Conservatives think that signing free trade agreements will solve all the problems in our industries. As I said, this applies to any industry: agriculture, science and technology, the auto industry, and especially the aerospace industry. Montreal lost hundreds of jobs, even though Canada was a leader in the field.

A free trade agreement is not an investment. The Canadian government must invest in its national industries and then sign free trade agreements. Then it must ensure that the health of our industries is reflected in all the other states.

• (1120)

[*English*]

Mr. John Rafferty (Thunder Bay—Rainy River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as has already been indicated, the NDP will be supporting the bill at third reading. I am glad to see that my friend from Kitchener—Conestoga is happy about that.

Mr. Harold Albrecht: Hear, hear!

Mr. John Rafferty: Mr. Speaker, when the NDP looks at trade deals, we use four very important criteria to assess these deals.

Is the proposed partner one who respects democracy and human rights, and does it have adequate environmental and labour standards, and Canadian values?

If there are challenges in these regards, is the partner moving towards these goals?

Is the proposed partner's economy of significant or strategic value to Canada? On this point, I might just comment on the minister's question for the previous speaker.

Currently, seafood from both our coasts is subject, in some cases, to 47% tariffs. Under this deal, not all but most of those tariffs would disappear, which would certainly be good for fishers on both of our coasts. Therefore, on the question of this deal being of strategic value, in many areas it is, and a little later I will talk about the wood and forest industry.

Also, are the terms of the agreement satisfactory, and are they of net benefit to Canada?

There are some issues, which I will talk about in a moment, but on balance, this trade agreement is with a democratic country that has high standards. It is a good deal, and so Canada can support it.

Furthermore, South Korea is an established democracy that has high standards for labour rights, human rights, and environmental protections. It is a large market that offers significant opportunities for Canadian business to gain a foothold in the important Asian market area. Of course, it is also an opportunity for Canada to diversify its trade.

As the forestry critic for the official opposition, I will say a few words about forestry and wood products in this particular deal.

Canada's forestry and wood products industry includes newsprint, wood pulp, wood panels, and other value-added products. Even with the downsizing and the loss of 48,000 jobs in the last few years, the forest industry still contributes over \$20 billion to Canada's GDP, and it still employs 230,000 Canadians in primary and secondary manufacturing. Many of these jobs are for high-skilled trades.

Canadian exporters to Korea are really at a disadvantage by tariff lines on Canadian wood products, which are, in some cases, up to 10%. Now, 10% might not sound nearly as bad as up to 47% for some seafood products from Canada, but 10% in a very competitive business means a lot of money on the bottom line for Canadian forest companies.

It is important to note that this free trade agreement would provide growth opportunities for value-added wood products, which would help develop good family-sustaining jobs in the value-added economy. As we move forward, this would be good for the forest and wood products in my critic area.

The Korean free trade agreement is different from the European and China agreements. I will highlight some of the differences, which might help to further explain why we are supporting this trade deal with Korea.

Unlike the China deal, the terms in the South Korea free trade agreement are reciprocal. I think that is a very important element to keep in mind as we move forward in this debate.

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•(1125)

The Korea free trade agreement would not apply to provincial, territorial, or municipal procurement or crown corporations, where most Canadian procurement is located. That is good for businesses like Bombardier in my riding, Thunder Bay—Rainy River, so that if the City of Toronto, for example, decides it needs new streetcars, Bombardier can bid competitively and keep its 800 to 1,200 high-paying, family-sustaining jobs in Thunder Bay. That is a good part of this deal that is missing from other trade deals.

The Korea free trade agreement would not apply to or negatively affect supply-managed agriculture products, something the NDP has always protected with the belief—and I know this belief is probably right through this place—that we cannot forget that farmers feed cities in this country and it is important that they be able to keep and work their farms and, hopefully, be able to retire with that income.

The Korea free trade agreement does not contain any negative intellectual property provisions. When I say that, I am thinking of pharmaceutical and copyright, for example. Michael Geist has pronounced positively on the intellectual property terms of the Korea free trade agreement, calling it a “model” agreement.

While the Korea free trade agreement does have investor state provision, it contains transparency guarantees, and we are fully able to cancel that on six months notice. More importantly, particularly for the east coast of Canada, shipbuilding is exempt from federal procurement rules. Therefore, there are some differences, and those differences highlight why New Democrats can support this deal and have perhaps not supported other deals that the government has sought to make.

A question came up earlier in the debate, so I will say a few words about investor state dispute settlements. Quite frankly, an NDP government would not have included investor state dispute settlements in the Korea free trade agreement. Just as a side note, the investor state dispute settlement mechanism in this free trade agreement is also opposed by Korea's main opposition party. An NDP government would negotiate with South Korea to have it dropped. I heard the government say earlier that this is a mechanism that is in all modern free trade agreements. I am not entirely sure that it needs to be; so it needs to be looked at a little more closely.

One would think, as I am speaking, that everything is rosy between the government and the official opposition on this particular bill, but the fact of the matter is that New Democrats proposed six amendments at committee and the government, true to form, dismissed them wholesale. It decided to dismiss these amendments out of hand without a proper discussion or looking at whether these amendments might improve the bill. That is true to form, along with just about everything else that has happened for the last three and a half years in committees. It is unfortunate that the government has always been so heavy handed in terms of amendments.

There are some things New Democrats would like the government to do after this bill passes. We want the government to make sure it supports our automotive industry. We support breaking down trade barriers, but we believe government should provide the support that Canadian industry needs to remain competitive in a more open world economy.

New Democrats also agree with the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and others that the government needs to do more than sign trade agreements. It must do more to promote Canadian exports, attract investment, and help Canadian companies penetrate the South Korean and other Asian markets.

•(1130)

The New Democrats want a strategic trade policy where we restart multilateral negotiations and sign trade deals with developed countries that have high standards and with developing countries that are on progressive trajectories. These are countries like Japan, India, Brazil and South Africa.

The bottom line is that this is not the precise agreement that we would have negotiated. There are some problems, as I have outlined, but we will support this free trade agreement.

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Northwest Territories, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to note that South Korea has now put in place a carbon trading practice. It is very progressive in dealing with climate change. Now we have a situation where a Canadian government that is so lax on its international agreements on climate change has been put in almost last place among developed countries dealing with climate change. The Prime Minister is vilified as a climate change villain by organizations around the world.

Does the member think that circumstances will arise in the next few years where South Korea may take action against Canadian laws and companies that may want to invest in the country because they do not follow the same level of environmental standards that South Korea has?

Mr. John Rafferty: Mr. Speaker, my friend is absolutely right. One never knows what could possibly happen as an offshoot of an agreement like this. It is entirely possible.

I will give one possible scenario of a Korean company that finds itself exporting into Canada. Finding that it has extra costs associated with the environmental rules and regulations that it may have in South Korea but that do not exist here and may not be as stringent, it could become a sticking point and something that would need to be negotiated. Alternatively, with the investor state mechanism, perhaps the Canadian government could even be sued over that kind of situation.

It is a problem. Some might say that it is a good thing. Maybe a trade deal with South Korea would improve Canada's action on climate change. That remains to be seen.

[*Translation*]

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his excellent speech.

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A certain document prepared by the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development shows that Canada dragged its feet on signing trade agreements with important markets that are of strategic interest to Canada.

In fact, the government allegedly wasted many resources and a great deal of time negotiating agreements with far-right governments, small Latin American countries and other countries that are of no strategic interest to Canada but are friends of the Conservative government. Unfortunately this has not helped our economic development or our trade.

Could my colleague comment on this document from the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development?

[*English*]

Mr. John Rafferty: Mr. Speaker, indeed, this free trade agreement has been almost nine years in the making. In that time, other players, like the European Union and the United States, made their own free trade agreements with South Korea. It has put us at a great disadvantage. In fact, if we look at the other free trade agreements that the European Union and the United States have made, one might think they actually got better deals than we did in a number of areas.

We have been playing catch-up. Nine years is a long time, while other countries or groups of countries get in to make their own deals.

I do not want to speak for the government, but I suppose that it made deals with some of the other smaller countries and, in some cases, less developed countries because they felt they were easy and would move ahead, and that Korea would be difficult, just as the European Union deal appears to be quite difficult and still ongoing.

• (1135)

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, before I begin my remarks on the Canada-Korea free trade agreement, I am sure I speak for all of my colleagues when I say that our hearts and prayers are with the family and friends of Corporal Nathan Cirillo in the final ceremonies honouring his life today.

I am very thankful to the RCMP, our security staff on the Hill and especially Sergeant-at-Arms Kevin Vickers for their great work last Wednesday. I am certain that in those first few moments last Wednesday, there were many thousands of prayers offered by Canadians. I want to thank God for his protection that the tragedy of last Wednesday was not much worse than it was.

I am pleased to rise today to speak about the historic Canada-Korea free trade agreement. I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Willowdale.

It is only our Conservative government that is focused on what matters to Canadians: jobs, growth, and long-term prosperity. By pursuing an ambitious trade agenda, our Conservative government has provided Canadian businesses with access to new opportunities in dynamic markets around the globe.

The Canada-Korea free trade agreement is a landmark achievement that will restore a level playing field for Canadian companies competing in the South Korean market. It is also Canada's first agreement with an Asian country. This is an important point to keep in mind.

As chair of the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development, I would like to focus some of my remarks on the environmental provisions contained in the agreement. I am proud of our government's action to protect our environment.

Both Canada and South Korea have committed to ensuring that trade does not come at the expense of the environment by negotiating robust and ambitious environmental obligations into the environment chapter in this free trade agreement.

While Canada has traditionally included strong, legally binding commitments to protect our environment in parallel environment agreements, we have in these negotiations moved those provisions within the free trade agreement itself. This is the same approach we pursued in the Canada-European Union trade agreement negotiations and reflects the importance that Canada places on ensuring that free and open trade and environmental protection are prominent and mutually supportive in our agreements.

Canada and South Korea have committed to promote sustainable development and to undertake their commitments in a manner that is consistent with environmental protection and conservation.

This environment chapter obliges both countries to maintain high levels of environmental protection, as we intensify our trade relationship. It commits us to effectively enforce our environmental laws and to ensure that we do not weaken them in order to encourage trade or investment.

In addition, we have agreed to obligations that address accountability and transparency, public awareness and engagement, all fundamental Canadian values.

This builds on a tradition of transparency and public engagement enshrined in all of our trade agreements beginning with our first environmental agreement, the North American Agreement On Environmental Cooperation.

We have a strong record of achievement in implementing our first and most comprehensive environment agreement with our North American partners. In fact, this year we celebrated the 20th anniversary of the North American Agreement On Environmental Cooperation. The Minister of the Environment had the privilege of hosting her American and Mexican counterparts in Canada's north this past July.

In Yellowknife, our three countries agreed to focus on three priority areas for the organization's next strategic plan: climate change, green growth and sustainable communities and ecosystems.

The environmental chapter also requires that each party provide appropriate and effective sanctions or remedies in the case of domestic law violations. Ensuring that our citizens have access to strong and robust legal systems is a priority for this government. In this regard, our government has enhanced enforcement of federal environmental legislation through the Environmental Enforcement Act.

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Once fully implemented, existing environmental laws will be further strengthened through the establishment of minimum fines and increasing maximum fines which will more accurately reflect the severity of environmental offences.

Recognizing the value of international co-operation in addressing environmental challenges, we are affirming our commitment to implement the multi-lateral environmental agreements that we have already ratified. This includes such agreements as the convention on biological diversity.

● (1140)

We also look forward to sharing Canada's achievements under the national conservation plan. Through this plan, Canada will invest \$252 million over five years, with a focus on conserving our lands and waters, restoring our ecosystems, and connecting Canadians to nature.

The environment chapter of the Canada-Korea free trade agreement will also provide for potential future co-operation to support the objectives of the agreement. Both Canada and Korea recognize the value of sharing expertise and best practices to help advance our shared commitment to sustainable development and environmental responsibility.

Distinct dispute resolution mechanisms are also included in this chapter to ensure that the obligations are respected. If a matter comes up, we would seek to resolve it through consultations and co-operation, including at the ministerial level. If the issue remains unresolved, we would seek advice from a panel of experts and work together to implement the panel's recommendations.

Beyond the environmental chapter, the free trade agreement itself includes important trade-related environment provisions. These include provisions stipulating that nothing in this agreement shall prevent Canada and South Korea from taking measures necessary to protect the environment.

The agreement also includes commitments for both governments to encourage their respective enterprises operating abroad to observe internationally recognized standards of responsible business conduct, including respect to environment.

We stand with Canadians incredibly disappointed that the NDP tried to completely gut the bill at the trade committee. It tabled amendments to remove the investor protection provisions that are cornerstones of modern trade and investment agreements.

This is just as harmful as the neglect of international trade under the Liberals. For 13 long years, they took Canada out of trade negotiations, putting Canadian workers and businesses at severe risk of falling behind in this era of global markets.

Canada and South Korea have demonstrated through this agreement our commitment to protecting the environment. From Canada's perspective, it is a commitment that we see reflected across our agenda. For example, Canada is taking action on climate change both domestically and internationally. On the international stage, we continue to work with our international partners to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to address climate change globally.

Canada continues to play an active role in the United Nations framework convention on climate change and is fully committed to establishing a fair and effective climate change agreement that includes all major emitters.

We are also a founding partner and a major financial contributor, as well as an active participant, in the climate change and clean air coalition to marshal global efforts to tackle short-lived climate pollutants. This is in addition to action we are taking domestically through a strategic and pragmatic sector-by-sector regulatory approach.

We have already taken action on some of the largest sources of emissions in our country, the transportation and electricity generation sectors. As we announced last week at the United Nations climate change summit, we will build on our record by taking pre-emptive action to reduce and limit harmful hydrofluorocarbon, or HFC, emissions before they actually increase.

We are proud that Canada's economy has grown substantially, while our greenhouse gas emissions have decreased, with per capita emissions now at their lowest level since we started recording in 1990. We have demonstrated that we can protect the environment, while supporting a strong and robust economy.

Our government values high-quality economic growth and is committed to sustainable development as we continue to cultivate new opportunities for Canadian businesses abroad. We believe that trade and environment can go hand-in-hand, and this agreement proves it.

No government in Canada's history has been more committed to the creation of jobs and prosperity for Canadian businesses, workers and their families.

The farmers, food processors and manufacturers of Waterloo region are supportive of this agreement and are excited that they will reap the fruits of our labours.

On this side of the House, we recognize that Canadian business can compete and excel around the world, given a level playing field. I do not understand why the opposition seems to be against our attempts to put Canadians on equal footing with our international competitors.

I call for the speedy implementation of the Canada-Korea free trade agreement.

Government Orders

•(1145)

Ms. Ève Péclet (La Pointe-de-l'Île, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have immense respect for my colleague here on the other side and my other colleagues. However, they have been telling the House that we were trying to kill the bill at committee and that we are not respecting the will of Canadians. This is a legislative process and the opposition has proposed valuable amendments that the Conservatives voted against. They keep telling us that we are trying to kill the bill. I spoke three times on the bill. We are not trying to kill the bill, we are trying to discuss it.

I have immense respect for my colleague. I am sure he has immense respect for the legislative process. How is proposing amendments to make a bill better trying to kill the bill?

Mr. Harold Albrecht: Mr. Speaker, if I did say kill the bill, I misspoke. I certainly did not intend to say that. I do not believe I said that. I may have said to gut the bill because I believe very strongly in the important provision of investor protection. If we are to encourage Canadians to invest in Korea, it is important that we have these mechanisms in place to protect the equity Canadians would like to invest.

To acknowledge my colleague and her concern, I want to thank the New Democrats for their intention of supporting the bill. It is a great move forward. To finally see some support for responsible initiatives that would be good for Canadian families and businesses is a change that we welcome on this side.

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Northwest Territories, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my colleague said something in his presentation that is kind of a half truth, which is that our per capita emissions are the lowest they have ever been. That is not how the world measures and has agreed to measure emissions of CO₂. Rather, it is by the actual amount of CO₂ emissions. My colleague would have to agree that since 1990 those have gone up and to try to change the statistics by using different formulas to present a case is disingenuous.

We put forward a motion to prohibit the weakening of environmental standards to encourage investment. If my colleague is so concerned about the environment, why would his government and the Conservative Party vote against this amendment, which was designed to ensure that nothing would change our ability and our desire to improve environmental standards in both countries?

Why would the Conservatives reject this amendment? Was it rejected because they foresee that there may be times in the future when investment will ask for lower environmental standards?

Mr. Harold Albrecht: Mr. Speaker, this gives me a great opportunity to set the record straight, because my colleague may remember that he is quoting statistics from 1990. Between that time and the time that our government took office, there were 13 years of Liberal inaction on climate change. The Liberals signed agreements but under those agreements the greenhouse gas emissions rose by 30%.

Since we took office, greenhouse gas emissions have dropped by over 5% during a time when the economy grew by over 10%. Therefore, I think members see that there is definite improvement on the environmental front under this government.

I could go on about many of the other environmental initiatives that our government is working on, and my colleague often serves on the environment committee so he would be aware of them. In our national conservation plan we are partnering with partners on the ground who are already actively doing work to protect our environment, and this would have the synergistic effect of doubling or tripling the effect to be had from investments we make.

I am proud of our government's record on the environmental protection standards that we have implemented.

•(1150)

Mr. Chungsen Leung (Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to stand in the House to speak on the Canada-Korea free trade agreement.

At the onset, I should indicate that prior to entering politics, I had an opportunity to do a significant amount of business in South Korea. As a matter of fact, one of the subway systems that is used in a suburb of Seoul is a system that I introduced to them back in the mid-1980s.

However, what I would like to address today is the broader implications of the Canada-Korea free trade agreement being the first of our many agreements, hopefully, in the Asia-Pacific region.

Our Conservative government is committed to protecting and strengthening the long-term financial security of hard-working Canadians. The creation of jobs and economic growth for the benefit of Canadian businesses, workers, and their families continues to be our focus. That is why we will continue to deliver pro-export leadership.

I would like to highlight the Canada-Korea free trade agreement in the broader context of Canada's foreign policy in the Asia-Pacific region.

This dynamic region accounts for half of the world's population and is expected to contain two-thirds of the world's middle class by 2030. By that point, it is further estimated that the region would account for one-half of global GDP. Canada and our competitors recognize the significant potential Asia-Pacific has to offer, in terms of productivity, investment and innovation.

In the last Speech from the Throne, we committed to expanding trade in the Asia-Pacific region to benefit hard-working Canadians and businesses, especially, our crucial small and medium-size enterprises and industries across the country.

In addition to the Canada-Korea free trade agreement that we are discussing today, Canada continues to pursue agreements with other Asia-Pacific nations. Earlier this month, we ratified a foreign investment promotion and protection agreement with China. We are also participating in the trans-Pacific partnership negotiations with 11 other countries in the region, and are negotiating an economic partnership agreement with Japan.

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The tremendous economic momentum and potential of the Asia-Pacific has been accompanied by political and demographic shifts across the region. Amid this transformation, Canada has made our relations with Asia-Pacific a top foreign policy priority in order to contribute to regional and global security and prosperity.

In August, the Minister of Foreign Affairs announced additional Canadian funding in the amount of \$14 million to help address security issues of shared concern in Southeast Asia. The projects include those to mitigate biological and nuclear threats; disrupt illicit flows, while protecting legitimate trade; combat human smuggling activities; improve regional cybersecurity tools; and work with our Association of Southeast Asian Nations partners to prevent and respond to terrorism.

For example, we are helping states by providing training and equipment, and technical and legal assistance to address the foreign fighter phenomenon and radicalization. Canada committed \$2.3 million to support efforts by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to identify and detect foreign fighters, individuals who are returning to their countries from abroad having been further radicalized and with the training and experience to undertake terrorist activities at home.

Canada also provides bilateral development assistance to countries such as Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Mongolia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, and the Philippines, as well as other countries across Southeast Asia.

Furthermore, Canada provides development assistance through multilateral and global programs in Asia, as well as through partnerships between Canadian organizations and counterparts in Asia. In the fiscal year 2012-13, Canada provided approximately \$1 billion in official development assistance to countries in Asia.

As an example, in September, our government announced funding for World Vision Canada and the Canadian Red Cross to support projects that are improving the health and well-being of vulnerable people in Afghanistan, as well as strengthening community resilience to natural disasters in Southeast Asia. Stability and security are vital to the prosperity of the region and that of Canada. We have a stake in attaining these objectives and we have made important contributions to supporting them in the Asia-Pacific region.

South Korea has witnessed rapid development, democratic evolution, and growing regional and international interests. It joined the United Nations in 1991 and in 2010 it was accepted into the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

• (1155)

These milestones have facilitated and enhanced co-operation between Canada and Korea in a number of political and security dimensions such as arms control, disarmament, peacekeeping and development assistance. Canada and Korea are both active in multilateral fora and partners in promoting global peace and security. Both countries also co-operate on security issues in other fora, such as the ASEAN Regional Forum and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum.

Additionally, we share important alliances with the United States and the Asia-Pacific and beyond. Canada supports efforts to maintain peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and in that region, and takes seriously the threat posed by North Korea to regional and indeed global security. We stand with South Korea in its efforts to ensure peace on the peninsula. North and South Korea technically remain at war as hostilities were concluded with an armistice, not a peace treaty.

Canada remains gravely concerned about North Korea's provocative and destabilizing actions such as nuclear and missile tests and related proliferation, as well as its egregious human rights abuses. Canada strongly supports the six-party talks as a framework for credible negotiation on the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. Some of the great success stories of democratization in the last generation can be found in the Republic of Korea as well as Taiwan, Indonesia and Mongolia.

Canada now has more diplomatic staff in Asia than anywhere else in the world. Canada places great value on our relationships with the Asia-Pacific region and with Asian countries. We increased our presence on the ground with over 10 new offices in China and India since 2006. We will be establishing Canadian diplomatic presences in both Cambodia and Laos, and Canada is establishing a mission to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations headed by a new ambassador.

While in Burma in September, the Minister of Foreign Affairs opened Canada's newest diplomatic mission. Establishing a trade commissioner service in Burma is an integral component of the embassy as Canadian companies will have an important role to play in fostering sustainable economic growth while providing opportunities for Canada's private sector. No government in Canadian history has been more committed to the creation of jobs and prosperity for Canadian businesses, workers and their families. Deepening Canada's trading relations in dynamic and high-growth markets around the world is key to these efforts.

Government Orders

Canada's network of missions across Asia will help us to promote Canadian values: freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law. People in the region seek a bright future, including freedom and opportunity. Canada is ready to help them and to invite Canada's private sector to expand our engagement. Economic opportunity, in Canada and elsewhere, rests on free, transparent and open markets, the rule of law and democratic governance. As like-minded partners, Canada and Korea share a strong commitment to these values. Canadian foreign policy, including our trade policy, will not only promote peace and prosperity, but will contribute to the development of the wider Asia-Pacific region. In this context, the Canada-Korea free trade agreement is an important achievement that would advance our bilateral relations with Korea as well as Canada's broader objectives in this region.

We stand with Canadians incredibly disappointed that the New Democrats tried to completely gut the bill at the trade committee, where they made amendments to remove the investor protection provisions, cornerstones of modern trade and investment agreements. This is as harmful as the neglect of international trade under the Liberals who took Canada virtually out of the game of trade negotiations, putting Canadian workers and businesses at severe risk of falling behind in this era of global markets.

Thanks to the leadership of our government, in less than seven years our government has reached free trade agreements with 38 countries, bringing Canada's total to 43 countries. By continuing to actively pursue broader market access to new investment opportunities, we are providing Canada's businesses and exporters with access on preferential terms to the largest, most dynamic and fastest-growing economies and regions around the world.

• (1200)

Mr. Jasbir Sandhu (Surrey North, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the hon. member's speech very carefully. I have been listening to speeches by the Conservatives since this morning and one of the things they keep bringing up is the investment that South Korea makes in science and technology. Korea became one of the tigers in Asia because of its investment in science and technology, yet the record of the current government is that it has made cuts to scientists. It has eliminated thousands of positions, and that is not a direction that we should be heading toward, having learned from what Korea has done over the years. Not only did the Conservatives cut scientists, they actually muzzled them to ensure that it is the Conservative spin that carries on.

My question is very simple. What can the Conservatives learn from Korea in regard to investment in science and technology?

Mr. Chungsen Leung: Mr. Speaker, the Korean scientific model was built very much on Korea's acceptance of trade. When I went there in the 1980s and the 1990s, the first request was for us to help with scientific development. Scientific development in railroad technology and subway technology was a Canadian investment in the Korean marketplace. Understanding how that technology worked helped Korea to develop its railroad technology to where it is today.

Canada's investment record in developing all these technologies, such as in urban transit, is second to none. We have advances in software development, agriculture, and in all of our technology. We are ready to go from innovation to commercialization. The Canadian innovation record is excellent.

Ms. Chrystia Freeland (Toronto Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the parliamentary secretary for his remarks. I particularly endorse his point that opening up Canadian trade to Asia and opening up Asia to the Canadian economy is absolutely essential.

As the House knows, the really big deal, which would cover 40% of the world's economy, is the TPP. I would be very interested in the member's views on how those talks are going. If, as some observers fear, it looks as though they are getting bogged down, does the hon. member believe that Canada should be pursuing its bilateral talks with Japan more energetically?

Mr. Chungsen Leung: Mr. Speaker, the trans-Pacific partnership is like other agreements in which Canada participates through the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and with APEC. The coastline spans the Pacific, covering more than half the world's population. It is possibly one of the greatest consumer markets as well, and one of the higher-income markets as we approach the next generation.

Canadian TPP negotiations are well under way. Unlike some countries, we are not the first to jump in. We are looking to see how the trade negotiations transpire. As a matter of fact, as we speak, the Minister of International Trade will be returning from his discussions on this matter.

I have also participated in a number of briefing sessions on the TPP, especially in the greater Toronto area. I think we are advancing quite well in this area.

Hon. Deepak Obhrai (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and for International Human Rights, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is indeed an honour for me to rise and speak today on the free trade agreement between Canada and South Korea.

This trade agreement has been a very long journey. It started under a Liberal government, but the Liberals had a record of not doing much about trade. During the Liberals' tenure, they just talked about it. After 10 years, they had only three free trade agreements.

There has been persistence by this government. The Prime Minister, the Minister of International Trade, and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade have been consistent in trying to reach an agreement with South Korea.

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As a matter of fact, at this stage I would like to acknowledge others who have also been working extremely hard to come to a fruitful conclusion for this free trade agreement. They include my colleague from Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, Senator Yonah Martin, and colleagues who have been going to South Korea as part of the South Korea-Canada association. Here I include myself: I have made four visits to Korea, the last one being a state visit with the Governor General. During this visit we again raised this issue.

All of these officials consistently put pressure that both sides should continue to negotiate, because this free trade agreement is of immense benefit to both countries. When the Prime Minister met with the President of South Korea at Bali at a conference, both of them agreed that the agreement should be concluded very quickly. When the President of South Korea visited Canada, we were able to say that the free trade negotiations begun in 2005 had finally reached a conclusion. That is what we are debating in Parliament today. It will be ratified as well by the South Korean parliament.

When we look at the history of North and South Korea, we see that there has been tremendous advancement made by the people of South Korea in building their economy, which is one of the fastest-growing economies in the world today. It is a tribute to the people of South Korea. We are very grateful that Canada has over 200,000 people from South Korea living in this country and contributing to our prosperity.

In Canada, everyone knows about the Kia cars and the televisions being built in Korea. Korea's high technology is a tribute to that great country. It is natural for Canada, a country with a small population and vast natural resources, to look for markets overseas to continue to build on our prosperity by building free trade agreements bilaterally with other countries. I am pleased to say that since 2006, when this government came into power, as has been mentioned many times, we have signed 36 agreements. Before that, the Conservative government signed two more, bringing the total under the Conservative government to 38 free trade agreements around the world.

Let us just imagine the business that free trade agreements open up in the market for Canadian goods around the world. We have full confidence in Canadian businesses. We are one of the best in mining, engineering, and agriculture. We have a vast variety of businesses and products and we need markets where we can grow.

• (1205)

The NAFTA agreement we reached with the U.S.A. and Mexico is a clear example of why a free trade agreement is very beneficial. It has benefited all three countries. To say that a free trade agreement benefits one country over another is wrong. New Democrats have said at times that we are giving ground to other countries; we are not. What we are doing is opening markets for us as well as for them. It is mutually beneficial. That is why South Korea is now one of the strongest economies in Asia, and that is why Canada is also a strong economy. Let us not kid about it: Canada is one of the strongest economies in the world and is able to share with others.

Businesses need this market, and the market is growing. The Liberal critic talked about TPP. Indeed, we have TPP negotiations going on, and they are very extensive. These negotiations are going

on. We see that the WTO talks have collapsed, but the problem is that we cannot wait for a global situation on a free trade agreement. Therefore, this government took upon itself a very robust agenda of free trade and went out, as I mentioned, to 36 countries. Imagine the market we have opened up for our Canadian businesses to take advantage of.

Of course, because we have the experience that comes with signing so many agreements, we know exactly how an agreement will impact the economy. We have taken into account every sector of the economy. We have talked to the provinces. We have talked to businesses. We have their input, and we have come up with a game plan or template on how free trade agreements should be done.

We are currently in negotiations with India on this same template, but we have also successfully done negotiations with the European Union. If we think about the markets of the European Union and NAFTA, we see that Canadian businesses are poised to take advantage.

From the other perspective, opportunities are opened up for Canadians to go overseas to work and gain experience and become first class in their businesses. That is happening around the world. Canada is welcomed anywhere in the world. We have a very robust corporate social responsibility. We hold Canadian companies to a high standard, and that is why we are welcomed wherever we go. They want Canadian expertise. In this situation, it works best to have a free trade agreement.

This agreement would be beneficial both for Korea and for Canada. There is no downsizing to this thing, contrary to what New Democrats will say, because experience has shown to us, as in NAFTA, that this is not a downsizing but an important and beneficial thing for Canada.

Koreans have already signed free trade agreements with the U.S. and with the European Union, so these countries are far ahead of us. Because of that, we started losing ground in South Korea. Our exports have fallen, and if we do not sign this agreement, how will we catch up? It had become an unlevel playing field, and the Europeans and Americans were far ahead of us. Now we are catching up, and we should be there.

That is why it is important for the other side to understand that we live in a global world. Other people are signing free trade agreements, as I just mentioned. The European Union, the U.S., and other countries are in TPP negotiations. We are in negotiations with Japan, with India, and with other countries, but at the end of the day, other countries are doing the same thing. If we are not up in the forefront in doing those things, we will lose ground, and we, with the smaller population, will suffer the financial consequences if we lose ground.

• (1210)

Let me expand on how provinces will benefit from this agreement. We have a vast country, from British Columbia all the way to P.E.I., and every region has its own strength in natural resources, which it can leverage on the world market. There is agriculture and potash; in the north there are diamonds, forestry, oil; and potatoes in P.E.I. We need this vast country, as I have stated, to move out and do it.

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The Canadian trade delegation, led by the Minister of International Trade and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, is robust. I just came back from my visit to India, where the premier of British Columbia brought in a strong trade delegation to build up markets with India. I accompanied the Governor General to Brazil, which is an emerging market. It is a market where we can sell and expand our trade with Latin America. I was with the Governor General in Southeast Asia looking for markets to expand in.

All countries are doing the same thing. There is a global competition. It is not as if Canada is doing something different from others. There is a global competition to enter into other markets. Our good friends in Australia have successfully concluded a free trade agreement with Korea. They are good friends, but they are now our competition. They are there ahead of us. If we do not do these things, then we will lose ground. That is why I find it quite strange that New Democrats use any kind of excuse to say they do not want a free trade agreement and they feel we must live within our boundaries. They have never approved any free trade agreement. I have been here for a long time.

New Democrats need to understand that Canada is a trading nation. We market goods; we sell goods to markets. Think of the market in the U.S. that has over 300 million people, the market in the European Union that has 600 million people, the market in India that has 1.2 billion people, or the market in China that has 1 billion people. Canadian companies are robustly present in all of these areas. We have a global presence.

Canada is recognized around the world. As I travel, I see that we have a global presence. We have a global presence because, as I have stated, we have a great reputation, but we are also traders. When we trade around the world, we do it fairly and we have a good corporate socially responsible system here, contrary to what the NDP says. I will not mention the Liberals because with them there is only talk on trade and no action.

I am delighted to say that I have been to Korea and it is a country that I thoroughly admire, as well as the people. This free trade agreement would be of benefit not only to the world but Canada and everyone else, and I ask my colleagues on the other side to support this great agreement.

• (1215)

Mr. Jasbir Sandhu (Surrey North, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I too was part of the Governor General's delegation with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs to Korea. As he would recall, I actually encouraged the government to speed up the agreement that we were going to sign with South Korea.

Here is a memo from the parliamentary secretary's own department. It says that the foreign affairs department shows that Canada has been slow to conclude trade deals with strategic partners and markets because resources and time were wasted securing agreements with extreme right-wing governments in tiny Latin American countries.

We have been encouraging the government to negotiate good, fair trade agreements with our strategic partners, in markets where we sell a lot. South Asia is one of those markets where we sell a lot of

goods, and we should be negotiating good trade agreements there that will be beneficial to Canadians.

My question is this. Why has the Conservative trade policy been so unfocused and erratic? Why do the Conservatives not have a focused policy where we negotiate with governments and markets into which we can expand our businesses?

• (1220)

Hon. Deepak Obhrai: Mr. Speaker, I am delighted that I hear support from the NDP for our trade negotiations. I have been here for a long time, and I have never heard the NDP come and say that it is for trade. Rather, it puts all kinds of obstacles in the way to say that it does not want to sign this trade deal. The NDP should see its record, but I am glad that the member is on the record to say that he supports this thing. I hope that when we work, he will work for this free trade agreement.

In answering his question, I am a little puzzled. We have negotiated, almost, with the European Union. We are in negotiations with India. We are in negotiations with Korea, which we are talking about today. We are in negotiations with Japan. We are in negotiations for a trans-Pacific partnership. If these are the countries that he thinks are small countries, then he really needs to double-check his facts out there.

Mr. Jasbir Sandhu: Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for another opportunity to ask a question for the parliamentary secretary.

Honduras, a country that we negotiated with, has a terrible record, and it is a tiny country. We need to negotiate with countries that have strategic value for Canada and where there is a lot of value for us to be able to negotiate with them. What I have seen from the Conservative government is that it has been wasting its time negotiating these tiny agreements just to get its numbers up, so it can say it has negotiated with 20 or 50 countries.

What we should be focusing on is countries like Korea. It started negotiations back in 2003. There is the European Union. This is what the parliamentary secretary was saying about how we have been losing ground. We have been losing ground to the European Union and the United States. The European Union and the United States started negotiating trade agreements with Korea after we did, yet they concluded their negotiations before we concluded ours.

We have been losing ground. We have been losing ground because of the Conservative government.

South Korea has been investing in science and technology for many years, and this investment is one of the reasons it has emerged as a tiger in Asia. What can the Conservatives learn from Korea?

Hon. Deepak Obhrai: Mr. Speaker, signing a free trade agreement with a country like Honduras and what the member is talking about is a good thing. Colombia and all these countries here widen the market, even if they are smaller. There are Canadian companies that are doing business in those parts of the world. For them, this is a great advantage.

Government Orders

On the larger scale of things, I have already pointed out where we are going with our trade agreements. It is quite interesting now that the member opposite is talking about the slow pace of negotiations with this deal here. I would remind him that there are two parties to a free trade agreement, not one party. We walk in with our template when we go to negotiate, which is what the Prime Minister and the President of South Korea did when they finally said, "Let us move on." We did move on. It is this government that has moved on.

To my colleague over here, I am pretty delighted to know that the NDP is now going to be a pro-trade party. We are delighted and looking forward to their supporting other trade agreements that will come forward over here. I will keep note of what he just said.

• (1225)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mathieu Ravnat (Pontiac, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as with any free trade agreement, we must ensure that Canadian markets benefit and, to a certain extent, that our businesses can compete internationally.

This requires that we conduct studies and gather information. We have to consider these studies when we move forward with a free trade agreement. Otherwise, there can be very serious repercussions for some sectors of the Canadian economy.

I would just like to ask my dear colleague if basic market research was done before this free trade agreement was negotiated.

[*English*]

Hon. Deepak Obhrai: Mr. Speaker, as I stated, we have 36 signed free trade agreements around the world, or 38. We have a template, which comes after extensive negotiations and talks with our own people, provinces, businesses, and so forth in this country. We take that into account.

It is not as if we are just signing one agreement that is different from another agreement. No, we use the examples we have had and the success rate we have had. This is why we say this is a successful template, which is why it takes a little longer for us to negotiate with other countries. Other countries have their own interests as well. However, ultimately, things are moving forward.

When Korea signed the deal with the U.S. and the European Union, they had a template as well, which they completed. We also came to a successful conclusion. However, extensive consultation takes place in Canada before we sign these agreements

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mathieu Ravnat: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my dear colleague for his answer. It is not reassuring. He spoke about consultation and a template for free trade agreements used in the past.

I asked this question because there are people in my riding who could benefit from this free trade agreement, but who could also be adversely affected. I am thinking of pork producers, for example.

What can he say to reassure my constituents who make a living in the agriculture industry and hog production?

[*English*]

Hon. Deepak Obhrai: Mr. Speaker, if the member looks at the agreement, he will note that it does ensure that the farmers' interests are well taken care of. As a matter of fact, I would like to advise the member that, because we had not signed a free trade agreement with the Koreans, some agriculture sectors had lost the Korean market. However, I can assure him that the pork producers' interests are taken care of under this agreement. If he reads the agreement in depth, he will know that his farmers would have a lot of advantages through this agreement.

Mr. Jasbir Sandhu (Surrey North, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is always an honour to speak in this House on behalf of my constituents from Surrey North.

I know that many of my constituents are very happy about this particular trade agreement. I have talked to a number of small businesses that already do some business in South Korea, and they will be delighted to finally see, after many years of negotiation, and to some degree neglect by the government, the conclusion of this agreement.

It is not perfect, but this is something that will definitely benefit not only the people in my constituency but people across this country, because we are a trading nation.

Before I get to that, I had the opportunity, along with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and for International Human Rights to visit South Korea with the Governor General. At that point, the talks were sort of stalled because of a lack of resources provided by the Conservative government to negotiate this particular trade agreement. The government's priorities were somewhere else, as I spoke about earlier. The government's priorities were countries that have shady records and should be a low priority, for a number of reasons.

The delegation encouraged speeding up those negotiations. I am very proud that I was part of that delegation encouraging the Korean government to come to the table to negotiate a trade agreement that is going to benefit both countries, Canada and Korea. Both countries will benefit from trade.

Canada is a trading nation. We on this side of the House know that. We have been encouraging the government to negotiate trade agreements that are fair to Canadians. We are not going to get it 100% right, but overall, the majority of the trade agreement will be beneficial to Canadians and Koreans.

The NDP has always encouraged governments to negotiate trade agreements that are fair and that will benefit Canadians. I sat on the international trade committee. I have talked about what criteria we need to use to look at which countries we should be negotiating with and what sorts of things we should be negotiating to expand the markets our exporters need.

In this House we have heard that there are jobs related to our exports. It is critical that we negotiate trade agreements to benefit people across this country.

Government Orders

The Conservative government talks about having a template. I doubt that it has a template. The only template it has is to make sure that it negotiates trade agreements with 50 countries or 40 countries. It just looks at numbers. The government's priorities are not consistent.

I am going to talk about the criteria the NDP government in 2015 would look at in negotiating trade agreements. We will ensure that markets open up for all Canadians right across the country.

Here is some of the framework we should be looking at. There are three important criteria I will talk about in detail.

First, is the proposed partner one that respects democracy, human rights, adequate environmental and labour standards, and Canadian values? If there are challenges with these, is the partner on a positive trajectory towards these goals?

Second, is the proposed partner's economy of significant or strategic value to Canada?

● (1230)

The third criteria makes common sense. The Conservatives do not always talk common sense, but New Democrats do. Are the terms of the proposed agreement satisfactory and of benefit to Canadians? Would it create good-paying local jobs here in Canada. Would it create secondary industry jobs and value-added jobs?

Value-added jobs pay higher wages. Shipping our raw materials overseas does not create a lot of jobs. Creating value-added jobs in this country is what we on this side of the House, in the official opposition, have always advocated.

We should be adding secondary jobs. The Conservative government's record with regard to trade and the creation of secondary jobs is horrible. I would like to talk about that before I get into the details of the three criteria.

Canada had a trade surplus when the Conservatives took office in 2006. That trade surplus has now turned into a huge trade deficit. That is not a good record for the government. The Conservatives say they are stewards of the economy and have negotiated many trade agreements. However, they have failed to look at these agreements to see if they have been positive or to make adjustments for future trade agreements. The government continually fails to do its research with regard to trade agreements.

I talked about negotiating trade agreements that will add value to the goods we produce in Canada and ship overseas.

The government has gutted manufacturing here in Canada over the last few years. Hundreds of thousands of good-paying manufacturing jobs have disappeared under the Conservative government. When I talk about the government's erratic policies when it comes to negotiating trade agreements, we can relate that to what has happened in our manufacturing industry.

Conservatives' do not have a coordinated policy plan when it comes to negotiating agreements with our strategic partners.

I will talk to the House in detail about the criteria I just mentioned.

First, is the proposed partner one that respects democracy, human rights, adequate environment and labour standards, and Canadian

values? I had a chance to go with the Governor General to South Korea. After the dictatorship in 1987, South Korea transitioned into a vibrant, multi-party democracy with an active trade union movement and relatively high wages. South Koreans have a high standard of living and freedom of expression.

South Korea has emerged as a tiger in South Asia. It is the fourth-largest economy in South Asia and the 15th-largest economy in the emerging developed countries. South Korea has one of the highest post-secondary education rates of all OECD countries.

In recent years, South Korea has invested billions of dollars in an ambitious green growth strategy aimed at improving energy efficiency and boosting renewable and green technology. This is something my friends across the aisle could learn from South Korea. It has invested in green energy and green projects. It is looking at 20 years from now. In the last decade, this Conservative government has been looking back.

● (1235)

The parliamentary secretary was right. The members of the third party talk about negotiating trade agreements, but they actually just talk. They do not negotiate any trade agreements. Over the years, we have seen them dragging their feet with respect to making good agreements that make sense for all Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

On the first criterion, it is clear that South Korea is a country that respects environmental and labour law standards. It shares Canadian values on human rights and democracy.

On the environmental front, Korea has emerged as a leader in renewable energy and green technology. Canada can increase its trade in these important sectors.

The second criterion is that the proposed partners be of strategic value to Canada.

Coming from Surrey, British Columbia, and living on the west coast, I know how important the South Asia economies are to British Columbia, because all of our goods flow out of the ports in Vancouver or Prince Rupert. We have been doing quite a bit of trade with Korea. Not only that, some of the ports on the west coast are located strategically. Goods shipped from Korea may be going to Ontario or the midwestern United States. The ports are actually able to cut down the time it takes the goods from Korea to get to Ontario or the central United States. We are strategically located, and we have been encouraging the government to negotiate good, fair trade agreements based on that criterion.

Japan is another country we have been negotiating with for many years. However, we have not yet seen a successful conclusion. There has not been that concrete push from the Canadian government to ensure that a fair trade agreement can be concluded with Japan. Japan is another strategic trading partner for Canada.

There is already a large amount of trade between Korea and Canada. We started these negotiations with Korea back in 2003. It has taken up to now, close to 11 years, to successfully negotiate a trade agreement. Although sometimes it may take a long time, I agree that we should ensure that the trade deals we are negotiating are fair to our country.

Government Orders

This is where I wonder what the government's priorities are. The European Union started negotiating with Korea after we started negotiating. The United States started negotiating with Korea after we started negotiating the trade agreement. The current government has been busy negotiating with some countries that have very shady records, and I have spoken about that in the House. The European Union and the U.S. not only started negotiations after we did but concluded their free trade agreement before we did. That tells me that their governments are putting more effort into ensuring that they lock in their strategic markets. We are negotiating trade agreements with strategic partners, yet the government has failed to see how important South Korea is.

I have talked with farmers from Alberta and Saskatchewan. I have sat on the trade committee. The cattle and hog farmers have told the trade committee that we are losing the market for their goods in South Korea due to the negligence of the government. That has eroded some of the markets our competitors have access to and we do not.

We will catch up. However, jobs have been lost because of the government's inability to negotiate these trade agreements with these strategic partners in a timely fashion before our competitors, such as the European Union, the United States, and Australia, have.

● (1240)

Australia is another country that is heavily invested into Asia. It is negotiating trade agreements and finding markets in Asia. A lot of the goods it sells to these markets are similar to what we have to offer to those very nations. I would advise the government to put its resources where strategically Canada can benefit from these fair trade agreements that will lead to local jobs and prosperity right across the country.

Another one of the factors of the second criterion I talked about is that Korea is also part of the Asian global supply chain and a gateway market to the economies of other countries in Asia. Korean and Canadian economies are largely complementary, meaning most Canadian industries do not compete directly with Korean industries. I am talking about most in generalities.

There is a number of manufacturing industries that would benefit from this agreement, and there is a cross-section of those. There are the aerospace industry, the chemical industry, the Canadian Apparel Federation and Bombardier. The heavy industry, such as Aluminum Association of Canada and the Mining Association of Canada, would benefit. Another area that would benefit would be the wood products. Agricultural goods, food processing, seafood and high-tech information technologies are some of the industries that would benefit as well.

There is a concern from the auto industry in regard to being unable to benefit from this agreement. We have asked the Conservatives how they will respond to the concerns of the auto industry, yet we have no response from them. We have seen the agreements the United States negotiated. It had won some concessions from the Korean government to protect parts of its auto industry. Again, the Conservative government has not provided any answers as to how it will mitigate the very real concern from auto workers in Ontario.

The third criterion is this. Are the terms of the proposed deal satisfactory? Most Canadians and virtually all industry associations support the deal, and these include, as I pointed out, many of the industries. The agreement would create a level playing field for Canadian companies and Canadian auto workers exporting to South Korea.

I have a lot to talk about, but I will try to sum this up.

One of the other areas of concern to us, as always, is the investor state dispute resolution. We have a very good judicial system in our country and South Korea has a fairly good one. The rule of law governs and the rules are applied the same to all companies. However, the investor dispute resolution settlement would provide an alternative kind of settlement. Sometimes that is not very open and sometimes it ties the hands of governments to protect local industry, or ties the hands of local city governments as to whether they can create local jobs or hire local people or buy local products. That is of concern to us.

The good thing about the investor state dispute settlement is that it could be cancelled with a notice of six years, whereas the FIPA the Conservative government has signed with China ties the hands of future governments for 31 years. That is the sort of irresponsible action the government has taken in regard to that agreement.

● (1245)

As we pointed out earlier, the Korean opposition parties did not want the investor state provisions in the agreement. The NDP is on record saying that we will look at opening it up and renegotiating this part of the agreement.

Overall, it is a good deal, one that we have always advocated. We are a trading nation. We will continue to negotiate free trade agreements that support Canadian jobs, local economies and local industry to provide prosperity across the country.

● (1250)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is quite encouraging to see that our friends in the New Democratic Party seem to have turned a new leaf. It is now supporting trade agreements. I never would have thought, given individuals like Jack Layton and Ed Broadbent, that we would ever see the NDP support free trade agreements. I applaud the New Democrats in recognizing that there is value to trade.

We in the Liberal Party have been very consistent through the years. In regard to this specific agreement, there was a will from South Korea to have an agreement put in place between Canada and South Korea back in 2003. The then prime minister, Paul Martin, took action within the year to ultimately get the negotiations under way. Unfortunately, it has taken many years for the Conservatives to capitalize on that interest of South Korea had, and at great cost. It has cost us a great deal of jobs and opportunities because of the slowness of the Conservative government.

Government Orders

Does my colleague from the New Democratic Party agree that even though there are concerns from the automobile industry in particular with this agreement there is great benefit? Does he agree that a considerable amount of benefit was lost because of the amount of time it took the Conservative government to achieve something that could have been achieved years ago, as many other countries did?

Mr. Jasbir Sandhu: Mr. Speaker, when the member for Winnipeg Centre talks about consistency and Liberals in the same sentence I get goosebumps because that is not something on which they have been consistent. When we look at NAFTA, Prime Minister Chrétien came in and said that he would rip the deal apart. There was another member from Southern Ontario who said that she would resign and she actually did.

Consistency is not something Liberals are very good at. We have seen this on the issue of the war in Iraq. One day they were sitting on the fence. The next day they were jumping on the other side, then back up on the fence again. If we look at the agreement that was signed in principle with the European Union, the leader of the third party stood up in the House, clapped and congratulated the government on negotiating CETA, which he had not even seen. How can they approve something and say that it is a good deal without even seeing the text? That is their consistency.

On this side of the House, the official opposition NDP has been consistent throughout our history. We have been calling for good, fair trade agreements. This is one agreement we like. We think it is a good trade agreement that will benefit Canadians right across the country.

The only people who have been consistent and principled in the House is the official opposition, not only today but for many years.

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Surrey North for that very eloquent presentation of the NDP support for the Canada-Korea free trade agreement.

In the speech given by the member for Vancouver Kingsway, he noted that in recent years South Korea had emerged as a global leader in environmental economics, investing billions in an ambitious green growth strategy aimed at improving energy efficiency, while boosting renewables and green technology. Then, sadly, he turned to Canada's track record.

In the report, "The Maple Leaf in the OECD", comparing progress toward sustainability, it indicated that according to recent tracking polls, 90% of Canadians believed it was very important for national identity that Canada be a leader on the environmental issues. However, Canada's environmental performance was one of the weakest of all countries in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. The data shows Canada's overall environmental performance is far behind other OECD countries, with a rank of 28 out of 30, virtually at the bottom.

In Korea there is a green growth in action and it has become only the third country to issue a report using the proposed OECD green growth indicators. It is looking at CO₂ emissions, environmental and resource productivity, energy productivity, domestic materials consumption and so on. On many measures, Korea is in the forefront of a new green economy.

Could the member comment about the fact that Korea could show leadership to Canada, which is such a laggard when it comes to environmental measures?

• (1255)

Mr. Jasbir Sandhu: Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that the environmental record of the Conservative government has been horrendous. Southeast Asian countries and Korea have taken leadership in looking at developing new industries. They are looking ahead 20 years. What is the Conservative government concerned about? It is concerned about fossil fuel, and we have seen the price of oil going down. Conservatives have been dependent on one industry for the last number of years. We need to diversify our industry. We need to invest in research, science and new technologies. The government has failed to do that.

Here is another lesson the Conservative government can take from South Korea. It has invested in science and technology to have it emerge as a leader in Southeast Asia. It has emerged as one of the tigers in South Asia. The reason it has been able to do that is because it has made a heavy investment in research and science. What does the Canadian government do? Not only does it muzzle the scientists, but it has also cut thousands of research positions throughout universities and the federal government. That is its record.

If we are looking into the next 20 years of creating good jobs, we need to make investments in the very sectors that will generate those jobs. The green energy sector is one of those sectors that the government has failed. In 2015, when the NDP forms government, we will be making those investments. The leader of the official opposition is committed to ensuring Canada has a leading world economy.

Ms. Jean Crowder: Mr. Speaker, I want to turn to the investor state resolutions youth settlement mechanism for a moment. There was a report issued by the International Investment Arbitration on Public Policy and it highlighted some of the concerns raised with regard to the lack of openness and transparency. In fact, it said:

Unfortunately, a recent review by the International Chamber of Commerce of its arbitration rules maintained a very high level of confidentiality in ICC arbitrations involving states, such that the existence of a claim against a state, the identity of the arbitrators, the text of orders or awards, and any amounts awarded against a state will continue to be kept confidential. While this level of confidentiality may be appropriate in commercial arbitrations, it precludes public scrutiny of ICC arbitrations involving states and makes it difficult to evaluate the policy implications of a state's decision to authorize investment arbitration under the ICC Rules.

In the House we often call on the government to engage in activities around openness and transparency. With the investor state resolution dispute settlement mechanisms, that openness and transparency is absent.

Could the member comment on the secretive dealings of those mechanisms?

Government Orders

Mr. Jasbir Sandhu: Mr. Speaker, the investor state dispute resolution component of this particular agreement is of concern to us. It should be of concern to all Canadians. Just as we cannot put consistency and the Liberals together, we cannot put transparency and openness together with the Conservative government. We have seen this with the CETA agreement and the Korean agreement. They have been negotiated in backrooms. Canadians did not have all the information to make those decisions along the line. Now that we see it, we do support that. Not only that, the current government likes doing things in secret and in backrooms.

This investor state dispute resolution fits right in with the Conservatives, where the public will not know why some of the decisions were made and whether their interests were protected.

There are robust judicial systems in both countries and those systems should have been able to take care of some of the disputes arising from trade. However, the current government has signed on to an agreement that would hear the disagreements in secret and the decisions would be made in secret. That fits right into the back alley of how Conservatives like to function.

• (1300)

Mr. Devinder Shory (Calgary Northeast, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Prince Albert.

I am pleased to rise today to speak about the historic Canada-Korea free trade agreement and how this agreement supports the government's broader pro-trade plan. It is only our Conservative government that is focused on what matters to Canadians: jobs, growth and long-term prosperity.

By pursuing an ambitious trade agenda, our Conservative government has provided Canadian businesses with access to new opportunities in dynamic markets around the globe. As an export-driven economy, Canada needs free trade agreements. Trade accounts for one out of every five jobs in Canada and is equivalent, in dollar terms, to over 60% of our country's annual income. Despite all the evidence that modern trade agreements create jobs, economic growth and economic security for hard-working Canadian families, the NDP tried to completely sabotage the Canada-Korea free trade agreement at committee. They would have forced our government to completely renegotiate the agreement and set Canadians back even further.

This anti-trade behaviour is just as bad for Canadians who depend on trade for their jobs as the Liberals' record on trade. During 13 long years in the government, the Liberals completely neglected trade, completing only three free trade agreements. The Liberals took Canada virtually out of the game of trade negotiations, putting Canadian workers and businesses at severe risk of falling behind in this era of global markets. Their trade critic does not even sit on the committee.

Our government recognizes that Canadian companies are at risk of being at a competitive disadvantage in key markets, as their major foreign competitors, such as the U.S. and the EU, are benefiting from preferential access under existing FTAs. That is why Canada is pursuing its most ambitious trade negotiations agenda in Canadian history.

Eight years ago, Canada had just five trade agreements, but since 2006, Canada has successfully reached free trade agreements with 38 countries, namely, Colombia, the European Free Trade Association, Honduras, Jordan, Panama, Peru, all 28 members of the European Union, and now South Korea. In addition, Canada has 28 foreign investment promotion and protection agreements in force, 13 additional concluded FIPAs. These bilateral agreements establish a strong rules-based framework for increased investment by protecting and promoting foreign investment through legally binding rights and obligations.

Focusing on sectors and markets that offer the greatest opportunities for growth is a priority under Canada's new global markets action plan, called GMAP.

Let me now turn to the historic Canada-Korea free trade agreement.

South Korea is identified as a priority market in the GMAP and the CKFTA represents an important step in increasing access to this fast-growing economy. The Canada-Korea free trade agreement is a landmark achievement that would restore a level playing field for Canadian companies competing in South Korean markets. Stronger economic ties with South Korea would create new jobs and opportunities and contribute to Canada's long-term economic growth and prosperity.

Critically, with this agreement, Canadian companies will become increasingly competitive in the region. With half of the world's population living a five-hour flight away from Seoul, South Korea offers strategic access to regional and global value chains. As a result of improved market access for goods, services and investments under the agreement, Canadian companies can use South Korea as a strategic base for growing their businesses throughout the Asia-Pacific region. The positive momentum of an agreement with South Korea is and will continue to carry Canada forward in this vibrant region, but creating new opportunities for Canadians in the Asia-Pacific region does not stop there.

Just a few weeks ago, the Minister of International Trade led his third trade mission to India, along with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of National Revenue. India is a country where we continue to see many opportunities for Canadian businesses.

• (1305)

We have also seen a great deal of interest in India from a number of my colleagues, including the Minister of Agriculture and the President of the Treasury Board in September, as well as the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration in July.

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Canada and India have long-standing bilateral relations, close people-to-people ties and shared goals of free trade, open markets, democracy and good governance for more growth and prosperity. In fact, India is a priority market under Canada's global markets action plan. Bilateral merchandise trade between Canada and India totalled \$5.8 billion in 2013, a 10.7% increase from 2012, and has more than doubled over the last 10 years.

Strengthening the Canada-India partnership is one of our Conservative Government's top trade priorities. We believe that an exciting future awaits both our countries, a future based on deeper trade and investment ties. Opportunities are particularly strong in the fields of energy, agriculture and agri-food, infrastructure, and education.

Through our ambitious pro-trade and pro-export global markets action plan, Canadian businesses have the tools to grow, export and build on their success at home and abroad. These tools include trade missions such as the one the Minister of International Trade recently led to India, free trade agreements, foreign investment promotion and protection agreements, together with the support of the on-the-ground Canadian trade commissioners service, Export Development Canada, the Canadian Commercial Corporation and the Business Development Bank of Canada.

Canada has eight Canadian trade commissioner offices and five EDC representatives in India, reflecting the importance both countries place on increasing bilateral trade and investment. Canada's trade network in India is now our third largest globally, after China and the United States, and is also the second-largest foreign network in India, after the U.S.

Export Development Canada is a strong investor in Canadian companies seeking opportunities in India. Five EDC officers are on the ground in the country. To date, EDC has supported 299 Canadian companies with contract volumes of \$1.86 billion.

While the Liberals led trade missions purely for photo-ops for politicians, our approach is to lead trade missions to actually help our businesses. The Minister of International Trade led his most recent trade mission to India to interact with Indian businesses and government representatives and to see first-hand the opportunities that exist to boost Canadian exports.

Participants in these trade missions have told us that high-level trade missions are valuable in opening doors and identifying opportunities. By helping Canadian businesses expand and succeed abroad, we are also helping to create jobs, growth and prosperity at home. Canada's competitive edge and combined access to these markets will lead directly to jobs and opportunities in every region of Canada.

Whether we are exporting meat, grain, fish, wood products or industrial goods, the more markets we have access to, the more jobs are created for hard-working Canadians and their families. Canada's long-term economic prosperity is directly linked to market access and other economic opportunities beyond Canadian borders.

Our government understands the importance of trade and exports to our economy. Exports are responsible for one out of every five Canadian jobs. The prosperity of Canadians depends on the continued expansion beyond our borders into new markets that

serve to grow Canada's exports and investments. The CKFTA represents one of these key economic opportunities and is a watershed moment in our historical relationship with South Korea.

For this and other reasons, stakeholders from across the country have called for the agreement's entry into force as soon as possible. That is why our government is moving to pass the bill quickly and will not be stopped by opposition stonewalling.

I look forward to the support of the opposition on the bill.

● (1310)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Ève Pécelet (La Pointe-de-l'Île, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the question I have for the member is simple.

The facts are clear regarding chapter 11 of NAFTA, which contains the first investor state dispute settlement mechanism that Canada included in a free trade agreement. The Government of Canada had to pay hundreds of millions of dollars of public funds, taxpayers' money, to a number of American companies. Canadians had to pay American companies because they challenged Canada's right to make environmental and public health regulations.

What do Canadians stand to gain from the inclusion of such mechanisms in the free trade agreement with South Korea? Will it mean that, in addition to having to pay millions of dollars to American companies, Canadians will now have to pay Korean companies and assume those costs too? We are talking about hundreds of millions of dollars of taxpayers' money.

I would like my colleague to tell us what Canadians stand to gain from this type of provision.

[*English*]

Mr. Devinder Shory: Mr. Speaker, the NDP has a long proud history of working against trade. I understand it is finding it very difficult to support this good agreement.

As a matter of fact, the NDP tried its best to gut this legislation in committee. It would have sent us back to the renegotiation table, which would basically put us off trade with South Korea. The U.S. has some deadlines, which come into action on January 1.

This agreement would benefit virtually every province and territory. I am from Alberta. Whether it is on agriculture or industrial goods or forestry, this agreement would help every province and territory, including Quebec.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member spoke about India. I am a great fan of India. It is wonderful in terms of the way in which we can look at expanding our relationships.

Government Orders

The member talked about his government's actions in regard to trade with India. The first thing that came to my mind was that former prime minister Jean Chrétien said we were going to go to China. He brought in this whole team Canada approach. He took premiers, stakeholders, industry reps, and so forth to China. There was hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of activity created because of that particular initiative.

Our Prime Minister goes to India, and he took a limousine. It cost \$1 million. I am not too sure how he enhanced the trade negotiations by incorporating the different premiers of the provinces and so forth.

It is the same thing on this particular trade agreement. South Korea has wanted this agreement since 2003. Could the member explain why it has taken the government so long to sign the agreement? Could the member comment as well on the lost opportunities due to the government's slow response to South Korea's request?

Mr. Devinder Shory: Mr. Speaker, I agree with the member from the Liberal Party that its prime minister took a huge group of people overseas for photo ops. That I understand.

Let me say that I have been to India with our Prime Minister and with our Minister of International Trade, and when we sit at those tables we talk about what is in the best interest of Canadian people and business. That is why it takes some time.

We do not sign junk agreements for the sake of signing agreements. We definitely work hard to make sure the agreements are signed with the intention and results that would be in the best interests of Canadians and Canadian businesses.

• (1315)

Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to thank my colleague from Calgary Northeast and acknowledge the hard work he has done in committee and the respect he has shown for the committee, attending the meetings, being there, asking the great questions, and making sure we have the best piece of legislation we could possibly have for our Canadian businesses and families.

The Canada-Korea free trade agreement is an ambitious, state of the art agreement, covering virtually all sectors and aspects of Canadian-Korean trade. South Korea is an important export destination for Canada and the Prairies, with exports from the Prairies to South Korea worth an average of \$934 million annually from 2011 to 2013.

I would like to highlight some of the key benefits in the agreement, starting with Alberta. South Korea is a very important market for Alberta. It is the province's fifth-largest export destination, with exports from 2011 to 2013 worth an annual average of approximately \$635 million. From 2011 to 2013, Alberta's agricultural exports to South Korea were worth an annual average of \$195 million, with wheat, pork, canola, unroasted malt barley, and tallow as the main exports.

South Korean tariffs would be eliminated on all of these items. For wheat, the current rate is 3%. On pork, the current rate is 30%. Unroasted malt barley is at a current rate as high as 269%.

Alberta would also benefit from the elimination of tariffs on beef, which is one of the biggest export interests for Alberta in the South Korean markets. Exports to South Korea of fresh chilled and frozen beef, which totalled over \$43 million in 2002 prior to the BSE outbreak, are in a rebuilding phase following the restoration of the access to the South Korean market in 2012. Canada's exports of beef to South Korea reached an average of \$5.5 million from 2011 to 2013. Separately, exports of bovine genetics, offal, and tallow averaged over \$15 million.

The Canada-Korea free trade agreement would eliminate its high beef tariffs and allow Canadian exports to compete head to head with their U.S. competition. Specifically, the 40% tariff on fresh and chilled frozen beef cuts, as well as the 72% tariff on some of the processed and prepared beef, would be eliminated within 15 years. Tariffs of 18% on most beef offal would be eliminated within 11 years, while tariffs on beef fats and tallow would be eliminated upon entry into force of the agreement. Importantly, the 18% tariff on bovine embryos would also be eliminated upon entry into force.

The services sector is another key economic driver in Alberta, and it is expected to benefit greatly from the Canada-Korea free trade agreement. In 2012, the services sector accounted for 53% of Alberta's total GDP and employed more than 1.5 million Albertans. Canada's service exports to South Korea are worth more than \$750 million a year. Many areas of export interest in Alberta in the services sector would benefit from the Canada-Korea free trade agreement, including architecture, construction, financial, and telecommunications services, to name just a few.

The agreement would also increase the transparency and predictability of South Korea's markets by ensuring that the regulators act impartially, objectively, and in a transparent manner.

Now, I would like to turn to Saskatchewan, my home province. It is the home of the Roughriders, and it is the emerging powerhouse in Canada. Its exports to South Korea in 2011 to 2013 were worth an average of \$175 million. This agreement would bring significant benefits to Saskatchewan across sectors including agriculture, agri-food products, the industrial goods sector, and the services sector.

Canola and malt are Saskatchewan's key exports to South Korea. From 2011 to 2013, Saskatchewan exports of barley malt, canola, and canola oil to South Korea averaged \$23 million a year. Once the Canada-Korea free trade agreement comes into force, canola and malt producers would benefit greatly from the elimination of duties on these products, which currently face duties of up to 10% and 269%, respectively.

Listen to what the president of the Canola Council of Canada said about the agreement's expected benefits to Saskatchewan's canola industry:

Government Orders

South Korea is an important market for canola, with annual sales ranging from \$60 million to \$90 million in recent years. Under the Canada-Korea Free Trade Agreement, we could significantly increase—even double—our exports to this market.

Saskatchewan would also benefit from the tariff elimination on industrial goods. From 2011 to 2013, Saskatchewan exports of industrial goods to South Korea were worth an average of \$42 million. Exporters of industrial goods such as weighing machinery, scales, electrical transformers, and sporting equipment, which currently face an 8% tariff, would now enjoy preferential access to the diverse Korean market.

I look forward to Saskatchewan's increased prosperity through the benefits of this agreement.

Finally, I turn to Manitoba, located at the heart of Canada. South Korea is also an important trade destination for Manitoba, with exports from 2011 to 2013 worth an average of \$124 million.

● (1320)

At the centre of Canada's grain trade is Manitoba's innovative agriculture and agri-food sector. From 2011 to 2013, Manitoba's agriculture exports to South Korea were worth an average of \$92 million, with wheat and pork at the lead. This free trade agreement would eliminate many agriculture tariffs immediately upon implementation of the agreement, and would eliminate all tariffs, in whole or in part, on 97% of current agricultural exports when the agreement is fully implemented.

Tariffs would be eliminated on agriculture exports such as wheat, from the current rate of 3%, and pork and most processed pork products, from a current rate of up to 30%. This is important to allow Manitoba producers of wheat, pork, and other products to compete with the other agricultural and agri-food exporters in South Korea, including the United States and the European Union.

In 2010, before the implementation of the South Korea free trade agreement with the U.S. and the EU, Canada's share of Korea's fresh chilled and frozen pork imports was 14.2%. However, in 2013, after the implementation of these agreements, it dropped to below 9%. This represents a loss in export value of \$22 million. We must act now to level the playing field for our pork industry.

Regarding Manitoba's services sector, it accounted for 71% of the province's GDP in 2012. It is by far the largest sector of Manitoba's economy and generates more than 75% of the province's total employment. Key export interests in this sector are business and professional services, construction, engineering and architectural services, and marketing and distribution services.

Some of the benefits of the agreement for the services sector include enhanced access to the South Korean market for service providers, which go beyond South Korea's current obligations. Notably, nothing in the agreement would prevent our government from regulating in the public interest. For example, public services such as health, public education, and other social services would be excluded from the obligations of the agreement, and our government remains free to enact the policies and programs it chooses.

We stand with Canadians, incredibly disappointed that the NDP tried to completely gut the bill at the trade committee, where it tabled amendments to remove the investor protection provisions, corner-

stones of modern trade and investment agreements. This is just as harmful as the neglect of international trade under the Liberals, who took Canada virtually out of the game of trade negotiations, putting Canadian workers and businesses at severe risk of falling behind in this era of global markets. Only our Conservative government is committed to protecting and strengthening the long-term financial security of hard-working Canadians.

I call for the urgent ratification of the Canada-Korea free trade agreement, so that we can begin to reap the benefits of this landmark agreement as soon as possible.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments the member made, particularly about my home province of Manitoba.

I understand and appreciate just how important the pork industry, in particular, is to Manitoba. It has created literally thousands of jobs over the years. All one has to do is look at the Maple Leaf company as a whole and how much it has assisted communities such as Brandon and Winnipeg.

There is, no doubt, concern with regard to this particular agreement, particularly with the automobile industry, but from the pork industry a great number of accolades have been directed toward the agreement.

Because this is such an important industry, I am wondering if the member might want to provide some further comment as to how he expects the pork industry in Manitoba to grow with this. He might also want to provide some comment in terms of the need for workers within the pork industry because of the growth that has taken place in that industry in Manitoba.

Mr. Randy Hoback: Mr. Speaker, it will be really interesting to watch the growth in the pork sector, and there will be some challenges in that industry, no question about it, but they are great challenges. They are challenges of growth, challenges of expansion, rather than the opposite challenge of shutting things down, of seeing things collapse.

It is not just in Manitoba where we would see growth. We would see hog producers right across the Prairies ship their pork into Brandon and Winnipeg where the pork is processed and shipped on to Korea.

This whole area would expand and grow. It went down to 9% and should be up higher to 15% to 20%. The growth potential in Korea for Canadian pork is huge. As we start exporting into that market, the cash would flow back into western Canada, back into communities such as Brandon, back into little communities that have hog barns and hog facilities, and that money is spent throughout the economy, throughout rural Saskatchewan, rural Manitoba, and rural Alberta.

Government Orders

This is such a positive agreement, and it trickles right back to every individual in a direct or indirect way. That is why it should be ratified rather quickly.

• (1325)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marc-André Morin (Laurentides—Labelle, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine.

Although it seems almost as difficult to agree with the government as to disagree with it, I am still pleased to rise today to speak to Bill C-41, An Act to implement the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and the Republic of Korea.

As I mentioned in my speech at second reading, I am proud to support the implementation of this agreement because it is very important for our agricultural producers and our exporters.

The discussions regarding a free trade agreement between Canada and South Korea began in 2004, and negotiations officially began in 2009. It took nine years to conclude the treaty.

During that time, Korea signed agreements with the United States and Australia. Canada's delay cost our producers and exporters dearly. Canada has been losing significant market share. We need to step up our efforts in order to recover those losses. Canada's delay in signing an agreement with Korea shows just how important it is to have an international trade strategy. Signing agreements right and left without a coherent plan is certainly not in the best interests of Canadians.

What is more, in its haste to pass this agreement as quickly as possible, the Standing Committee on International Trade conducted a rapid study. We had a limited number of study sessions, and we were only able to hear from a limited number of witnesses.

The NDP meticulously studies free trade agreements that are presented to us. We know that once they are ratified, it is difficult, if not impossible, to turn back the clock and fix any errors. We apply three criteria in our assessment. First, is the proposed partner one that respects democracy, human rights, adequate environmental and labour standards, and Canadian values? If there are any issues, is the partner on the path to meeting those objectives? Second, is the proposed partner's economy of strategic value to Canada? Third, are the terms of the proposed deal satisfactory?

The agreement with Korea meets those three basic criteria. Korea is an established democracy that enforces high labour, human rights and environmental protection standards. It is a developed country that is ranked 15th on the human development index, the highest ranking of all East Asian countries. In addition to introducing social programs and the rule of law, South Korea has low levels of corruption and provides high access to quality education. With respect to the environment, Korea has emerged as a world leader in renewable energy and green technology.

Furthermore, the agreement with Korea represents a significant and strategic value to Canada. This agreement is viewed positively by a plurality of Canadians and is supported by virtually all sectors of the Canadian economy. South Korea is Canada's seventh most important trading partner.

Even more importantly, this agreement would be Canada's first trade agreement with an Asian country, so it provides a significant opportunity to capitalize on the Pacific region economies and to diversify our export markets.

The agreement with South Korea also passes the test if we look at the terms of the agreement. A very broad coalition of Canadian economic stakeholders believe that this agreement will have a positive impact. I must note, however, that certain terms of the agreement are not what an NDP government would have negotiated.

The manipulation of Korean currency as a form of protectionism as well as the investor state dispute settlement mechanism are two aspects that keep coming up in the discussions. Despite the NDP's demands, no real study has been conducted to examine how these aspects will affect Canadians.

• (1330)

We proposed amendments to improve the agreement at the Standing Committee on International Trade. In total, the NDP proposed six amendments. These amendments aimed to protect the right of Canadian governments to legislate in the public interest and to prohibit the weakening of environmental standards.

Furthermore, two of these amendments directly addressed the auto and steel industries. Neither the Conservatives nor the Liberals proposed any amendments to improve this agreement. Obviously, as usual, the Conservatives voted against all of our attempts to improve this agreement. It is sad that members choose to do this.

Nevertheless, we believe that, overall, the benefits of the Canada-Korea free trade agreement outweigh the risks. For these reasons, I am pleased to support Bill C-41, An Act to implement the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and the Republic of Korea. However, I believe that our work does not end here.

South Korea is a new market for our exporters. It would be magical thinking to believe that simply signing the agreement will automatically enable our exporters to take advantage of the Korean market. Many of our Canadian exporters, especially SMEs, need a little help to benefit from this opportunity. Co-operation among businesses, the Canadian embassy in South Korea, the Trade Commissioner Service, Export Development Canada and other services is essential to implementing the agreement and improving trade.

In my riding, Laurentides—Labelle, the Oviva group, which produces maple water, contacted me for more information about opportunities available to them to get into that market. They do not know where to go for help from the government. Maple water is a niche product. The quality of their product is exceptional. I will personally make sure that these exporters from my region get all the help they need to access the Korean market.

Government Orders

In closing, I believe that this free trade agreement with Korea will create new opportunities for Canadian producers and exporters. I think it is a real shame that all of the amendments my party put forward to improve this agreement were rejected out of hand. I think that this agreement will be good for Canadians, so I support Bill C-41.

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for his remarks.

I would like to know why the Conservatives did nothing when they received the document from the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development showing that Canada took too long to sign trade agreements with strategic markets because it wasted resources and energy negotiating agreements with governments of smaller countries just because they were friends and allies, instead of signing agreements with countries like this one that would really have benefited Canada and its people.

Mr. Marc-André Morin: Mr. Speaker, that is a very good question, one that is nearly impossible to answer.

I think common sense dictates that when we want to achieve a certain outcome or goal, we need to focus on one task. When we spread our resources too thin and try to do too many things at once, we invariably fail or miss out on projects that are more serious or more important.

This probably happens simply because there is no plan and no industrial strategy or international trade strategy.

• (1335)

[*English*]

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification), CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am a bit puzzled by both the question and response from my colleague opposite. He made it seem like trade with other countries was an either/or proposition, and that is not the case. Canada has diverse industries. We should be looking at the diverse markets to ensure we have market sustainability for our products.

I am curious as to how the NDP can arrive at the school of thought that we should only have one trade agreement. I do not understand the logic of that.

This agreement would allow us access to the Asian supply chain and put us on par with the U.K. and the U.S., and that is a good thing. I certainly hope my colleague will comment on his support for that.

I cannot understand the NDP's logic in opposing trade just out of fundamental opposition to it, then asking false questions about it and coming up with a false dichotomy in terms of either/or for entering into free trade agreements with one country or not. Could the member comment on that?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marc-André Morin: Mr. Speaker, the government is spending most of its time explaining to us that resources are limited and that we have to tighten our belts and do more with less. In these circumstances, I imagine that the resources dedicated to international trade are not really a matter of choice. We need to have priorities. I think that the agreement with South Korea is considerably more

important than other agreements signed with countries like Nicaragua, for example. It is simply a question of priorities.

[*English*]

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for talking about the importance of farming in his community. It is important in mine as well.

I want to refer to the investor state dispute resolution mechanism. Earlier I pointed out the fact that it was a very secretive process. It is also costly for governments to have to defend themselves on these dispute resolution mechanisms.

Could the member comment on the fact that this really needs to be a more open and transparent process and safeguards need to be put in place for countries so they do not get involved in these costly battles?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marc-André Morin: Mr. Speaker, that is an excellent question.

I do not believe that these agreements are an obligation. It is a bad habit that some governments have developed. If we sign agreements with countries that do not have robust legal systems, where corruption is a problem and where the impartiality of the courts is in question, it is wise to include these kinds of provisions in agreements.

However, when we are doing business with reputable countries with legal systems similar to ours and where corruption is not a problem, there is no need to worry. It is not like in the case of Mexico in the 1980s, when NAFTA was being signed. There was good reason to question Mexico's legal system at the time. In fact, that might still be a concern today. However, when we are doing business with large, modern, democratic countries like South Korea, there is no need to worry about that.

• (1340)

[*English*]

Ms. Isabelle Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to reiterate the NDP's support for the bill that is presented before the House today. We add our voices to those of a broad coalition of Canadian stakeholders, such as the agriculture and agri-food industry associations; the UFCW, which is Canada's largest private sector union; manufacturing industry associations; and Bombardier, just to name a few.

As we have declared before the House, the NDP keeps in mind three fundamental criteria to ensure that the interests of Canadians are protected when it comes to a trade agreement.

Government Orders

The first has to do with the proposed partner's attitude toward Canadian values. We will make sure that countries respect democracy and human rights and that they have high policies toward labour and environmental standards. In the case of South Korea, we are very satisfied by the work this country has achieved since it broke free from dictatorship a quarter of a century ago. It has transitioned into an energetic, multi-party democracy with an active trade union movement. The wages are beyond decent, and freedom of expression is encouraged. South Korea is a developed country and is ranked 15th on the human development index, which is the highest rank in east Asia. We also have to point out the success of South Korea in becoming a world leader in renewable energy and green technology.

Our second criterion is with respect to the economic benefits Canada can receive from the agreement. Is the proposed partner's economy of significant or strategic value to Canada? Again we are satisfied, considering that South Korea is Canada's seventh most important trading partner. In 2013, Canadian exports to South Korea totalled \$7.3 billion. Also, this first agreement with an Asian country would allow Canada to enter the Pacific region and diversify its export markets. Canadian exporters lost 30% of their market share in South Korea after the European Union and the U.S.A. concluded similar trade agreements. This agreement would allow Canada to restore its competitiveness in global markets and compensate for the losses.

Bob Linton, from the United Food and Commercial Workers Union, stated:

This deal will not only help to protect the jobs of our members in these provinces but has the potential to increase employment with good union paying jobs that benefit the communities.

The third criterion is with respect to the terms of the agreement. The NDP wants to make sure that such terms are satisfactory for the Canadian economy. In this present case, we are satisfied by the benefits provided in many sectors.

One example is the agricultural sector. The agreement would enhance trade in the agriculture and agri-food sector, which represents 8% of the country's economy and sustains one out of eight jobs. South Korea imports a colossal amount of these products and is therefore a complementary economical partner for Canada.

We can also point out the benefits provided by this agreement in the aerospace sector. I am really pleased with this agreement, considering the proximity of South Korea to other major economies, such as Japan and China. In the next 20 years, half of the world's air traffic will be driven by Asia. The demand for aircraft in Asia will account for 37% of worldwide sales and be valued at \$1.9 trillion.

The NDP recognizes the virtue of free trade and is aware that deepening our trade linkages with the Asia-Pacific region is essential to maintaining Canadian prosperity in the 21st century. However, this is not exactly the agreement that we would have negotiated. Let us face it: some aspects of it need to be criticized.

Let us start with concerns regarding the automobile sector, which needs to be protected. The NDP is calling on the government to take action to support the Canadian automobile industry, which provides 100,000 good jobs. Even if we go outside the frame of this agreement, the Canadian automobile sector has to face ferocious

world competition. In 2013, Canada could not attract any of the \$1.7 billion in auto assembly investments that were made around the world. These are shocking facts. That is why the NDP is urging the government to provide financial help to this very important sector of our industry.

• (1345)

An NDP government would create policies that would fortify the sector, and we have many ideas on how to do so. We would encourage Korean automakers to set up production facilities in Canada. We would also assist our industry in penetrating Korean and other Asian markets, and we would definitely keep an eye on non-tariff barriers and hurry to resolve disputes in an efficient and adequate manner.

At committee stage, the NDP definitely took the lead by inviting several witnesses from different sectors, including those against the agreement. We were also the only party to propose amendments to protect Canada's automobile sector, which goes back to what I was mentioning a moment ago. One amendment proposed a snap-back in the event of a surge in Korean vehicle imports in the Canadian market. We also suggested implementing yearly trade missions to Korea to observe and control the removal of harmful non-tariff barriers on Canadian exports. However, the government refused both these amendments that would have protected our industry.

Obviously the Liberal Party is no help in addressing that issue, since it does not have a plan or even the beginning of a proposition to protect our industry. There is no surprise there, since the Liberals are willing to support an agreement without even knowing its details, as they did when the Liberal critic approved a trade agreement with the European Union without seeing it.

Still on the topic of what happened at committee stage, the NDP was the only party to step up to introduce Canadians' concerns. We made three motions regarding investor protections. The first one was to protect the right of the Canadian government to legislate in the public interest. The second motion was to prohibit the fading of environmental standards in order to encourage investments. Last but not least, we wanted to repeal the investor state dispute settlement chapter from the agreement. In that matter, the main opposition party in South Korea joined its voice to ours.

Despite the relevance of these interventions, both the Liberal and the Conservative parties rejected these amendments.

In conclusion, the NDP supports open trade, especially when it comes to breaking down harmful trade barriers and decreasing tariffs and protectionism. Nevertheless, past experience has shown that a completely hands-off approach to the economy just does not work. Therefore, I concur with the Chamber of Commerce of Canada that there is a common sense role for government to play in promoting our exports and helping Canadian companies get into the Asian market.

Government Orders

[Translation]

I want to reiterate to my community and to all Koreans in my riding and in the greater Montreal area, whom I often deal with, that I am very proud we can conclude this free trade agreement and that I will help them. Some production companies have already approached me for help in developing markets with Korea. I will do everything in my power to help them.

According to the criteria I listed, this is a good agreement. I would have liked us to study it a bit more in committee, but this is a step in the right direction for our country, and I am pleased to say so again today and support this bill.

[English]

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I know that there remain deep concerns. I am sure my hon. colleague from the official opposition is aware of the concerns from the auto workers and the unions that work with the Canadian Auto Workers. The trade situation with South Korea is likely to remain one in which we primarily import finished products from Korea with lots of value added and export raw resources to it. The experience with other countries in trade deals with Korea has not redressed this balance of trade to the advantage of those countries.

We will obviously be going forward with this treaty, since every major party in the House supports the Canada-Korea treaty and the Green Party is the only party that does not. I wonder if the official opposition has any proposals for steps we can take to make sure that we do not just export raw resources and import high-value exports from Korea.

[Translation]

Ms. Isabelle Morin: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question.

Indeed, Canada exports a lot of raw materials, since it is a country of natural resources. I would prefer it if we processed those materials here and boosted our industry, because that would create good jobs. Nonetheless, as the hon. member said, will sending South Korea a lot of raw materials that come back to us as processed goods increase or decrease this trade? I do not have an obvious answer.

We said we want to encourage the auto industry. I support any suggestions for making it easier to process our own raw materials in Canada, because that would create good jobs. A country like ours that has a lot of natural resources would certainly benefit from exporting value-added processed materials. I encourage that. For now, we have not proposed any amendments to that effect. We wanted first to protect our industries. However, we should look into this shortly because we must correct this import deficit.

• (1350)

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for my hon. colleague, who gave an excellent speech and demonstrated that she is very knowledgeable about this issue.

A Department of Foreign Affairs document indicates that Canada dragged its feet on signing trade agreements with countries of strategic interest. While the Conservative government was wasting time negotiating less important agreements, it neglected agreements that are of great value to the Canadian economy and create jobs in

Canada. This incompetence on the part of the Conservatives is deplorable.

I am wondering what my colleague thinks of this document, which shows the Conservative government's shortcomings when it comes to negotiating free trade agreements.

Ms. Isabelle Morin: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his excellent and very pertinent question. When we want to engage in trade with other countries, the NDP asks itself three questions. Does the country respect human rights and workers' rights? Is there added value for Canada? Are the trade terms satisfactory?

Clearly, human rights and workers' rights are not an important consideration for the Conservatives. Canada, which is the free trade partner of choice for most countries in the world, should use this as leverage to improve workers' rights and living conditions abroad.

Regarding the document my colleague mentioned, we have to consider the countries that provide the greatest benefit to Canada based on what we want to import and export. The free trade agreement with South Korea should have been signed long ago. Other countries that have less to offer Canada from an economic perspective were given priority.

This is about priorities. The government should not be helping countries that are friends; it should be signing agreements that will benefit Canadians and our workers. I hope that other countries were mentioned in the document and that Canada will put more effort into signing free trade agreements that are good for Canadians.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): I would like to advise the House that there have been more than five hours of debate on this motion since this first round of speeches. Consequently, the speeches will now be 10 minutes and the period for questions and comments will be 5 minutes.

Before handing the floor over to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Official Languages, I should inform him that I will have to interrupt him around 2 p.m. for statements by members.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

• (1355)

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government is committed to protecting and strengthening the long-term financial security of hard-working Canadians.

It is with great pleasure that I rise today to talk about the Canada-Korea free trade agreement, a landmark agreement that will strengthen our trade and investment ties across the Pacific, increase the prosperity of both countries and result in job creation and enhanced opportunities for Canadian and Korean businesses, investors, workers and consumers

I would like to focus my remarks today on the benefits the Canada-Korea free trade agreement will bring to my home province of Quebec.

Statements by Members

With Canadian agricultural exports to South Korea facing an average tariff rate of close to 53% over the 2011-13 period, Quebec businesses stand to gain considerably from the Canada-Korea free trade agreement. When fully implemented, the agreement will eliminate tariffs on over 99% of agricultural tariff lines. This duty-free access will not only give Quebec exporters preferential access to the South Korean market, but will also create a level playing field on which to compete and win.

Upon entry into force, the Canada-Korea free trade agreement will eliminate tariffs on almost all of Quebec's key exports and provide access to new opportunities in the South Korean market. Quebec exporters will also benefit from non-tariff provisions that will improve conditions for exports in the diverse South Korean market. The Canada-Korea free trade agreement will, for example, ease regulatory barriers, reinforce intellectual property rights and ensure more transparent rules for market access.

I would now like to highlight some of the broad benefits for Quebec. The Canada-Korea free trade agreement will provide enhanced market access for key sectors of interest to Quebec, including industrial goods, agricultural and agri-food products, forestry products and professional services.

The Canada-Korea free trade agreement will also provide predictable, non-discriminatory rules for our investors and ensures that their investments will be protected in the South Korean market. Access to South Korea's government procurement market will also be improved. Suppliers from Quebec will benefit from expanded opportunities at the central government level, putting them on an equal footing with suppliers from the United States and in a better position vis-à-vis others such as Japan and the European Union.

The strong provision on non-tariff measures, backed up by a fast and effective dispute settlement provision, will also contribute to facilitate trade between Quebec and South Korea.

Now, I would like to turn to some of the specific benefits the Canada-Korea free trade agreement will bring to Quebec in different sectors, including industrial goods and agricultural and agri-food products. The area of industrial goods is a significant component of Quebec's economy. There are over 295,000 hard-working Quebecers and their families that depend on the industrial goods sector for their livelihood, with the sector accounting for approximately 11% of Quebec's GDP.

From 2011 to 2013, Quebec's exports of industrial goods to South Korea were worth an annual average of \$280 million. The Canada-Korea free trade agreement will significantly improve market access opportunities for Quebec's industrial goods sector by eliminating all tariffs. Upon entry into force of the agreement, over 96% of South Korean tariff lines for industrial goods will be subject to immediate duty-free access, with the remaining 5% eliminated within 10 years.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

• (1400)

[*English*]

ANTI-BULLYING CAMPAIGNS

Mr. Blake Richards (Wild Rose, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to applaud and congratulate a grade 11 student at George McDougall High School in my hometown of Airdrie, Alberta. Last month, Caitlin Prater-Haacke was maliciously targeted by a bully. He broke into her school locker, accessed her iPad, and posted hateful messages on Facebook.

Caitlin reacted with the poise of a woman wise beyond her years. She bought 800 Post-its, wrote positive messages on them, and stuck them on every locker in her school. I am proud to say that her efforts were widely supported by the community. Led by the Airdrie Moms Facebook group, the City of Airdrie declared October 9 as Positive Post-it Day, an event that was widely embraced throughout southern Alberta and across our country.

Through the power of positive words, Caitlin has turned an act of malice into a valuable lesson for all, and we could not be more proud of her, just as we are tremendously proud of our other courageous anti-bullying crusaders, such as MacKenzie Murphy of Airdrie and Hannah Godard of Cochrane. May their grace inspire all of us who stand up against bullying.

* * *

[*Translation*]

LIMOILOU'S PUBLIC MARKETS

Mr. Raymond Côté (Beauport—Limoilou, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we in the NDP are aware of the problem of food security because it affects public health and economic vitality. We need to encourage initiatives that provide Canadians with healthy food and support local food production.

Two public markets opened in Limoilou in 2014. In recent weeks, the P'tit marché solidaire de Limoilou offered affordable fruits and vegetables to residents in order to help the poor and those on the margins of society, while the Limoilou public market, an initiative of the Collectif Rutabaga, allowed local producers to sell their products directly to people in the community.

I would like to commend these organizations for their work. They are helping to make the population healthier and encouraging companies to develop a clientele that lives in the area. It is an example to follow.

* * *

[*English*]

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS IN MISSISSAUGA

Mr. Bob Dechert (Mississauga—Erindale, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate all of the winners and each of the participants in yesterday's municipal elections in Mississauga. For the first time in 36 years, Mississauga is going to have a new mayor and a new voice directing our city.

Statements by Members

I would like to convey my sincerest congratulations to mayor-elect Bonnie Crombie on her election victory. I would also like to congratulate Steve Mahoney on running a formidable campaign. I look forward to working with mayor-elect Bonnie Crombie on issues of importance to the people of Mississauga, including promoting jobs, safe communities, growth and long-term prosperity.

I would also like to thank outgoing mayor Hazel McCallion for her years of service and her tremendous contributions to our city and to Canada.

* * *

NATHAN CIRILLO AND PATRICE VINCENT

Mr. Massimo Pacetti (Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, October 22, a tragic scene took place at the National War Memorial, when Corporal Nathan Cirillo was senselessly struck down performing a ceremonial duty on behalf of all Canadians. Today Corporal Cirillo is being laid to rest in Hamilton, and we unite as a nation to grieve.

[Translation]

We are thinking of Corporal Cirillo's family and the family of Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent, who was killed two days earlier in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu.

[English]

Let us keep them in our thoughts, for it is they who have been forced to endure the greatest loss of all.

It is my hope that these tragedies are a thing of the past, but that we remember and learn from them. The sacrifice of Corporal Cirillo and Warrant Officer Vincent's lives demand no less.

[Translation]

Today we are mourning the loss of one of our sons, and we offer our deepest condolences to his loved ones.

* * *

[English]

LANSDOWNE CHILDREN'S CENTRE

Mr. Phil McColeman (Brant, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am thrilled to rise and celebrate a major milestone for an incredible organization in Brantford, the Lansdowne Children's Centre. For 40 remarkable years, Lansdowne has been supporting families and treating children with physical, communication, and developmental needs. Last weekend, we celebrated its anniversary at an event entitled "Magic Happens", a perfect description of the transformational impact that Lansdowne has had on thousands of children's lives.

Because of Lansdowne, we have seen children taking their first steps when it seemed physically impossible, speaking their first words when speech seemed out of the question, and playing with friends when they had been isolated and excluded. Because of the hard work of dedicated staff, supporters, and volunteers, young people all across our community have been empowered to realize their full potential.

Magic does happen. It happens in my hometown, inside the walls of the Lansdowne Children's Centre.

[Translation]

LYNE BERNIER

Ms. Paulina Ayala (Honoré-Mercier, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to an exceptional woman who is no longer with us. Lyne Bernier was a nurse who dedicated herself to volunteer work after retiring.

For four years, she was on the board of the Centre d'action bénévole Rivière-des-Prairies. She devoted herself to many different causes and lavished her caring approach on them all. Her nurse's heart always shone through.

In addition, this woman was passionate about nature, especially trees. She even won a prize for horticultural beautification in her community garden. Because she was so deeply rooted in her neighbourhood, a tree was planted in her honour on the community centre grounds.

Today I would like to thank Ms. Bernier and reach out to her loved ones and everyone involved in the Rivière-des-Prairies community centre.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all those who put their heart into volunteer work day after day. Volunteers are always there, ready to help others and build a better country for us all.

* * *

●(1405)

[English]

CANADIAN CEMENT INDUSTRY

Mrs. Stella Ambler (Mississauga South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to welcome senior leaders from the Canadian cement industry to Ottawa today, including Holcim Canada from my riding of Mississauga South.

The cement industry is a vital contributor to Canada's economy, to infrastructure and to our communities. Cement and concrete are literally the foundation upon which modern societies are built. Virtually all construction projects need concrete, which is the second most-consumed commodity in the world, second only to water. The Canadian cement and concrete industry generates more than \$8 billion in annual sales, contributing some \$2.9 billion to the country's GDP. It employs nearly 27,000 Canadians, including 175 jobs at Holcim's Mississauga Lakeshore plant and quarry.

I extend my thanks to Holcim for providing these local jobs and for its commitment to provide them in an environmentally and socially responsible manner.

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SPORTING EVENTS IN RED DEER

Mr. Earl Dreeshen (Red Deer, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise today to inform the House of some of the exciting things happening across my fantastic riding of Red Deer, the first of which is that the town of Sylvan Lake was recently crowned Kraft Hockeyville 2014. With this came the exciting opportunity to host Arizona and Calgary in a pre-season NHL game and an investment of over \$100,000 in arena upgrades.

Statements by Members

The city of Red Deer also has exciting news, having been awarded the privilege of hosting two of Canada's biggest sporting events; the first of which is the 2016 Memorial Cup, Alberta's first since 1974. The second major event is the 2019 Canada Winter Games. These games will see top athletes from across the country descend upon Red Deer to compete and set the stage for the 2022 Winter Olympics.

Today I would like to acknowledge and congratulate all the volunteers and members of our community whose hard work has paid off. Without their dedication and countless hours volunteered, none of this would have been possible.

Red Deer is ready.

* * *

EVENTS OF OCTOBER 22, 2014

Mr. Jamie Nicholls (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, NDP): We seldom speak about love in this place, yet who can deny that this force in our lives, above all others, transcends our daily troubles and binds us to one another?

In the frantic moments of last Wednesday, many of us found ourselves side by side with people from other parties and with the people who make this place work, the staff of the House of Commons.

I had the good fortune to find myself with Jud Simpson and the employees in food services who nourish us every day. Jud, Rabiã, and Dominique, the senior staff, maintained supreme calm under the circumstances. They showed love and compassion for others in the building by continually contacting security with an offer to deliver food to those in lockdown.

Imagine if only love and compassion permeated our every action? Too often, we are coloured by fear.

The love of my wife, Amanda MacDonald; my daughter Pera; my mother, Linda St-Maurice; Penny, Ian and Ryan MacDonald; Neil and Carol Nicholls; and friends and citizens of Vaudreuil—Soulanges is what carried me through these difficult circumstances.

I believe Barbara Winters, in comforting Nathan Cirillo in his last moments, gave the most important message we could give anyone in this life: "You are so loved."

Let us build a society based upon love, for freedom is only valuable if we integrate it with love.

* * *

NATIONAL WAR MEMORIAL

Mr. Royal Galipeau (Ottawa—Orléans, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today the National War Memorial is a reflection not just of the first Great War but of all those wars where Canadians have laid down their lives.

It is truly our most sacred place of remembrance, which is why we gather each year to pay our respects to those who have fought for our values: freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. We also pay respect to those who have died protecting these values.

● (1410)

[*Translation*]

As a reflection of our respect for the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and for each and every Canadian veteran who has laid down their lives in the service of Canada, two soldiers stand guard. They do this to honour our fallen, to embody the values our fallen stood for.

[*English*]

After last week, it might be easy to stop this honour guard, but not here, not in Canada.

[*Translation*]

I am so proud of the Canadian service personnel who resumed their post, honouring what is and will always be our greatest place of remembrance.

[*English*]

Lest we forget.

* * *

COMMUNITY SERVICE IN DARTMOUTH—COLE HARBOUR

Mr. Robert Chisholm (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, NDP): Mr. Speaker, people all over Dartmouth—Cole Harbour are working hard to build a stronger community, and they deserve our gratitude.

Thanks to Laura McAvoy and the volunteers at Bicentennial School, I recently spent a beautiful Saturday building and installing benches on the school grounds.

Thanks to Joel Plaskett for supporting the work of the BridgeCAT centre in downtown Dartmouth in keeping at-risk youth in school and introducing them to the world of arts and technology, especially through music.

Thanks to David Foster and the team at Halifax Diverse for their community orchard initiative at the Dartmouth Commons.

Thanks to Lesley Dunn and the Dartmouth Learning Network for hosting a citizenship ceremony at the Dartmouth North Community Centre.

Thanks to Joe Gibson and the Freedom Foundation for 25 years of addictions recovery services.

Thanks to Debby Meier and the North Woodside Community Centre for 20 years of community-building.

Finally, a hearty congratulations to Susan Marshall Steele, a teacher at Astral Drive Elementary School, and Angela Daniels-Drummond, of the Dartmouth Day Care Centre, who were just awarded the Prime Minister's Certificates of Excellence.

NATHAN CIRILLO

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a century ago, tens of thousands of Canadian volunteers went overseas to defend our rights and freedoms during the first Great War. In the fields of France and Belgium, they demonstrated unfaltering resolve, bravery, and camaraderie in the face of terrible danger. The National War Memorial was built so that future generations would never forget their sacrifices, and it has become this nation's most sacred place of remembrance.

On October 22, Corporal Nathan Cirillo embodied this spirit as he stood at his post above the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. He was a mirror of the tenacity that has been timelessly captured in the faces of the bronze servicemen above him.

The National War Memorial today is different than it was last Tuesday in that a new guardian now stands on eternal watch.

As Corporal Nathan Cirillo is laid to rest, a grateful nation salutes him and thanks him.

Lest we forget.

* * *

RAOUL WALLENBERG CENTENNIAL MEDAL

Mr. Marc Garneau (Westmount—Ville-Marie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, tonight the member for Mount Royal will receive the Raoul Wallenberg Centennial Medal in recognition of his long-standing commitment to preserving the legacy of Raoul Wallenberg, the Swedish diplomat who saved the lives of tens of thousands of people during the Second World War.

[Translation]

The member for Mount Royal is being honoured not only for his efforts trying to ascertain the fate of Raoul Wallenberg but because of his outstanding record representing prisoners of conscience such as Nelson Mandela and Natan Sharansky, his years promoting Holocaust education, his work towards the prevention of mass atrocities, and his decades of efforts in support of human rights for all.

[English]

The member for Mount Royal's contributions in the field of human rights law exemplify the values we most admire: to stand for justice and freedom in the face of tyranny and to fight against ignorance and hatred wherever it exists.

For all his remarkable work, we thank and congratulate the member for Mount Royal.

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PATRICE VINCENT AND NATHAN CIRILLO

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I search for an appropriate tribute to Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent and Corporal Nathan Cirillo, I am reminded that today and Saturday our country will pause to say goodbye to these two Canadian heroes.

Oral Questions

These days not only mark the days we lay them to rest but also the beginning of our collective effort to fulfill the age-old promise to never forget their sacrifice.

A soldier's goal is to defend the nation at all costs. As a serving member of our Canadian Armed Forces for 28 years, Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent did just that. Corporal Nathan Cirillo undertook the highest honour in standing on guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at the National War Memorial.

Their sacrifices have made us stronger as a nation. What a fitting tribute to two men who will forever be remembered as two great Canadian heroes.

* * *

• (1415)

NATHAN CIRILLO

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today Canadians have come together to lay Corporal Nathan Cirillo to rest. His family, his friends, and his neighbours have come together in Hamilton, and across the country, Canadians have joined them in spirit. They are taking a moment to mourn the tragedy of a young man who was both a son and a young father, a moment to honour a soldier who volunteered to serve our country. He was a man who stepped forward without hesitation, willing to put himself in harm's way for Canada. It reminds Canadians of all the young men and women who came before him who put on the uniform and were taken from us before their time.

I am a proud representative of a military community. Today, as we join all Canadians in honouring and mourning Corporal Cirillo, let us say again, to all members of the Canadian Forces, that we thank them for keeping us safe. To Corporal Cirillo and his family, we say, as Barbara Winters said to Corporal Cirillo in his final moments, "You are loved."

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Lawrence Toet (Elmwood—Transcona, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada has never bowed to aggressors who wish to change our way of life, nor will we ever. Sentry guards returned to the National War Memorial and were joined by thousands of Canadians. The public is here again in Parliament. We will ensure that our security forces have the tools they need to keep us safe. In one collective voice, our Prime Minister spoke on behalf of all Canadians: "We will not be intimidated."

ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we know that members of the House were in attendance at the funeral of Corporal Nathan Cirillo today, and I know that we all were there in spirit, even as we continued our work today here in the House.

Oral Questions

Yesterday the government tabled new proposals to expand the powers of CSIS. These measures require careful study, particularly the role of special advocates.

Alongside providing more powers to CSIS, will the government also be moving forward on improving civilian oversight at the same time?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague, the member for Vancouver East, for paying tribute to Corporal Cirillo and Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent.

Today, our entire country is mourning a courageous man, a symbol of the best Canada has to offer. We are able to be parliamentarians and govern today because people sacrificed their lives and protected us.

Today we thank them from the bottom of our hearts.

[*English*]

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the minister's words, but we also come back to the business at hand before the House.

The Arar commission concluded in 2006 that improved civilian oversight of CSIS was needed, but for eight years, the Conservatives have ignored this recommendation. In the 2012 budget bill, the Conservatives eliminated the CSIS inspector general, and now there are two vacant positions on the Security Intelligence Review Committee.

After three consecutive years of cuts, is the minister re-examining the resources available to CSIS?

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, regarding the hon. member's two questions, there are provisions in the bill tabled today that would take into consideration the privacy rights of individuals. It is a good tool that would improve the safety of our country, and we intend to move forward.

With regard to oversight of our intelligence, we have strong and robust oversight. We formerly had NDP members sitting on the advisory committee on that oversight body. I expect that our intelligence will follow up on its recommendations.

• (1420)

Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the reality is that SIRC is already overstretched and is not getting the co-operation from CSIS it needs. The minister does know this.

In fact, the report tabled on Friday noted that this small oversight body, now with only three members, reported "significant delays" in receiving information from CSIS. In one case, it said it was "seriously misled".

I ask the minister again: Will he ensure that there will be enhanced civilian oversight to go along with any expanded powers of CSIS?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I expect that the committee that oversees the operations of our intelligence agency will be properly

completed. I thank the committee for its important report on the intelligence activities.

It is important to maintain trust between our Canadian Security Intelligence Service, the review committee, the government, and Canadians, and all for the sole purpose of protecting the public. We will continue to support the efforts of the review committee so that it can achieve its mandate and be accountable to all parliamentarians.

Ms. Nycole Turmel (Hull—Aylmer, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the civilian review committee responsible for overseeing CSIS's actions is criticizing the agency's lack of co-operation and has shown that CSIS made a genuine attempt to mislead the review committee at a time when the government is seeking to give CSIS more powers.

Since the government is already having trouble overseeing the intelligence services, why does it not take the opportunity afforded by Bill C-44 to strengthen the authority of the Security Intelligence Review Committee in order to ensure that CSIS obeys the law and respects Canadian values?

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for her question.

Bill C-44 will indeed clarify the mandate of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service. This will make it easier for the Security Intelligence Review Committee to do its job by clarifying the terms under which the agency can operate, particularly when it comes to international activities that were the subject of comments made by the review committee. That will be included in the bill.

There is no doubt in my mind that the Canadian Security Intelligence Service will fulfill its mandate and make sure that Canadians are protected.

Ms. Nycole Turmel (Hull—Aylmer, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Security Intelligence Review Committee is the only mechanism by which Parliament can ensure that CSIS obeys the law and respects Canadian values. However, we know that the agency is refusing to be accountable. CSIS even tried to mislead an officer of Parliament. The accountability system is not working.

Since the minister is proposing that CSIS be given more authority, why does he not also offer more authority to the agency's civilian review committee?

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind my colleague that the bill clarifies the scope of CSIS's mandate, which will make the review committee's job easier. That is why I am hoping that we can count on the support of the NDP to quickly pass this bill, which is an additional tool to protect Canadians from the terrorist threat, from the threats to which we are exposed.

I have complete confidence in the review committee's ability to do its job. We will continue to ensure that the Canadian Security Intelligence Service implements the relevant recommendations in order to be more effective and more accountable to Parliament and Canadian taxpayers.

*Oral Questions**[English]*

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we join with colleagues from all parties who are in Hamilton today, paying solemn tribute to the late Corporal Nathan Cirillo. Our thoughts and prayers are with his son, Marcus, his family, comrades and friends.

In responding to this tragedy, we must ensure adequate resources are available to our security services: the Canadian Forces, the RCMP, CSIS and others. Is the government conducting a comprehensive analysis of security funding across all departments and agencies of the Government of Canada?

[Translation]

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Wascana. Although we find ourselves in this place, our hearts are also with the people of Hamilton who are paying tribute to one of their own. This honourable citizen will go down in history as a brave and down-to-earth Canadian and as the victim of a heinous act.

That said, as I mentioned, the RCMP, CSIS, the Ottawa Police Service and the Department of National Defence are currently studying last week's tragic events. The RCMP has asked the OPP to take charge of the entire investigation. We will base our actions on the findings of these analyses.

• (1425)

[English]

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, both CSIS and the RCMP have said in recent days that they are doing their best to discharge their security duties with the current resources they have available.

Commissioner Paulson said yesterday that 300 RCMP officers had been reallocated to security work, taken from units fighting organized crime and financial crime. That situation is not likely sustainable.

Does the government have an estimate of what incremental funding will be necessary for the RCMP and CSIS, and when can it be made available?

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what I can assure the member is that in the past our national security agency and our law enforcement agency have counted on this Conservative government to improve the budget by one third in each case. We are there to provide them with the resources that are necessary. Unfortunately, we cannot count on the support of the opposition, but we are moving forward.

Let me also quote Commissioner Paulson, who said yesterday, "I didn't come here to get resources. I came here to help understand the nature of the threat. We are going to make decisions; we have made decisions; and we will continue to make decision around moving resources to respond to the greatest threat to the safety of Canadians".

They can count on us.

[Translation]

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Beauséjour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our thoughts and prayers are with Corporal Nathan Cirillo and his family on this difficult day.

As parliamentarians, we must respond to this tragedy by ensuring that our security forces have the resources required to protect our national security. The RCMP says that it has to reassign 300 members working on financial and organized crime.

Will the government increase funding for these national security agencies so they can carry out their mandate?

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I just said, our government did not wait for these tragic events to take place to ensure that the RCMP and CIS have the resources necessary to carry out their fundamental and important mandate. That is why we have increased the budget of each of these agencies by over one-third.

Commissioner Paulson said yesterday that he was adjusting to the changing nature of the threat and that is why he moved resources based on priorities. We will continue to support our police forces and intelligence agencies in order to improve Canadians' security and safety.

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*[English]***FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today the U.S. Secretary of State is visiting Ottawa and holding talks with the Minister of Foreign Affairs. We welcome Secretary of State Kerry and we thank him for his expression of solidarity with our country.

We know the mission in Iraq was on the agenda. Could the Minister of Foreign Affairs inform the House whether the extension of Canada's combat role in Iraq was discussed?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we welcome Secretary Kerry who is visiting Ottawa and expressing his solidarity and the solidarity of the United States of America with Canada, with all Canadians, and especially paying respects to the two servicemen who passed away.

I can confirm that this was not part of the discussions we had with Secretary Kerry.

* * *

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we want to ensure we have clarity and transparency on the mission.

On another topic, there is urgent need for more help on Ebola. We note that the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Samantha Power, is visiting West Africa and has underlined the urgent need for increased aid and more medical workers to help stop new infections.

Oral Questions

Will the minister be offering Mr. Kerry a scaled up Canadian commitment in response to this global health crisis?

Hon. Christian Paradis (Minister of International Development and Minister for La Francophonie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there were requests about Canada's participation to help combat this terrible disease.

As I said, as of no later than Friday, the disbursement from Canada were \$57 million. That brings our contribution to the second largest amount of all contributors in combatting Ebola.

We will ensure that we keep monitoring the situation very closely. As I said, we have helped in prevention and education with UNICEF, 900,000 people so far.

• (1430)

[Translation]

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the U.S. Secretary of State, John Kerry, is calling on the international community to do more to combat the Ebola crisis. West Africa desperately needs more personnel and basic medical equipment. An American ambassador to the UN, Samantha Power, is calling on everyone to urgently provide beds and medical personnel.

Will the government offer any such assistance to the U.S. Secretary of State?

Hon. Christian Paradis (Minister of International Development and Minister for La Francophonie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are in constant contact with our allies, and in particular with the United States. As I said in the House just last Friday, Canada has already contributed \$57 million, which makes us the second-largest donor in the fight against the Ebola crisis.

We have been there since April 2014. We have already provided equipment and logistical assistance to the World Health Organization. We continue to assess all opportunities. For example, with UNICEF, we were able to help educate 900,000 people on preventive measures.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Americans are specifically requesting beds and medical personnel, and so is the World Bank.

The combat mission in Iraq is another issue at the top of the U.S. Secretary of State's agenda. There is certainly a lot of speculation about extending the Canadian combat mission.

Is the government planning to discuss this issue with the Secretary of State, and is it planning an additional commitment over and above the current six-month mission?

[English]

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I said, that did not come up in the meetings we had with my U.S. counterpart.

The combat mission is an important part of the mission. We also spoke of the need to go after the financing of terrorism. We also spoke of the need to combat radicalization. We also spoke of the

need to bring in the Sunni Arab world, which under the leadership of President Obama has seen significant engagement.

There are many way with which we can tackle this. We can provide training and logistical support. Canada is prepared to do our share. Canada is prepared to do our share of the heavy lifting, which we think is important.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the government cannot seem to get its act together on labour market information. It gets the job vacancy numbers from Kijiji. It does not count aboriginal Canadians in the unemployment rate. It has gutted Statistics Canada.

Now even the TD Bank has given up on the government and has created its own indicator. The new TD LMI shows that the Canadian labour market has been very weak over the past two years.

When will the Conservatives stop playing with numbers?

Hon. Candice Bergen (Minister of State (Social Development), CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government recognizes the need for better labour market information. We are addressing that. We have launched two comprehensive new surveys for labour market information, a quarterly job vacancy survey and an annual national wage report.

We are listening to the experts. We are ensuring that we have accurate labour market information.

[Translation]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé (Saint-Lambert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the temporary foreign worker program train wreck is due in part to the lack of reliable data.

In fact, TD Bank no longer trusts the government's labour market information. After having to develop its own methodology, it discovered that Canada's labour market has been ailing for two years, contrary to what the Conservatives claim.

Instead of messing with the numbers and pretending that the labour market is not in big trouble, will the Conservatives tackle unemployment with a real job creation plan?

[English]

Hon. Candice Bergen (Minister of State (Social Development), CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I said, we are not just looking but moving forward on ways to improve our labour market information.

Oral Questions

There are other things we are doing. We have made strong reforms to our temporary foreign worker program so we can ensure Canadians have first crack at the jobs that are available. We have also introduced the Canada job grant so employers are linked directly with skills training for jobs that are available. We recognize there are gaps in certain regions in the country in regard to labour skills and labour needs.

We are working on the whole sector in terms of labour market information and addressing those labour market needs.

* * *

• (1435)

[*Translation*]

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as usual, the Conservatives and the Liberals want to dip freely into the EI fund. This time, it is to finance their so-called job creation plan.

An economist called the Liberals' plans an election gimmick, while the Parliamentary Budget Officer has revealed that the Conservatives' plan will cost half a million dollars per job. In short, these are two bad plans funded with money that belongs to unemployed workers.

How can the Conservatives justify using workers' contributions to finance a program that will create virtually no jobs?

Hon. Joe Oliver (Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the premise of the question is inaccurate.

We have frozen EI premiums for three years, which represents \$550 million in savings for job creators and for workers in 2014 alone.

The new small business job credit would lower insurance premiums by 15%, which will enable small businesses to save a lot more money.

It is an advantage that the Canadian Federation of Independent Business has—

The Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley.

* * *

[*English*]

THE BUDGET

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, at \$550,000 a job, we can get two senators for that price.

Not only would this 450-page omnibus bill continue the raid on employment insurance, it is packed full of other measures that Conservatives want to hide from Canadians, like the Conservative private member's bill to strip social security from refugee claimants to federal judges to airports, and the elimination of the Canadian Polar Commission, dozens of laws changed with a single stroke of a pen.

Could the Minister of Finance answer just one question? What do any of these initiatives have to do with the budget?

Hon. Joe Oliver (Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our budget implementation plan goes to reducing taxes, creating jobs and economic growth, and there are many measures that would achieve that.

It would extend the existing tax credit for interest paid on government-sponsored student loans and interest paid on a Canada apprentice loan. It introduces a new reporting standard to meet Canada's G8 commitment to increase transparency for entities operating in the extractive sector. It would strengthen Canada's intellectual property regime and amend legislation to implement reforms to the temporary foreign workers program. It would make the tax system fairer and simpler for farming and fishing businesses. It would do a great deal for the economy.

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EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there is some worrisome news for the Conservative government. There seems to be division within the Conservative ranks over who the employment insurance fund actually belongs to.

Last night, the Conservative member from York Centre passionately told the finance committee that EI funds did not belong to the government but to the workers and employers who paid into it. We could not agree more, yet the Minister of Finance's own omnibus bill continues to rip off more than half a billion dollars from the EI fund, which has been panned by experts. This plan shows to be destructive and expensive.

Will the minister take his own colleague's advice and scrap this dangerous EI scheme?

Hon. Joe Oliver (Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I think perhaps the NDP member is thinking of the previous Liberal government, which increased EI premiums to \$65 billion and then used them as a slush fund. The Liberals raided and completely wiped it out. This is not something we will do.

The NDP also supported a 45-day work year that would drastically increase premiums by 35% at a cost of \$44 billion. Unlike the opposition—

The Speaker: The hon. member for St. Paul's.

* * *

INFRASTRUCTURE

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (St. Paul's, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Toronto Mayor-elect John Tory is committed to working with all levels of government to invest in the infrastructure on public transit, essential to making our community competitive.

The Ontario finance minister is already committed to working collaboratively with him to make these critical investments.

Oral Questions

Will the Minister of Finance stand up for his city and reverse his decision to slash infrastructure spending by almost 90% this year and increase the funding necessary to improve the quality of life for Torontonians, which will create jobs now?

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, first I have to congratulate the people who have been elected yesterday in the municipal elections. We are happy to work with them and we will continue to work with them.

We have tripled federal infrastructure investments since we took office. For the next 10 years, that is \$53 billion that municipalities can count on.

In respect of jurisdiction, we will not manage everything in Ottawa. We will work with provinces and municipalities.

• (1440)

Mr. Arnold Chan (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government just does not get it. Its Building Canada fund commits only \$210 million for each of the next two years.

In yesterday's municipal elections, voters sent a clear message that the current plans for infrastructure, and in particular public transit, are not good enough.

In the GTA and indeed across much of Ontario, we saw a wave of candidates who are focused on city-building and building access to public transit.

Will the government heed the calls of Ontario's municipalities and commit to invest more in infrastructure?

[Translation]

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, I am a former mayor. I do not need a lecture from the member about how things work in a city. I know that before our government there was very little money available for cities and for infrastructure in this country. Since we came to power, we have significantly increased support for our municipalities, and we will continue to do so. Announcements are happening all across the country. I am proud of our government and of our Prime Minister.

[English]

Mr. Arnold Chan (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, even the Parliamentary Budget Officer suggested last week that the government could make significant investments in the budget and still maintain the Conservatives' goal of a 25% debt to GDP ratio. This would kick-start much-needed investments in public infrastructure across the country.

Will the government heed the advice of the Parliamentary Budget Officer and commit the much needed investments in public infrastructure?

Hon. Joe Oliver (Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the member of the opposition understands the strong fiscal situation of our country. Federal debt to GDP is one-third. It will go down to one-quarter by 2021, and it could decrease even more.

We have a strong fiscal situation, and that is why we have introduced the longest and largest infrastructure program in Canadian history, some \$70 billion, of which \$53 billion will go to the provinces and municipalities.

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PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Mr. Robert Chisholm (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, NDP): Mr. Speaker, another day, another vital military procurement project massively mismanaged by the Conservative government.

Today the PBO reported that the Conservative budget for the offshore patrol vessels is not realistic because it will only cover four ships, not the six to eight promised by the Conservatives.

The people in my riding and across the region are counting on those jobs. Can the minister explain how the government will get the project back on track and get those six to eight vessels it promised built?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in fact we are confident that we will build six Arctic offshore patrol ships. The contract with Irving, while advanced, is not yet finalized.

I should point out that the numbers provided by the PBO are based on erroneous data and rough cost estimates of international vessels with varied capabilities, and they are derived using inaccurate specifications. In one of his assumptions the PBO said it was:

...unable to locate reliable, sufficiently contemporary Canadian data on an acquisition of this nature....

Our national shipbuilding procurement strategy will deliver the goods for our men and women.

Mr. Robert Chisholm (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the current government stonewalls the PBO every single time, but when it comes down to who is telling the truth, it is the PBO who is always right.

The Prime Minister has been announcing these ships since 2007 and promising that the first one would have been built last year. The longer this project is delayed, the more expensive it will get. According to the PBO, if it is delayed another year, they will only be able to build three ships.

When is the government going to explain to Canadians that it is not going to keep its promise of building six to eight offshore patrol vessels?

Oral Questions

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the fact is that the opposition members voted against having any Arctic offshore patrol ships, so I am not sure what they are so worried about. However, in fact we are confident that we will deliver six Arctic offshore patrol ships, starting construction in 2015. In fact, as part of the national shipbuilding procurement strategy, yesterday for the first time we cut steel at Seaspan for the offshore fisheries science vessel.

Our national shipbuilding procurement strategy is moving forward and creating jobs, some estimated 15,000 jobs over the next 30 years, and \$2 billion a year in economic benefit.

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● (1445)

MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is not just ships they have abandoned. Unfortunately, the Conservatives have also totally abandoned southwestern Ontario. As good high-quality manufacturing jobs disappear, the Conservatives are just twiddling their thumbs. Instead of helping to secure investments that would create jobs here, Canada has lost 400,000 good manufacturing jobs plus all the spinoff jobs those jobs would create. Their inaction is hurting Canadian families and communities.

Where is the government's plan to create good manufacturing jobs here in Canada?

Hon. James Moore (Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, those who are actually experts in this field say the answers are in budget 2014 and the NDP should vote for it.

The Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters say:

...the budget contains a number of measures that will assist manufacturers and exporters in finding...skilled workers, lower regulatory compliance costs, and help win major investments in Canada.

That is exactly what she said we ought to be doing. They are policies that lead to investment, policies that lead to employment, policies that lead to an increase in manufacturing. The Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters say that our government has it right, that it is contained in budget 2014, and that the New Democrats ought to vote for it.

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AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, quotes do not equal a paycheque, and the reality is that the Conservatives' failure to work with others cost Windsor \$1.5 billion in investment, now going to Mexico.

The Conservatives failed to reach a deal with the province, Ford, and the union to build a major production facility that would have actually produced 1,000 jobs for my community and Essex County. New Democrats have long called for a proactive auto strategy that would bring together governments, industry, and labour to support good jobs and create them in our communities and avoid disappointments like this one.

Eleven countries have a national auto strategy. They include the U.K., France, Germany, Japan, Australia, India, and yes, Mexico. Why did this minister let our community down?

Hon. James Moore (Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is utterly nonsensical. Sticking with budget 2014, where he says he wants answers, the Canadian Vehicle Manufacturers' Association says that budget 2014 "demonstrates the government's continued recognition of the importance of the auto sector to Canada's economy...."

There is a reason we do have a strong auto sector in Canada. It is because on average we have a 13% lower corporate tax rate than is in the United States. The NDP leader said last week that the NDP wants to increase corporate taxes, so let us think of that. The New Democrats want to increase taxes and drive out the auto sector, so they can bring in revenue to give back to the Canadian auto sector that would not exist under NDP policy. That is their approach. The way we have it, we have it right.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mrs. Stella Ambler (Mississauga South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, to fulfill the St. Andrew's Society and the Sons of Scotland's vision of a Scottish regiment in Hamilton, the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders stood up in 1903. Since then, this storied regiment has represented its Scottish roots, the city of Hamilton, and indeed Canada in a manner fitting of the very men and women who serve among its ranks.

Would the Minister of Public Works and Government Services please share a few reflections on this storied regiment and on Corporal Nathan Cirillo?

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders is one of Canada's most renowned regiments with a history of remarkable bravery, heroism, strength, and honour forged on battlefields across the globe. Built with strong Scottish roots, it sent its very best last week to guard our country's most sacred place of remembrance. Corporal Nathan Cirillo stood up for freedom, defended the fallen, and stood in service of Canada.

On behalf of my proud extended Scottish family and indeed a grateful nation, I say that Corporal Cirillo's sacrifice will never be forgotten.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Ms. Annick Papillon (Québec, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there is nothing more frustrating than paying \$2, \$3, \$4 or \$7 to receive an invoice or bank statement. It is an abuse by financial institutions, which make huge profits.

If the government is acknowledging that this is an unfair practice on the part of telecommunications companies, it should also acknowledge that it is unfair on the part of banks. That would make sense to me.

Why does the government let banks charge unreasonable fees to Canadians who want a paper statement?

● (1450)

Hon. Joe Oliver (Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in the 2013 throne speech and 2014 budget, the government promised to put an end to pay-to-pay billing practices. Canadian consumers should not have to pay more to receive paper statements. Major banks do not charge clients for any credit card statements or other statements indicating amounts owing.

[English]

Mr. Glenn Thibeault (Sudbury, NDP): Mr. Speaker, then why is there a double standard? Why is he allowing the banks to get away with charging it but not in stopping the telecoms? It absolutely makes no sense. The Conservatives promised to end these types of pay-to-pay policies, but if we read the fine print, the banks are exempted.

Canadians have been loud and clear. These cash grabs are unfair. Why are the Conservatives picking and choosing which Canadian consumers get ripped off by these fees? Why will the minister not stand up to the banks and end the gouging of Canadians?

Hon. Joe Oliver (Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I already said, for credit cards and other statements that show a payment owing, all major banks are mailing bills to their customers without charge.

Let me quote John Lawford of the Public Interest Advocacy Centre. He said, “Consumers are clearly opposed to paying for paper bills and the federal government has clearly committed to ‘eliminating’ these charges.”

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CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Mr. Andrew Cash (Davenport, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there is no clear commitment there when it comes to banks. Actually, what they are saying is, “If you are being ripped off by banks who are charging pay to pay fees, this government is not going to stand up for you.”

On the subject of refugees, refugees are fleeing persecution. They arrive in this country with nothing but hope for a better life. Now the Conservatives are cutting them off, and they are hiding it in an omnibus bill. If the minister really insists on standing by this heartless attack, will he at least agree to a full and open debate?

Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on a day when the House is, for the most part, given over to non-partisan commemoration of one of our fallen

soldiers, it would be nice if the NDP did not spread utter misinformation about the nature of the bill.

Refugees are absolutely unaffected by the measures in the bill. We are simply establishing the authority for provinces to have a minimum residence time in the country for categories of persons, not including refugees, should they wish to use it. It is a provincial jurisdiction. We respect that.

[Translation]

Ms. Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe (Pierrefonds—Dollard, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the minister needs to stop hiding behind the provinces and face the potential consequences of his own decisions.

He cannot deny that the government decided to bury a private member's bill in the middle of this omnibus budget implementation bill, in the middle of these 478 pages. The bill was controversial because it allows the provinces to take away refugees' welfare benefits. The minister cannot allow the provinces or anyone else to target refugees and their children like this.

He must take these inhumane measures out of the omnibus bill. Is he willing to do that?

Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, instead, the member should stop spewing this completely false rhetoric.

We are simply establishing minimum residency requirements for people other than refugees, if the provinces and territories wish to use them. It is a provincial jurisdiction. We respect that. The provinces will continue to set the ground rules for social assistance.

* * *

[English]

PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Cardigan, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a new PBO report says that the Conservative budget for the Arctic patrol ships is insufficient and could mean only three ships would be built rather than six to eight.

Whether it is the F-35s, naval supply ships, military helicopters or Arctic patrol ships, the government botches every procurement it touches. Will the government be increasing the budget or buying fewer patrol ships? When will the government come up with a procurement strategy that fixes the nine long years of Conservative incompetence?

● (1455)

Hon. Diane Finley (Minister of Public Works and Government Services, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is time to remind the hon. member that it was his Liberal government that cancelled the Sea Kings and paid half a billion dollars after that. We are still trying to recover from that. The Liberals starved the military for 10 years.

On the other hand, as I announced, we cut steel on the first offshore fishery science vessel, part of our national shipbuilding procurement strategy. We have successfully completed procurements for military with the LAVs, heavy-lift aircraft, tactical lift transporters, main battle tanks, new heavy artillery, and many more.

We support our men and women in uniform.

* * *

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada has over 1.3 million people of Canadian Ukrainian heritage. As a country, we truly care about what is happening in Ukraine.

This past Sunday, the people of Ukraine voted for building a stronger and healthier relationship with the west and against the far right. Ukrainian President Poroshenko told Canadians that he would like to see a trade deal between our two nations.

Could the government provide a status report on the trade talks between Canada and Ukraine?

Mr. Gerald Keddy (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue and for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in July the Minister of International Trade led a trade and development mission to Ukraine aimed at deepening economic co-operation with Ukraine. Our government is committed to supporting efforts to build a peaceful, democratic and proper society in Ukraine. Ukraine is a priority market under Canada's global markets action plan.

* * *

[Translation]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. François Lapointe (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Superior Court of Quebec had to issue an injunction to halt the drilling off the coast of Cacouna. To make matters worse, the Quebec Department of the Environment revealed that hammering work, which was not even mentioned in the authorizations granted, caused excessive noise within a perimeter five times larger than what was allowed. Rather than stopping the work, the Conservatives let the company regulate itself, without asking for any scientific advice from experts.

When will the minister acknowledge her incompetence in protecting species at risk and terminate this project, which is unacceptable from both a human and an environmental perspective?

[English]

Hon. Gail Shea (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, CPC): Mr. Speaker, protection of belugas is a priority for DFO. The current court case is about provincial laws and involves provincial officials.

The only work that was taking place at Cacouna was exploratory work that was approved. Projects will only move forward if they are safe for Canadians and safe for the environment.

TransCanada has not yet submitted the construction of a marine terminal for review at all.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the more we question the minister about what is happening in Cacouna, the more she convinces us that she does not know what is happening in her own department.

She misjudged the noise impact of the exploratory work in Cacouna, and now we have also learned that the proponent conducted penetration testing, which no one had heard of before.

How can the minister explain the fact that nothing was known about this testing or the noise impact of the work carried out off the coast of Cacouna?

[English]

Hon. Gail Shea (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us look at the facts. TransCanada's work was reviewed by DFO. We relied on the best available science. We imposed strict conditions for the work to go ahead. We made all this information public.

This exploratory work was found not to cause any harm to the environment. At this point in time, only exploratory work has been approved.

* * *

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Lawrence Toet (Elmwood—Transcona, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today UNICEF released a new report on child poverty, specifically looking at the effects of the recession.

Could the Minister of State for Social Development update the House on UNICEF's findings for Canada and what the government is doing to alleviate child poverty?

Hon. Candice Bergen (Minister of State (Social Development), CPC): In fact, Mr. Speaker, the UNICEF report today showed that Canada's child poverty rate actually decreased during the recession years, pulling 180,000 children out of poverty. UNICEF's president said that Canada had done better than most western countries because of the low-tax incentives that we provided families and also the programs like our universal child care benefit.

We are very proud and grateful for these results. Under our Conservative government, we have seen child poverty reduced to an all-time low. We will continue to take action to protect Canada's most vulnerable.

Oral Questions

● (1500)

HEALTH

Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last week we tabled a motion asking the government to work collaboratively with Parliament to contain Ebola at source. In that spirit of co-operation, we even amended our original motion to accommodate the government's concerns.

Since then, there have been 400 new Ebola deaths and spread to another African country. Effective action in Africa is even more critical now and so is a national Ebola plan for Canada. It is time to put aside political partisanship and end these deaths.

Will the minister vote for our motion?

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Minister of Health, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I can reassure the member that I have now met with my provincial counterparts three times, most recently yesterday, to discuss their preparedness.

In terms of the motion, the member knows, as we email each other, that I am available every day in the House of Commons. I am willing to come to committee to answer questions. Dr. Taylor, our Chief Public Health Officer, has made himself available for briefings for any MP and he briefed all MPs before the House rose a couple of weeks ago. We will continue to make ourselves fully available to all members of Parliament.

* * *

[Translation]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Air Canada is a chronic offender when it comes to official languages.

The public is lodging a growing number of complaints. The Commissioner of Official Languages has criticized Air Canada, and our courts regularly say that the carrier is violating its official language obligations, yet nothing changes.

When will the Conservatives stop tolerating the behaviour of Air Canada, which has repeatedly shown that it could not care less about French and about Canadian laws?

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Transport, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Supreme Court ruled on this issue. We respect the Supreme Court's decision and we expect Air Canada to comply with the Air Canada Public Participation Act.

* * *

[English]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Greg Kerr (West Nova, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when we were first elected, our government significantly increased the budget for the Canadian Armed Forces. This allowed the military to undertake some major capital acquisitions, including the purchase of four C-17 Globemaster strategic airlift craft, 17 C-130J Hercules tactical transport aircraft, and the Aurora modernization project.

Could the Minister of Justice please update the House on the contribution our modern CP-140 Auroras and CF Greenwood will be making to Operation Impact in the fight against ISIL?

Hon. Peter MacKay (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last week I had the honour, with the member for West Nova, to visit 14 Wing Greenwood in Nova Scotia, where two of our modernized Aurora surveillance aircraft were departing for Kuwait as part of Operation Impact to assist in the campaign against ISIL terrorists.

The modernized CP-140 Aurora aircraft, work that was done, as he mentioned, in Nova Scotia, offer the Royal Canadian Air Force a world-class capability and are among the most effective man surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft in the world. They bring a lot to the fight.

On behalf of all Canadians, I want to thank the courageous men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces for the work they do defending Canada's interests at home and abroad.

* * *

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Mr. John Rafferty (Thunder Bay—Rainy River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadians continue to be gouged at the pumps in northern Ontario. Thunder Bay, Atikokan and Fort Frances have some of the highest gas prices in the country. Despite gas prices falling in the rest of Canada, prices in northern Ontario are not budging. In fact, some are inching upward.

When will the government finally support our proposal for a gas ombudsman to ensure the people of northern Ontario are not being gouged at the pumps?

Hon. James Moore (Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government has taken action when it comes to prices at the pumps. We have put in place the Fairness at the Pumps Act. We have put in place a regulation after consultations with the folks in northern Ontario and elsewhere to ensure that the regulation is meaningful for everyday consumers.

My colleague thinks that gas prices should somehow be regulated or that there needs to be an ombudsman. This is an area of provincial jurisdiction and I would encourage him to call the provincial premier and suggest that idea.

We on this side of the House believe in taking action to support consumers and put more money in their pockets by lowering taxes, which we have done, and by preventing any company from gouging consumers through our legislation, which we have done.

We continue to ensure that consumers are adequately protected at the pumps.

Government Orders

• (1505)

[Translation]

MARINE TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Jean-François Fortin (Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matapédia, FD): Mr. Speaker, on the weekend, thousands of people marched in Sorel to demonstrate their opposition to the unchecked use of the St. Lawrence River for exporting oil from the oil sands.

They refuse to remain silent about the increased number of giant oil tankers on the river and refuse to accept the risk of an oil spill, which would be disastrous. Unfortunately, neither the NDP, the Liberals, nor the Conservatives were there to listen to what the elected officials, citizens, and groups had to say.

When will the government acknowledge the concern caused by the oil being shipped on the St. Lawrence and listen to what people have to say?

[English]

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Transport, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government believes in responsible resource development and that is why we are signing so many free trade agreements. Part of that as well is being ready for the increase in traffic.

That is why about a year ago we embarked upon the world-class tanker safety system. We have introduced a number of measures that do uphold the three pillars, which are to prevent a spill from happening, to respond if it does unfortunately happen and to ensure that taxpayer dollars are kept safe. Under prevention, we have one of the best smart navigation systems in the world and we will continue to invest in that.

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PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I would like to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of Dame Rosemary Butler, Presiding Officer of the National Assembly for Wales.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: I would also like to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of the 2015 Indspire Awards recipients: Madeleine Redfern, Brenda LaRose, William Julius Mussell, Elsie Yanik, Jordan Konek. Ron E. Scott, Gerald Anderson, Kendal Netmaker, Kim Baird, Peter Irniq, Dr. Paulette C. Tremblay, Gabrielle Fayant, Dr. Wilton Littlechild and Gino Odjick.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

CANADA-KOREA ECONOMIC GROWTH AND PROSPERITY ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-41, An Act to implement the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and the Republic of Korea, be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, for Official Languages and for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, upon entry into force of the agreement, over 96% of South Korean tariff lines for industrial goods will be subject to immediate duty-free access, with the remaining 5% eliminated within 10 years. For example, South Korean tariffs on flight simulators, cosmetics, ferro-alloys, gas turbines and scientific instruments, which run as high as 8%, will be eliminated.

This duty-free access will give Canadian products preferential access to the South Korean market and will create a level playing field with South Korea's current free trade agreement partners.

Another key driver of economic activity in Quebec is the agricultural and agri-food products sector, which employed over 138,000 people in 2012.

From 2011 to 2013, Quebec's agricultural exports to South Korea were worth an annual average of \$93 million, led by pork, malt extract, food preparations and maple syrup.

Quebec will benefit from expanding exports of these and a wide variety of other products, including animal fats, soybeans, animal feed and fruits such as cranberries and blueberries.

The Canada-Korea free trade agreement will eliminate many agricultural tariffs immediately upon implementation of the agreement and will eliminate tariffs, in whole or in part, on 97% of current agricultural exports when the agreement is fully implemented. For example, South Korean tariffs on pork and most processed pork products, which face a current rate of up to 30%, will be eliminated. Tariffs on most food preparations, which run as high as 30%, will also be eliminated. For their part, exporters of blueberries and other berries will see current tariffs ranging from 30% to 45% eliminated. That is not all.

The Canada-Korea free trade agreement also contains robust provisions, which will ensure that Quebec agricultural and agri-food products are not undermined by unjustified trade barriers.

The chapter on sanitary and phytosanitary measures negotiated in the Canada-Korea free trade agreement is a good example. In this chapter, Canada and Korea have agreed to build on their shared commitments under the WTO Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures.

The chapter fully recognizes the rights of WTO members to take the sanitary and phytosanitary measures necessary for the protection of human, animal or plant life or health, as long as they are based on science and are not used as disguised measures to unnecessarily restrict trade.

Under the agreement, Canada and Korea will establish a new bilateral sanitary and phytosanitary measures committee through which experts can collaborate and consult on sanitary and phytosanitary measures to enhance bilateral co-operation and facilitate trade by discussing issues before they become problems.

Government Orders

Since South Korea is a large net importer of agricultural and agri-food products, importing nearly \$20 billion in 2013, Quebec stands to benefit considerably from the Canada-Korea free trade agreement.

Beyond tariffs, Canada and Korea recognize the importance of fostering co-operation and transparency in standards-related measures and have committed to encourage the use of internationally recognized standards and membership in multilateral arrangements to minimize duplicative certification and testing of products, including those related to medical devices.

The agreement also includes provisions aimed at minimizing the impact of technical barriers, which will in turn help maximize market access for Quebec's exports.

To conclude, Canadian companies that do business abroad rely on fair, transparent, predictable and non-discriminatory trade rules. With the Canada-Korea free trade agreement, we are looking to provide the rules they need so they can compete and win abroad and build a stronger economy here at home.

No government in Canada's history has been more committed to the creation of jobs and prosperity for Canadian businesses, workers and their families. Deepening Canada's trading relationships in dynamic and high-growth markets around the world is key to these efforts.

• (1510)

Mrs. Carol Hughes (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasing, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the NDP certainly supports Bill C-41, An Act to implement the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and the Republic of Korea.

We use three criteria to determine whether or not we will support trade agreements. First, we must ensure that the proposed partner respects democracy, human rights, adequate environmental and labour standards, as well as Canadian values. If there are problems in that regard, is the partner making progress towards achieving these objectives? Next, is the proposed partner's economy of significant or strategic value to Canada? Finally, are the terms of the proposed agreement satisfactory? These are the criteria we use when studying agreements such as this one.

Since 2012, when the United States implemented trade agreements with South Korea and obtained preferential access for its businesses, Canadians exporters have lost 30% of their market share.

Why was this government so slow to act, and why has it negotiated an agreement that is not as good?

• (1515)

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question.

I think that the government took as much time as was necessary to negotiate an agreement that is in Canadians' best interest. It will create jobs and opportunities for Canadian workers in all regions of the country.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is important to recognize that this particular agreement was not an initiative by this particular government. In fact, it was South Korea,

which back in 2003 put itself on track to go out to the world and sign free trade agreements. Within a year of that, Prime Minister Paul Martin put Canada in a position to begin the negotiations.

My question is in regard to the amount of time that it has taken for this current government to reach an actual agreement. We often hear about the United States, but other countries, such as Chile, India, and Peru, have been successful in getting an agreement in place earlier.

Why does the minister think it took Canada so long to actually achieve an agreement?

[Translation]

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Mr. Speaker, I think it is very hard to compare the Liberals' record on agreements with foreign governments to our own record.

Since 2006, and even before then, the Conservative government has signed agreements with partner countries that account for over 52% of the international GDP. That is a huge success, the kind of success that the other side of the House will never know.

[English]

Mr. Bruce Hyer (Thunder Bay—Superior North, GP): Mr. Speaker, this is a lopsided deal.

In 2013, there was an almost \$4 billion deficit in trade with Korea. It is going to get worse.

It is great for Korea. It is great for Hyundai. It is bad for Canadian automakers and auto workers, and I am surprised that the NDP is not standing up for auto workers.

My question for the Conservatives is this: why they are making Canada a resource-exporting colony of South Korea?

[Translation]

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Mr. Speaker, every free trade agreement with another country, including the one with Korea, helps develop the economies of both partner countries.

On this side of the House, we are very proud of what we have accomplished through our free trade agreements with countries around the world.

[English]

Mr. Kennedy Stewart (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak to Bill C-41, an act to implement the free trade agreement between Canada and the Republic of Korea. There are a number of things I would like to highlight in my few minutes here.

I would like to say why I support the bill.

First of all, I follow the party criteria that we should only be engaging in trade negotiations and signing deals with partners that respect democracy and human rights, have adequate environmental and labour standards, and share values similar to ours.

Second, we should only be doing deals that provide an economic advantage to us.

Government Orders

Third, we should only sign deals if the terms are satisfactory.

Our trade critic, the very hard-working member for Vancouver Kingsway, has put his mind to this bill, as have all of us on this side of the House, and we think this agreement is worth supporting. I am proud to say that. We will keep an eye on this measure as it moves forward.

When I reviewed the deal and looked at the history of the two countries, I was struck first by how different they are and then, perhaps thinking about the lessons that I have learned from having a very large Korean community in Burnaby, by what we can hope to gain from this deal beyond merely trade. I am hoping that we can take some inspiration from how the Koreans have built their economy.

We have a tale of two countries that have come together to do a trade agreement. In the 20th century, Korea was at war from 1950 to 1953 and had 375,000 civilian deaths. That is a massive loss of life. In talking to Koreans, we hear that the country was more or less bombed flat. Koreans had a very difficult rebuilding process, both economically and politically. I have talked to the scientific adviser to the President of Korea, who said that with essentially no energy resources, they had to be quite creative when it came to rebuilding their economy.

South Korea became a full democracy in the 1980s, when the constitution was changed to allow direct election of the president. South Korea then held its first free parliamentary elections in that decade, the same decade that it hosted the Olympics.

South Korea also has a very troubled relationship with North Korea, as everybody in the world does. It is a very difficult neighbour to have. In 1980, South Korea's GDP per capita was just over \$1,700. Twentieth century Korea was very different from 20th century Canada.

Canada participated in the Korean War. We sent 26,000 troops and we had 512 casualties, which is a high number, but it was well worth the effort. As we move toward Remembrance Day, we want to remember all those who fought in the Korean conflict.

Where Korea had a massive loss of civilian life, there was no real domestic destruction here in Canada in that conflict. Where South Korea moved to becoming a full democracy in the 1980s, we are one of the oldest democracies in the world. As for problems with our neighbours, we have none. The U.S.-Canadian relationship is one of the strongest in the world. In 1980, the South Korean GDP per capita was \$1,700, while in Canada it was \$11,000, ten times higher than in Korea. It really paints two different pictures of 20th century Canada and South Korea: one is a picture of a country getting on its feet after a tremendous struggle and the other is a picture of a very strong and enduring democracy.

It is also worth thinking about where our countries are now, in the 21st century. In Canada, our GDP per capita is \$52,000. That is five times higher than in 1980, so we have had significant economic growth. Our population is 35 million, and we are 15th in the world in terms of GDP, at \$1.5 trillion.

However, what is remarkable is what has happened in South Korea. The GDP per capita in 2014 is almost \$26,000, which is 25

times what it was in the 1980s. That is the fastest-growing economy in the world over that period. The current population is 50 million. South Korea has passed us in terms of GDP, with a \$1.7 trillion economy. It is 13th in the world; we are 15th in the world.

The question is, how did South Korea do this? How did it pull off what we might consider an economic miracle?

• (1520)

Korea invested in science. It invested in research and development. It is worth looking at how this investment has rolled out and compare it with what we are doing here in Canada with the hope that we will take lessons from this.

In 1991, Korea, both the public and private sector considered, spent 1.8% of its total GDP on research and development. That is very close to what Canada spent on research and development in 1991, which was 1.55% of total GDP. That is about a 0.25 percentage point gap in 1991.

However, in 2006, when we elected the Conservatives who unfortunately were not investing in science, the Koreans certainly did. In 2006, where Canada was spending 1.96% of our GDP on research and development, the Koreans were investing over 3%, so it is a big jump. The gap between the two countries became very sizable at a 1.05 percentage point gap. When we think about that in GDP terms, that is a massive amount of money.

The Korean government committed to investing in research and development and that is what they have done. Look where they are now. In 2012, Korea is the top investor in research and development, and 4.36% of their GDP goes into research and development. We have fallen. We have actually lost significant ground, not just to Korea but to many other countries in the world. Canada only invests 1.69% of our GDP. That is a 2.67 percentage point gap. That is a huge gap.

The Koreans are almost tripling our investment in research and development, which is why we have very different economies. What is scary is that the Koreans have just recently committed to investing 5% of their entire economy back into research and development. Again, that is public and private sector spending. That is the way the Koreans pulled themselves out of the horrors of war and it is the way they are going to continue to develop economically.

We just have to look at the companies that Korea has built from scratch. Look at Samsung Electronics. It is a \$165 billion company when we look at the market capitalization of outstanding shares. The Hyundai Motor Company is \$50 billion; POSCO, the steel company, is \$33 billion; Kia Motors, \$29 billion; Hyundai Mobis, which is an auto parts business, \$26 billion; LG Chemical, \$20 billion. The list goes on and on.

Government Orders

If we compare that with what is going on in Canada, the Royal Bank of Canada is the biggest company in Canada by market cap at \$88 billion, which is half the size of Samsung. Toronto Dominion Bank, Bank of Nova Scotia, Bank of Montreal, all within are our top ten companies, are financial services, not necessarily innovators.

That is really what we see when we look at what companies dominate the Korean economy: Samsung, Hyundai, Kia, LG, Hynix semiconductor. These are all big companies that have been really driven through a sustained and very focused effort on understanding economic drivers and making sure that the proper monies are put in to encourage research and development. In Canada, we have been relying on finances and natural resources. Besides the banks, our big companies are Suncor, Enbridge and TransCanada.

I hope we can learn from the Koreans. Innovation never goes away, unlike natural resources, which do disappear. If we look at our fish stocks, our trees, even oil and gas, these things all go away. What the Koreans have learned is that innovation is essential to the future.

I am pleased that we have decided to sign this trade deal in the hope that we will take lessons from the Koreans and build our knowledge economy here.

• (1525)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is really important to talk about free trade agreements, and it is great to see that the New Democrats are now supporting free trade.

One of the important issues that needs to be recognized is that it is not only about trade agreements, but overall trade. Over the last number of years we have witnessed a substantial decrease in trade in terms of having a trade surplus prior to the Conservatives coming into government and ultimately turning that into a major trade deficit. That means literally hundreds, thousands of jobs have been lost because the government has not done well on trade, on the bigger picture.

Could the member provide some comment? As important as it is that Canada look for and sign trade agreements, it is equally important, if not even more important, that we watch that bottom line. This is where the government has been negligent. It has failed to meet the potential of our Canadian exporters by ensuring that countries around the world are participating and consuming our products.

That is, in essence, the real reason why we now have a trade deficit as opposed to a surplus, which equates to jobs.

Mr. Kennedy Stewart: Mr. Speaker, in terms of how badly the Conservatives are managing the economy, it is hard to know where to start. We can work with trade deficits, and that is kind of where we are in this debate.

It is clear that the Conservatives have put all their eggs in one basket. They just want to triple the output of the oil sands, ram pipelines through British Columbia, ram pipelines through the rest of Canada and hope that provides the jobs they think it will. However, with predictions now of \$70 a barrel oil, that may be a big fault. It would be a mistake not to diversify, not to invest in the knowledge economy, not to look for other means of exporting.

For example, we do not just have to export oil. We could export education or culture. There are all kinds of different industries that could be grown, but the government has cut all of those industries. It has put all its eggs in one basket and I think it is a huge mistake.

• (1530)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Denis Blanchette (Louis-Hébert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his excellent speech. He identified many important aspects of free trade agreements, particularly one with Korea, a society that has decided to focus on high tech.

Unfortunately, there is a downside. I am not sure we are in the same league as Korea when it comes to that. I would like my colleague to comment further on that.

Are we in a position to act fast so that we too can trade value-adds rather than just raw resources for high tech? What are his thoughts on that?

[*English*]

Mr. Kennedy Stewart: Mr. Speaker, it is a great question. We are talking about an economic vision here. The government has had almost four years to tell us what its vision is, in a majority, and it is simply putting all its eggs in one basket.

We need to learn from other countries such as Korea that have national plans. Every country in the world would have a national energy plan. We do not have one here. All countries have housing plans and economic development plans. The government seems to be unable to put these together and it is causing all kinds of chaos in different sectors of the economy.

What we can learn from other countries is to get our house in order, have a clear vision and present it to the public, and we will have battling visions next year.

Mr. Brad Trost (Saskatoon—Humboldt, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I always enjoy getting involved in debates concerning trade and concerning the budget, because one of the things about these debates is that it enables us as parliamentarians to speak to our constituents about broader principles. I do not currently sit on the international trade committee. I have in the past and really enjoyed it. I do not quite have the detailed knowledge of this particular agreement that the members of the committee have, but trade is an important subject for Canada.

We can talk about the broader economic impacts, the principles, the understandings, because our debate in this place is not just to convince each other of the merits of this particular legislation but also to explain and educate Canadians on why the principles of free trade work and why we support this in a broader sense. Interestingly enough, it appears all three major parties will be backing the bill. One of my degrees being in economics, I very much enjoy talking about these broad principles in trade.

Government Orders

One of the things people instinctively understand in their individual lives is that trade is good. When I go to a grocery store, I trade. I may trade for a bag of chips. I may trade for a carton of milk. However, I always trade something. At every store I shop at, whether it is where I come from in Saskatoon or in Ottawa, I end up with a trade deficit with them, so to some of the hon. members who are implying that all trade deficits are bad, they need to think about that. For most people, when they buy something, a trade deficit is actually a good thing.

My salary is the one place where I have the equivalent of a trade surplus. My wife of course has the same thing. We instinctively understand that trade between individuals and each other, and individuals and businesses is good, but sometimes we do not always understand that the exact same principle goes from country to country, from nation to nation. Let us face it, what is a country? It is a collection of peoples that for some reason have been drawn together. Perhaps they have a common history, a civic identity, such as we have here in Canada. Perhaps they have a common ethnic identity, as do some countries in the world. However, whatever it is, a group of individuals have gotten together. It is not just trade among those individuals, but individuals across boundaries from one nation to another. Therefore, the principles fundamentally apply. It is just that with the complexity, the distance and everything, we begin to argue different principles, but it is really the same.

Free trade from an economic perspective is always in everyone's economic interest. There may be political interests. There may be other reasons why one may not want to trade with a particular country. We have trade sanctions against various regimes not because we think that benefits us economically. In fact we even acknowledge it hurts us economically. We do it because we want to make a broader political point and we are prepared to take whatever pain to advance a broader cause.

That is why it gives me pleasure today to talk about the agreement we have with the Republic of Korea, commonly known as South Korea.

Having read a little, not too much, of Asian history, I find it fascinating how the people of the Republic of Korea, South Korea, have been able to advance and build their country over the last decades in particular, starting after World War II where it had essentially been run as a Japanese colony and then of course came the absolutely disastrous, brutal Korean War that affects them to this day. They were at that point, according to one reading I had, the poorest or next-to-poorest nation in the entire world. Today, by some estimates they are the 30th wealthiest country in the world and the 13th largest economy. It is a country approaching 50 million people.

For those of you who have not had the pleasure of travelling there, go there. It is a vibrant, wonderful country. I have been there a couple of times. My wife Gerelt worked there in the Korean parliament, prior to her immigration to Canada. She just loves it and adores the people there and has actually come to really love the food. I am a Saskatchewan farm boy. It was a little different, but it is there.

Korea has become an absolutely dynamic leader in the world economy. That is one reason why we as Canadians need to get involved and trade with it more. As has been noted, in 2011 we had \$5.1 billion per year in exports to Korea and our growth and exports

over the previous five years had grown by a compounded rate of about 9.2% per year. Now, looking through our numbers here we are down to \$3.7 billion in the final year that we have statistics for. That is a drop in trade.

• (1535)

The economy is growing, et cetera. Why did we have a drop in trade? One of the particular and major reasons we had a drop in trade with South Korea, which we all know, is that some of our competitors got involved with major trade agreements, in particular the United States of America. The Europeans are also finishing their trade agreement with South Korea.

That brings me to one of the absolutely major reasons we need to get involved in this trade agreement. It would protect markets we have built up and are now losing because of competitors that have come after us.

For the various reasons that have been discussed, we were not able to quite get the agreement as soon as we wanted. We do not have quite the same leverage. We do not have the geopolitical strength in that area the United States does. However, we need to catch up. We need to get involved with South Korea and follow up on that trade agreement.

This trade agreement is also important for diversification. One of the ongoing trade issues we have with the United States is country of origin labelling. Through the back door, the United States is stopping the export of cattle and various other products into its market.

It is a great benefit for us to be involved with the United States of America. However, dealing with and making trade agreements, as we are with Europe, and as we are now debating, with Korea helps us to diversify our markets for all of our goods. When there is a country that acts with a backward policy, as the United States government has done with its country of origin labelling, we will have other options, other places to go to sell our products, in this case, agriculture. That is why it is absolutely important and vital that we continue to engage in treaties, not just this one but all others.

I would be remiss if I did not bring up this point, because I often see in the House that we debate and gladly and quite accurately talk about all the trade benefits that trade agreements have for our exporters. However, let us be blunt. There are great benefits for our consumers. If I may, I will throw in a quote, again, from one of my favourite economists, Mr. Milton Friedman. He said:

The great danger to the consumer is monopoly—whether private or governmental. His most effective protection is free competition at home and free trade throughout the world.

This is a benefit that is often overlooked. When we reduce tariffs on South Korean imports to Canada, that allows our consumers to buy the exact same goods at a lower price and have more money to spend. Our importers that use Korean products then have lower costs for their imports. It makes them more competitive. One of the things we need to always remember and celebrate, actually, is the benefit to consumers from this agreement.

Finally, coming from Saskatchewan, Canada's agriculture heartland, I have to note some of the benefits for the agriculture industry.

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In Saskatchewan, it does not matter where one is, Saskatoon or Regina, big towns or small, everyone benefits from a growing agriculture economy. My riding in particular, with one-third being a rural area and with the College of Agriculture at the University of Saskatchewan, benefits fairly directly.

Let me, for the record, put in a few of the cuts to tariffs South Korea would make that would help us sell more and challenge our rivals in the United States and Australia

The current rate for rye is 108.7%. That would be reduced.

Flaxseed may be only 3%. The current rate for pulses is up to 607.5%. Coming from a riding where pulses are very important and have helped us diversify from wheat, that is very important.

Animal feed, pork, flaxseed, golden roasted flaxseed, mustard seed, and of course, wheat are all products Saskatchewan grows and exports. This agreement would add to the \$149.5 million, from 2010 to 2012, in agriculture products we exported to South Korea.

I look forward to questions on this important trade deal for all Canadians.

● (1540)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Rosane Doré Lefebvre (Alfred-Pellan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague across the aisle for his speech.

I gave a bit of a summary of what happened with Bill C-41, An Act to implement the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and the Republic of Korea. In the latest reports I have read, I noted that the committee has had only one meeting on this free trade agreement.

Although the NDP supports this bill and the government on this free trade agreement, we still proposed six amendments. These relatively simple amendments were meant to improve the free trade agreement and, more importantly, to protect Canadian jobs, especially in the manufacturing and automotive sectors. Unfortunately, those six amendments were rejected.

Did my colleague across the way have a chance to study those amendments? Did he not think they were good?

[*English*]

Mr. Brad Trost: Mr. Speaker, as I noted in my speech, I no longer sit on the trade committee. I did before, prior to the last election.

One of the things we often talk about when it comes to trade deals, which the hon. member talked about, is protection. Protections for industry in trade deals are often damaging to the consumer. What we protect with one hand, we take away from other Canadians with the other. I am not sure if that is what the amendments the hon. member is referring to would have done, but it is something we should be cautious about.

We often talk about protecting industries, but what we often mean is that we are putting hidden taxes on consumers.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to pick up on the member's opening comments. When he was talking about a trade balance, he implied that there are certain situations where a deficit is a good thing.

Thinking of the trade deficit that was created, in fairness by the Conservative government, I am interested in how the trade deficit was a good thing for the Canadian economy.

● (1545)

Mr. Brad Trost: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member makes an interesting point. While most people instinctively understand that running fiscal deficits is a bad thing over the long term, notwithstanding the often Keynesian approaches all parties take, ours less than any of the others, deficits, when it comes to trade policy, are not necessarily a bad thing. We have to understand that the numbers that are often given are not totally encompassing. Canada has long run a trade surplus with the United States, but it does not include things like Canadian tourist trips to Florida, so these numbers are often incomplete.

The only way we can run trade surpluses with one part of the world is if we end up with trade deficits with the others. Of course, there are ways around it if we borrow, do not pay our bills, and so on. However, let us assume that all bills are paid. If we run trade deficits in some parts of the world, we bring in cheaper or more goods. These goods can then be used to manufacture, produce things, and ultimately, provide goods. Again, this is assuming that everyone pays and that there is no borrowing or theft.

Just as with human beings, countries have to pay their bills. One man's surplus is another man's deficit. In the end, the books should balance themselves.

Mr. Bruce Hyer (Thunder Bay—Superior North, GP): Mr. Speaker, I have been listening to the member say that all free trade is good and that balanced trade deficits are not bad. Now I am hearing the other two main parties in the House drifting over. I guess that it is out of fear that if they do not appear to be pro-business and pro-development, they will lose votes in the next election.

I would like the member to explain how a balance-in-trade deficit, when we get Hyundai cars and kill our auto industry and auto worker jobs here in Canada, is a good thing for Canada. How does that promote the growth of innovation and trade in our country?

Mr. Brad Trost: Mr. Speaker, as I pointed out, the hon. member needs to understand that if we run a deficit in one place, we will end up running a surplus in the other.

I run a deficit with every car dealership I have ever bought a car from. I run a surplus with the federal government, because I am employed by the federal government. That is where the balance ultimately comes out.

We have winners and we have losers. That is true, but in the end, everyone is a winner with free trade, in an economic sense. As I qualified before, we do not always do things for the best of the economy, as there are other priorities.

Government Orders

In an economic sense, everyone wins, because it is ultimately about the specialization of labour. It is about the most efficient way we can exchange goods and services and produce them for the benefit of all.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I plan to address the benefits versus the lack of benefits if we have a trade deficit.

First, I would like to provide some context. When we talk about trade with Korea, what are the types of items we are talking about? When we think of Korea and the exports it has, we are looking at motor vehicles; trailers; bicycles; motorcycles; electrical machinery and equipment; boilers; mechanical appliances; iron and steel articles; plastic and plastic articles; rubber and rubber articles; optical, medical, and scientific technical instrumentation; mineral fuels; oils; and copper and copper articles. These are the top Korean exports to Canada.

To my mind, and to the minds of many Canadians, a particular concern is the automobile industry. There is a great deal of interest in what will happen to our automobile industry. Obviously, the automobile industry as a whole in Canada provides tens of thousands of good-quality jobs for Canadians.

When we think of what Canada exports to Korea, top on the list are minerals, fuels, oils, and so forth. Next to that, we are looking at ores, slag, and ash; wood pulp; boilers and mechanical appliances; wood and wood articles; charcoal; aluminum and aluminum articles; electrical machinery and equipment; optical, medical, and scientific technical instrumentation; cereals; and, a very important one for me and something I have had an opportunity to talk a great deal about in the House, meat, particularly Manitoba's wonderful pork.

That gives us a sense of what is coming into and leaving Canada. We are talking about literally hundreds of millions of dollars on an annual basis.

South Korea plays a very important role when it comes to trade with Canada today. The expectations are that with the trade agreement, we will be able to enhance trade between the two countries. There are some industries, the pork industry and aerospace industry being two very important industries for my own province and across Canada, that would benefit from this trade agreement. Having said that, we need to recognize that there are areas we need to be concerned about.

As I have pointed out, this has not been an agreement driven by the Conservative government. It goes back to 2003, when the South Koreans took it upon themselves to move toward world trade agreements.

Canada has actually been very slow in pursuing an agreement. That was back in 2003. At that time, Paul Martin was the Prime Minister, and the Liberal Party was in government. Within a year of South Korea stating its intentions, the government of the day expressed its willingness to begin negotiations.

It is frustrating that the Canadian government made this country such a low priority. It signed some other agreements that involve a fraction of the trade that was being done between Canada and Korea.

● (1550)

Therefore, the Conservative government should not try to give the impression that it is the Prime Minister who has been out courting to get this agreement. That is not the case. Yes, the Conservatives has signed the agreement, but it has a lot more to do with South Korea than it does with the government.

The Liberal Party has consistently recognized the value of trade, and I can go through a litany of Liberal prime ministers. I often refer to the 1960s when we had the Auto Pact agreement and how Canada benefited economically and ultimately socially as a result of that. Through the years, we have continued to support the principle of free trade agreements where possible and where it makes sense.

In the last 15 or so years there has been a lot more interest around the world to develop and promote free trade agreements. That is why we have seen a lot more activity. In the late 1980s, it was not the thing of the day, and I made reference to this before.

I recall first-hand when I was sitting on the Manitoba legislature and Prime Minister Chrétien at the time talked about how important trade was to Canada. He wanted to go Asia, particularly China, and other countries, and he wanted this team Canada approach. He invited other provinces, stakeholders and so forth to participate in trying to capture new and growing markets to benefit from world trade.

If we look at the governments of Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin, we will see that we had consistent trade surpluses, and that is important.

I have studied basic economic courses and I had the opportunity to talk economics throughout the last 20 years in many different capacities, as well when playing the role of critic in the Manitoba provincial legislature. The bottom line is that a trade deficit is not a positive thing.

If we look at trade in a holistic fashion, what better way than to look at the bottom line? The trade balance is important. If we are on the right side of the balance on the ledger, we will find that we are in a better position to generate good quality-paying jobs. That is what Canadians want.

This is a fight for the middle class. We need the emphasis of our policy, and in setting policy, to benefit our middle class, because the middle class has been hit hard over the last number of years. One of the ways in which we can deal with that is to be more progressive on the trade file.

We cannot be dismissive or passive about a trade deficit and not worry about it. If the Conservatives gave the attention that was warranted in dealing with the trade deficit, we would have had more employment in Canada. The manufacturing industry would not have been hit as hard as it has been in Ontario, where we have lost tens of thousands of good quality manufacturing jobs. No one can convince me that has nothing to do with the trade deficit because it does. There are many things in which the government could be doing that would make a difference, and it is a small point.

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We ask questions about infrastructure. Investment in infrastructure allows our companies in Canada to get their product to market that much faster. It allows them to be that much more competitive. Investing in infrastructure is a good, sound economic policy.

• (1555)

We should all be concerned with the overall trade balance. I understand that the only party opposing this trade agreement is the Green Party. It is encouraging to see the flip that the New Democrats have made on trade policy.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Denis Blanchette (Louis-Hébert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech.

One thing always surprises me. Yes, it is good to diversify markets. However, a question came to mind while I was listening to my colleague speak.

Before he even knew what agreement he was dealing with, he said he supported it. He did not really look at the content of the agreement. Furthermore, he is completely surprised that the NDP is supporting a free trade agreement. As we in the NDP are always reminding this House, we have a very structured approach for determining whether or not an agreement is good for Canada.

Given that we have such a structured approach and that one aspect of it involves ensuring that the partner's economy has significant or strategic value to Canada's economy, would he agree that thinking in these terms could help us to improve our trade?

• (1600)

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, there was a time in which there was more difference between the New Democrats and the Liberals, but the New Democrats are trying to become Liberals on the trade issue.

We need to recognize that when the member said whether it was the European Union, that in principle they supported the concept of free trade. This is much like when Jack Layton was the leader of the New Democrats. He would say very candidly, "We oppose free trade agreements", even if the free trade agreement was not on the table or if there was no context to the agreement at all. At one time, the New Democrats knew that the content did not matter. It was totally, absolutely irrelevant. They just opposed trade agreements. It is only under this new leader that they have made this flip. That is a good thing.

They do not need to try to come up with this justification. That is all they are really talking about is justification. The Liberal Party believes in the importance of environmental and labour laws. We want to ensure that there is a respect for democracy and human rights. The New Democrats are coming up with a justification for their flip-flop. That is all it is.

Mr. Robert Chisholm (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the member for Winnipeg North as he talked about what Jack Layton said and what the NDP stood for. Maybe he should stick to what his own party stands for.

The problem we have on this side is that with respect to what the Conservative government has done in its trade policy, the Liberal

policy tends to be "me too". The Liberals go along with it. They do not think about it. They do not question it. They do not analyze it. They just want to agree.

What we have talked about here with respect to the Canada-Korea trade agreement, like we have with every other agreement that has been brought into the House, is the merits of it, the provisions, what is contained within the agreement and how it benefits Canadians, Canadian businesses and Canadian workers.

Why does the member for Winnipeg North get so offended when the NDP looks at a deal from a logical and principled point of view before we decide yea or nay?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, no offence to the member, but I do not believe the New Democrats are being fully transparent on this issue. The reality is quite different in terms of what they have done in the past versus what they say today.

If we use the same logic that the member just talked about in terms of how they thoroughly investigate and base their decisions strictly on the merits of a trade agreement, did that same principle apply when Jack Layton or Ed Broadbent was the leader of their party? Are they saying that the Jordan agreement and this agreement are the only two agreements that Canada has ever signed that are worth supporting? They need to look in the mirror and reflect on what they say if they want to be consistent and honest with Canadians.

Mr. Rodney Weston (Saint John, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise today to speak to Bill C-41.

Our government is committed to protecting and strengthening the long-term financial security of hard-working Canadians. Canada's prosperity requires expansion beyond our borders into new markets for economic opportunities that serve to grow Canada's exports and investments.

That is why our government is currently pursuing the most ambitious trade expansion plan in our country's history. The Canada-Korea free trade agreement is a state-of-the-art agreement which covers virtually all sectors and aspects of Canada-South Korea commercial relations, including trading goods and services, investment, government procurement and intellectual property, as well as labour and environment.

The Canada-Korea free trade agreement would result in job creation and enhanced opportunities for Canadian and Korean businesses, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as investors, workers and consumers.

Today, I would like to speak about how the Canada-Korea free trade agreement would help the Atlantic provinces to expand their businesses and increase their competitiveness in the South Korean market, which presents many opportunities for my fellow Atlantic Canadians.

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From 2011 to 2013, Atlantic Canada exported, on average, \$64 million worth of goods to South Korea. Through the elimination of tariffs in major sectors of interest to Atlantic Canada, including fish and seafood products, agriculture and agri-food products, rail products, information and communication technologies, industrial machinery and medical devices, Atlantic Canadian goods would become more competitive in South Korea.

The agreement's outcomes in non-goods trade would also help service providers by facilitating business mobility and investors through increased protection and clearer rules. New Brunswick is one of the Atlantic provinces that stands to benefit significantly from the Canada-Korea free trade agreement.

The agreement would bring numerous benefits to New Brunswick, including the province's industrial goods sector. Our industrial goods sector is an important driver of the economy for New Brunswick and it employs about 6,700 hard-working New Brunswickers each year.

From 2011 to 2013, New Brunswick exports of industrial goods to South Korea were worth an average of \$7.8 million. The Canada-Korea free trade agreement would eliminate tariffs on all of New Brunswick's exports of industrial goods to South Korea, including tariffs on information technology products which currently face tariffs of up to 13%. It would also eliminate tariff rates on industrial machinery and power-generating machinery, with the current tariff rate of up to 8%.

Tariff elimination would level the playing field for New Brunswickers relative to key competitors from the United States and the European Union, and bring substantial export gains to the province.

Nova Scotia is another Atlantic province that would gain considerably from the Canada-Korea free trade agreement. I would like to touch upon the agreement's benefits for the fish and seafood products sector, which provides jobs to more than 9,200 Nova Scotians.

Between 2011 and 2013, Nova Scotia's fish and seafood exports to South Korea were worth an annual average of \$23 million. Nova Scotia would benefit from tariff elimination on products such as live and frozen eel from a current rate of up to 27%. Tariffs would also be eliminated on live and frozen lobster, frozen crab and scallops, which have a current rate of up to 20%.

On a point of interest, shipments of lobster from Halifax Stanfield International Airport to Seoul have already begun, with loads this past summer of nearly 40,000 kilograms.

Throughout the negotiations on the Canada-Korea free trade agreement, our government has actively engaged stakeholders to ensure that the agreement best reflects their needs. Stakeholders have provided strong support for the agreement, including the Nova Scotia Fish Packers Association, which is congratulating our government on the agreement with the following statement, "The free trade agreements to eliminate tariffs will seriously open up the markets. I very much applaud the efforts of government to reduce trade barriers."

I am very excited for the many benefits that the Canada-Korea free trade agreement will bring to the Nova Scotians. That is a pretty strong statement in and of itself.

Prince Edward Island also has a lot to gain from the Canada-Korea free trade agreement, including P.E.I.'s agriculture and agri-food products sector. In 2012, this sector employed about 5,600 people in the province. From 2011 to 2013, P.E.I.'s agricultural exports to South Korea were worth an annual average of \$2.6 million. Frozen french fries and pork products were the top export items.

● (1605)

P.E.I. would benefit from the agreement's elimination of tariffs on frozen potato products, which includes frozen french fries, from a current rate of 18%. The agreement would also eliminate tariffs on all pork and pork products of export interest, which range anywhere from 3% to 30%.

I would like to share a quote from the vice-president of Cavendish Farms, a producer of frozen potato products. He said:

...a free trade agreement between Canada and South Korea presents a golden opportunity for us to grow our presence in the South Korean market, and in the Asia-Pacific region as a whole. Free trade helps to support our industry, the workers we employ and the sale of the high-quality products that we've been producing for more than 30 years.

The Canada-Korea free trade agreement would bring numerous benefits that would help to boost the economy in Newfoundland and Labrador. The province's services sector, for example, would benefit significantly from the Canada-Korea free trade agreement. This is an important sector for Newfoundland and Labrador, employing some 180,400 Newfoundlanders and Labradorians in 2012 alone and accounting for more than half of the Newfoundland and Labrador economy. The province's key export interests in the services sector include retail and wholesale trade, environment, travel and tourism, construction, and real estate services.

The Canada-Korea free trade agreement would provide services suppliers from Newfoundland and Labrador with greater and more predictable access to the diverse South Korean market. The Canada-Korea free trade agreement contains temporary entry commitments that are the most ambitious South Korea has agreed to in any of its free trade agreements and would go a long way to boosting services exports for the province.

We are standing with Canadians on the Canada-Korea free trade agreement by ensuring that investor protection provisions remain as the cornerstones, as has been the case in all modern trade and investment agreements. We take tremendous pride in our record on free trade agreements, which has put Canada back in the game of trade negotiations. Canadian workers and businesses were at risk of falling behind in this era of global markets, but thanks to the aggressive agenda of our government, we are giving our citizens a competitive advantage.

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By continuing to actively pursue broader markets and access to new investment opportunities, our government is providing Canadian businesses and exporters with access on preferred terms to the largest, most dynamic, and fastest-growing economies and regions around the world. No government in Canadian history has been more committed to the creation of jobs and prosperity for Canadian businesses, workers, and their families. Deepening Canada's trading relationships in dynamic and high-growth markets around the world is key to these efforts.

Without a doubt, the Canada-Korea free trade agreement promises many benefits for Atlantic Canada. It would level the playing field for Atlantic Canadian businesses relative to their competitors in the U.S. and the EU. It represents a concrete next step in bolstering Atlantic Canada's presence in the fastest-growing and dynamic Asia-Pacific region.

Today I am asking that all members of the House ensure the speedy ratification of the Canada-Korea free trade agreement, so that hard-working Canadians can start reaping the benefits of this agreement and solidify their presence in the Asia-Pacific region as soon as possible.

● (1610)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Rosane Doré Lefebvre (Alfred-Pellan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague across the way. We served together for a while on the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, always in a spirit of collegiality, a very pleasant attitude which has prevailed here for nearly a week. I am very glad to see that in the House.

We have already stated that the NDP will vote in favour of Bill C-41 at third reading. However, there are a few little things I have noticed. For instance, I am still worried about manufacturing jobs in this country.

Can the hon. member give me some more details? Does he know what kind of protection will be provided for jobs in the automotive sector? As he knows, trade with South Korea is quite substantial, especially in the automotive sector.

Will the federal government be introducing protective measures to ensure that the automotive sector in Canada remains competitive?

[*English*]

Mr. Rodney Weston: Mr. Speaker, I want to say that I enjoyed my time in committee with the hon. member. It is a committee that is very collegial and certainly continues to be to this day.

To the member's question, I spoke today about what I saw as the benefits to Atlantic Canada in this agreement. I saw a lot of opportunities. I spoke about a lot of opportunities that are there for Atlantic Canadians, and in every agreement there have to be some areas where one sector will do better than the other. We see great opportunity in Atlantic Canada, whether it comes from the seafood and fish products that are produced, the agriculture and agri-food products that are produced, or some of the services that we market around the world, such as industrial machinery. There are different opportunities that present themselves in this market. This is a rich and growing market, and we see huge potential for Atlantic Canada;

and for my province alone, the potential is so great. We see a growing market.

As I said earlier, I would ask all members to ratify this agreement so we can get on with it and start taking advantage of the opportunities that lie ahead for us.

● (1615)

Mr. Arnold Chan (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to follow up on the question that my colleague from the NDP raised for the member for . I too want to express my concern, given that I come from Ontario and given the potential impact that this Canada-South Korea free trade agreement may have also on the auto sector, notwithstanding the fact that our party will be supporting this particular deal.

I would like to get my friend's comments with respect to the ultimate accessibility that Canadian manufacturers would have to South Korea, particularly as it relates to the auto sector.

Mr. Rodney Weston: Mr. Speaker, my riding is Saint John. I just want to clarify that, because people in my area are very particular about that. I just want to make sure that members understand very clearly.

We see a lot of potential with this trade agreement, from my area in particular, from Atlantic Canada's perspective, and from New Brunswick's perspective. New Brunswick is the largest, most export-oriented province for percentage of GDP per capita in the entire country. We are very dependent on trade, and we see a huge potential here. We have opportunities that go far beyond what most could imagine. We see a growing marketplace with great demands, and we look forward to meeting those demands.

The Deputy Speaker: 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 Thunder Bay—Superior North, National Defence.

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise today in this House to speak in support of Bill C-41, an act to implement a free trade agreement between Canada and the Republic of Korea.

Whenever we are looking at free trade agreements, no matter which country they are with, it behoves the parliamentarians and those who are negotiating those agreements to ensure that due diligence is done and that the agreements we end up with are good for Canada. However, we want them to be good for the other country as well, because that is how strong relationships are built in the long run.

On balance, this trade agreement with a democratic, high-standards country is a good deal for Canada and one that the NDP can support. South Korea is an established democracy with high standards for labour rights, human rights, and environmental protections. Its large market offers significant opportunities for Canadian businesses to gain a foothold in important Asian markets and diversify our trade. Just so members know, we believe not everything is perfect and we will say that this agreement is not perfect. There are things we would have liked to see changed in it, but on balance we believe this is a good deal and it would benefit Canadians and would benefit Korea as well.

Government Orders

Unlike another party that sits on this side of the House—a party that, when a free trade agreement was announced, without seeing the details, said, “We approve; we like it; us too”—we actually believe in doing the work of parliamentarians and waiting to see what the deal is, reading it, studying it, and then trying to make it better before we go out and make grand pronouncements. That is what the people who elect and send us here expect of us. They expect us to do the kind of hard work that the NDP is prepared to do.

At this point, let me acknowledge the stoic work done by an amazing member of Parliament from Vancouver Kingsway. He has taken on this file and has been very thorough, balanced, and measured as he has looked at the policies and the agreements that have been presented to this House. He has put forward thoughtful amendments at committee and, now that it is here, has recommended to the caucus that after his thorough investigation, this is a good deal. That is the kind of work parliamentarians expect from all parties; not the “me too” attitude of the party at the other end of this House.

As members know, we do not always agree with the government on the other side or with our colleagues at the other end, so when we are looking at free trade agreements, we actually have some criteria and we examine free trade agreements against the criteria we have established.

The first criterion is this. Is the proposed partner one that respects democracy, human rights, adequate environmental and labour standards, and Canadian values? If it does not have those rights yet, is it on a trajectory that is moving it toward human rights, labour rights, and environmental rights?

The second criterion is this, and my colleagues at the end of this side could actually learn from doing this kind of homework. Is the proposed partner's economy of significant or strategic value to Canada? These are all very important.

The third one is this. Are the terms of the proposed deal satisfactory?

We have a measured approach, and I am proud of the way we do it.

● (1620)

It is important to note that we did have some concerns with this agreement, and I want it to be noted that once again at committee it was NDP members who did their homework and the hard pulling. It was NDP members who moved amendments based on our concerns over the provisions for investor state dispute settlement. We were very concerned.

However, we were pleased that in this case, unlike the case of the Canada-China FIPA, the agreement would not keep the hands of government tied for 31 years. This agreement can be renegotiated or cancelled after six months. Unlike the other FIPA, the Korean free trade agreement has guaranteed transparency rules for ISDS tribunals. Hearings must be in public. We still expressed our concerns about that, but the other party said it was quite willing to live with that provision.

We also have some major concerns around the auto industry. Once again, it was the NDP and only the NDP doing the hard work that we

do as parliamentarians. We brought amendments at the committee stage in order to strengthen protection for the auto industry.

I would like to welcome my colleague across the way, who is new to Parliament. He raised the question as if to say that we had abandoned the auto industry. In fact, it was NDP members who brought forward amendments that would provide further protection for the auto industry.

We have serious concerns about other free trade agreements, but on balance we are prepared to live with this one because it does have a six-month opt-out rule. However, both CETA and the China FIPA have provoked widespread public concern in Canada. I do not know about other members when they go home to their constituencies, but this is a topic I get asked about over and over again.

People feel that parliamentarians, especially members from the government across the way, are giving away too many Canadian jobs and are not doing their due diligence. I want to reassure them that a New Democratic government would pursue policies to strengthen the Canadian auto sector, including policies that would encourage Korean automakers to locate production facilities right here in Canada. Decent paying jobs would assist the Canadian auto sector to better access the Korean and other Asian markets.

We would closely monitor non-tariff barriers and act quickly and effectively to resolve disputes. Of course the relationship, as with any relationship, has to be nurtured, and we would utilize frequent trade missions to Korea to cement that relationship.

We realize that this agreement with Korea is a major agreement for us, and it does give us an entry into the Pacific gateway, but we also agree with the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and others that the government needs to do more than just sign trade agreements: we have to do our due diligence and make sure that these agreements will benefit Canadians and not put some of our sectors at risk.

We must do more to promote Canadian exports as well. It is a major job to attract investments and help Canadian companies penetrate the South Korean and other Asian markets.

As members know, the UFCW, one of our major public sector unions, has spoken in favour of this trade agreement. The UFCW can see the benefits of it for our fisheries industry, whether that be lobster, tuna, or salmon. We will make financial gains.

● (1625)

When the NDP forms government, we will work to strengthen this free trade agreement so that it benefits everyone.

Government Orders

Mr. Brad Trost (Saskatoon—Humboldt, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when the hon. member was going through her three criteria that New Democrats have for whether or not they support trade deals, one of the criteria was whether the partner would be a significant strategic partner for Canada. Judging from the way the hon. member describes what a strategic and significant partner would be, Canada would not engage with any low-income nations or smaller nations around the world.

Free trade helps countries. We engage in trade to boost our relationships with them and to boost other countries' standards of living. Why is the hon. member opposed to a significant Canadian foreign policy tool that can help countries in places like Africa or Latin America, countries that are not large, wealthy, or strategic in the sense that New Democrats are using those terms?

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague across the way for his very thoughtful question, and I want to say this to you: I will read the second criterion, and then you will see you do not need to have that concern.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Will the hon. member direct her comments to the Chair, please?

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims: Mr. Speaker, how could I have forgotten that I have to share my intimate thoughts with you?

The second criterion I read out is this: is the proposed partner's economy of significant or strategic value to Canada? That does not just mean economic. That covers other parameters.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very much interested in what New Democrats would have to say in regard to the amendments they said they brought forward in committee. I am sure the member realizes that had these amendments passed, there would have to have been more negotiations with Korea to make sure they were in compliance with the amendments that were being passed by the New Democrats.

Would the NDP then make changes to the free trade agreement? Are we to assume that if the NDP were in a position of power, it would renegotiate? That is an awfully big "if" that scares a lot of people.

If it were to occur, would it then be the policy of the New Democratic Party to give South Korea the six months' notice so that New Democrats could make the changes they wanted to make at committee stage?

• (1630)

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims: Mr. Speaker, my colleague was missing for a couple of days, and the House had a totally different feel. I want to let him know that we were wondering whether we should sit when he was not in the House.

In all seriousness, legislation goes through its rinse cycle, and when the bill was at the committee stage, our committee members did the hard work and brought forward amendments to improve the legislation and to strengthen it. When those amendments were not accepted, we analyzed the free trade agreement that is before us and on balance decided to support it.

It would be foolish for anyone to say we would open it up immediately, because we have to see how this new relationship

would work out. On the other hand, it would be even more foolish to say that we will never look at it, because is that not what we are supposed to do? Once we enter a new relationship, are we not supposed to do an ongoing evaluation and assessment and make amendments as necessary?

Hon. K. Kellie Leitch (Minister of Labour and Minister of Status of Women, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have to say the one great thing about this agreement is that the increase in exports would be upward of 32%. That is about a \$1.7 billion investment in Canada annually.

The other important part is the removal of duties. Essentially 98% of them would be removed on the different services that will be moving back and forth. That means a lot of investment and opportunities for Canadian businesses.

I recognize the NDP is supporting this new FTA, but my question for the NDP member is this: why was there such rigorous debate by the NDP for the removal of investors' protections and essentially such support for an anti-trade activist movement?

We want Canadians to be investing overseas and we want Koreans to be investing in Canada so we can grow our Canadian economy and create jobs, so at committee why did we see this attitude of removing investor protection?

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims: Mr. Speaker, once again, I am very proud of the NDP members, who did their due diligence. They have some concerns, as do I, around investor state dispute settlement and the lack of transparency in so many of our agreements. We never know exactly what is happening behind closed doors, but in this case the six-month window does give us some comfort.

[Translation]

Mr. José Nunez-Melo (Laval, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise this evening and speak to Bill C-41, An Act to implement the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and the Republic of Korea.

Like my colleagues, I am very pleased to say that our caucus is prepared to support this bill at third reading. At the same time, I would like to clarify certain points related to the amendments we suggested and proposed in committee meetings. Unfortunately, they were rejected by our Liberal and Conservative colleagues.

I particularly want to emphasize the criteria that the NDP caucus has always insisted on regarding the negotiation of free trade agreements. They can be summed up in three little points—small but also very important points—that have far-reaching significance. We know that a partner proposing a free trade treaty must respect democracy, human rights and proper environmental and labour standards. Naturally, these are Canadian values, and both countries must agree on these ideas.

The second point is that we should ask ourselves this question: is the potential partner's economy of significant or strategic value to Canada? That is obvious. We know that South Korea is a developing country, but one that is quite advanced. It is one of Canada's primary trading partners in Asia. Canada's clear need to diversify its international trade is a step in the right direction.

Government Orders

When I was studying economics and international marketing, I became aware that our country, Canada, was really very dependent on the economy of our neighbour to the south, the United States, to such an extent that some 80% to 85% of our exports were going south of the border.

Still, that need has always been great, since Canada has always emphasized the development of new markets for its technology and natural resources. That is why our international trade strategies came to focus on free trade agreements of all sorts. It all started with NAFTA in the 1980s. Later, there were more treaties with a number of developing countries. We supported some of these agreements and disagreed with others.

The third criterion concerns the terms of the agreement. This is an important point. One of the main problems we raised in committee relates to the resolution of trade disputes. We submitted amendments, corrections and modifications concerning certain aspects of this free trade treaty. From the perspective of the ethics of a democratic country, there is no problem. However, resolution of trade disputes should absolutely not be part of this agreement. This should not be dealt with by the government. We firmly believe that any trade dispute must be resolved through the appropriate legal processes.

• (1635)

The free trade agreement with Korea offers Canada a significant opportunity to diversify its economy. This is another step in the right direction, because we rely a great deal here on natural resources, and if I recall correctly, this was the main sticking point regarding one of the specific items in other free trade treaties. In those treaties, much criticism was levelled at the approach taken by Canada, which wanted only to export raw materials, without even putting them through some sort of processing that would have given them uniquely Canadian added value, highlighting our expertise and our technologies.

This free trade treaty with Korea is a step in the right direction, because that country enjoys support from a broad coalition of economic stakeholders in Canada. This partner shows that it has a firmly established democracy where human rights are respected. It also has adequate environmental and labour standards. The unions are firmly established and all have an affinity with Canadian values.

In all secondary or manufacturing sectors—to put it precisely, as we should—such as heavy industry, wood products, agriculture, food processing, seafood and high tech, we can genuinely share the expertise of each country and find a win-win formula somewhere, as should be the case for any trade with other countries.

We should note certain other important facts relating to these treaties. Korea is a member of the G20. It ranks fifteenth among those 20 countries, which puts it relatively high on the ladder. Korea is Canada's seventh-largest trading partner. Obviously, this is something that must not be forgotten. In fact, Canadian imports have already lost about 30% of the ground. We have been backsliding and we need to catch up.

I would remind members that this free trade treaty has been in negotiation since 2005, or for nearly a decade; it has been at least nine years. We do not understand why the government did not move

forward with this sooner. I suppose that, as usual, it was because of the Conservatives' laissez-faire attitude and mismanagement of our country's economy. It is all very well to announce that there will be job creation, but at the end of the day, we see that it never amounts to anything concrete.

Korea is a democracy and the fourth-largest economy in the entire Asian region.

To conclude briefly, we have certain affinities with some countries and South Korean opposition parties. They, like us, in our caucus, think that the investor state dispute settlement mechanism, as proposed in this agreement, must be eliminated.

I hope that at third reading stage, someone will think it would be worth reconsidering this situation, to make it acceptable to everyone.

• (1640)

We New Democrats know that international trade is essential to Canada's prosperity, and we have sought for a long time to diversify our trade with our trading partners in all regions of the world, including Latin America, Asia, Europe and Africa.

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity, given the importance of the trade agreement, to highlight the fact that there are certain industries that will be able to benefit in terms of the potential expansion of their exportation. I have talked a lot about Manitoba's pork industry. Allow me to focus on my province but also on the aerospace industry.

We have amazing technology and products here in Canada, particularly in my home city, where there are opportunities to expand in terms of the export of product and knowledge. Something that is really important when we talk about free trade agreements is that it is more than just a widget we are talking about. We need to recognize that Canada has a great deal of knowledge that can be exported to other countries. The aerospace industry is one of those areas where I think there is great potential, not only for product but also for knowledge.

I wonder if the member might want to comment on the issue of trade with Korea and others in terms of the benefits of going beyond just widgets.

• (1645)

[*Translation*]

Mr. José Nunez-Melo: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Winnipeg North for his very interesting question.

Yes, Canada is very technologically advanced, especially in the aerospace industry. I can attest to that, because the aerospace industry is very present in Laval. From what I hear, some companies have done business with South Korean partners in the past. Our main partners are usually in Brazil, but there have been some productive meetings with businesses from South Korea.

Government Orders

As my colleague just said when he was talking about his province, this trade can benefit Canada by helping us get into Asian markets, especially when it comes to the aerospace industry and aircraft construction. If our aerospace corporations and conglomerates set up shop there, the market will be closer and those companies will be able to do very well in that sector.

Mr. Dany Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech.

It is really interesting that we are talking about this free trade agreement with South Korea here today, because less than a month ago, I met the Korean Consul General, Donghwan Choi, at a Korean War medal presentation ceremony. I would like to ask my colleague a question.

The NDP has three criteria for determining the merits of an agreement. Specifically, the potential partner must respect democracy and human rights, it must have adequate environmental and labour standards, and it must respect Canadian values.

I expect the response to be positive, since the NDP and I will support this bill. I wonder if my colleague could talk about South Korea's record when it comes to those criteria.

Mr. José Nunez-Melo: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague from Chicoutimi—Le Fjord for his question.

Those are the criteria that our caucus strongly believes will help us protect Canada's best interests when negotiating a free trade agreement. My colleague mentioned his meeting with the hon. South Korean consul.

Furthermore, The Biotech City is in my riding. Most companies and laboratories in The Biotech City have rather close ties to Korean pharmaceutical companies. However, what is most important is the interaction between unions and the quality of life of Korean workers. That is a good thing and we should do the same here.

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Chambly—Borduas, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today, I am pleased to speak to Bill C-41, An Act to implement the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and the Republic of Korea. This is a great opportunity because it allows me to acknowledge the work done by our critic for international trade and free trade agreements, the hon. member for Vancouver Kingsway.

Over the past two days, I have heard a lot of rhetoric from our opponents in the House about the NDP's position. In fact, our position is very clear and comprehensive. There is no contradiction between our support for the bill before us and the free trade agreement to which it pertains and our opposition to other agreements.

Allow me to explain. There are a number of criteria to consider. In the recent past, some of the agreements negotiated by this government simply did not meet our expectations or the public's with regard to what we want from a free trade agreement.

Yes, free trade is important. Yes, there are benefits for our communities. That is why we support this agreement. However, a government should not have carte blanche when it comes to these negotiations. There are a number of criteria that must be taken into account.

I remember taking part in the debates on the free trade agreement with Panama. At the time, we were debating an information sharing agreement on tax evasion. I remember the government saying at the time that we should not interfere in the affairs of other governments. However, we saw our American neighbours signing similar agreements with Panama so that they could go ahead with their free trade agreement. Canada did not do that. I am using that example here today because it illustrates why we feel comfortable supporting the agreement before us and not others. There were some shortcomings in the past, but they are not that serious in this case. Overall, this agreement is positive for Canada.

We will now look at the three pillars, so to speak, that make up the NDP's strong position when it comes to international trade. We ask ourselves whether the potential partner respects workers' rights and environmental protections and whether it has a robust democracy. These are important questions.

It is interesting because I heard a Conservative colleague talking just now about the fact that free trade agreements are good for countries that have a democratic deficit and shortcomings with respect to environmental protection, because they are compelled to take positive action. That is true, but only if the Canadian government requires the country to do so in the course of negotiations. That has not always been the case.

It is all very well to negotiate with countries where there may be shortcomings with respect to workers' rights, but if Canada fails to stand up and say that it will engage in trade transactions with them only if they correct those shortcomings in their human rights practices, nothing else in such transactions will compel them to do so.

The fact that they are benefiting from transactions with the Canadian market, without trying to take corrective action, shows us that this will merely push them to continue those practices. It indicates that free trade will be important only if Canada plays its part in a positive way on the international scene.

That said, the same applies to environmental protection issues. In committee, the six amendments we proposed were all rejected. I will digress here because yesterday, our critic, the member for Vancouver Kingsway, was accused of trying to delay the bill or prevent its passage in committee. In committee, the fact is that we merely proposed amendments. One of them involved ensuring that environmental protection would not be reduced in the future, now that this agreement is in place to facilitate certain investments.

• (1650)

Yes, we are going to support the agreement before us. That does not mean that a few years from now, we will not see shortcomings appearing that were not there when it was negotiated. That is the kind of thoroughness—and that is the right word—that the NDP expects of a government; it is the kind of thoroughness a New Democratic government would apply if it was in power, which would make it possible to engage in free trade with other countries for the good of our economy, and do so in a responsible way.

Government Orders

The next pillar involves asking ourselves the following question: does this partner's economy hold significant or strategic value for Canada? Obviously, the importance is there. In my view, the most striking example in the agreement before us today is the aerospace industry. It is very important in my constituency and on the south shore across from Montreal. Many investments and jobs are at stake.

Other countries have signed agreements with Korea, including the United States and the European Union. That has created a disadvantage we are going to correct. This is where we can see the economic significance and also the strategic aspect. That is an important element. I heard one of our Conservative colleagues ask a question of a member. He asked her whether, if the economy was not important for Canada, we would ignore developing countries for whom Canada could do a lot of good. That is where the strategic element comes in.

Some considerations involve the work we do internationally to play a positive role in developing countries, where there is great poverty. We must make a positive contribution. That is part of what we mean by strategic importance. However, it does include many other aspects, and one of them is our competitive position. The Asia-Pacific region is physically close to provinces like British Columbia. Several things are involved. It may seem a bit of a grab bag, but the government must be very thorough and look at the big picture. The government has responsibilities during negotiations and must take certain things into consideration.

Finally, the third pillar consists in ensuring that the terms of the agreement are satisfactory. Since we are supporting this agreement, they should be satisfactory, but it is a little more complicated than that. As an example, take the agreement with Europe, which is still somewhat uncertain. In our region, we have a lot of cheese producers. We moved a motion, which was adopted unanimously, that they should receive financial compensation. It was promised by the government, but nothing has been heard of it since. The kind of announcement the government makes can help us better understand the terms of an agreement.

It may seem strange, but I do agree with my Conservative colleague. It is certain that losses in some sectors will bring gains in others. We must be prepared to weigh and balance these gains and losses. That is where we look into the terms.

More specifically, there is a mechanism for resolving disputes between investors and the state. A New Democratic government would not have included that in an agreement. However, it is in this agreement. It would not have been our first choice, but it is not enough to cause us to vote against the agreement. That is why we want to look at the terms, not only individually, but also as a whole.

I hope that my remarks have demonstrated that our position is solid, contrary to the accusations we hear that we are flip-flopping in our support for different free trade agreements. We base our support on a thorough assessment. We did our homework, as a number of my colleagues have said. We will not give the government carte blanche but we will keep an open mind for the sake of our economy and our communities.

I shall stop there. I eagerly await questions from the House.

● (1655)

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one of things I have noticed as more and more New Democrats stand up is that they have shiny new speaking notes that include three items, which is great. It makes sure that everyone is consistent and singing from the same book in terms of the three principles that they believe are important if the New Democrats are to support a free trade agreement.

I applaud the fact that they have changed their views on it. Now today inside the House of Commons there is only one party, the Green Party, that opposes free trade agreements, at least on the surface.

If the member were to take the principles he has referred to and apply them to previous trade agreements that have been signed over the last decade, does he feel that New Democrats might have voted incorrectly in the past? That would be okay. I am wondering if the member might want to provide some comment on that.

● (1700)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Matthew Dubé: Mr. Speaker, I am going to try to quickly correct all the errors in the comments made by my colleague.

First, the shiny speaking notes he refers to are absolutely not notes shoved down our throats by our leader's office. Rather, this is a policy that we developed as a team, one that is somewhat more exacting than the blank cheque the Liberals always seem to want to give the government when it comes to free trade, without reading the agreements.

Second, he talks about agreements in the last 10 years and asks whether we would like to change certain votes. I will talk about my votes as a member of Parliament. Each time I have voted in the House on motions relating to free trade, obviously I have done so with the points I raised in my speech in mind. I am therefore very comfortable with what is in the records of the House.

Third, he said that only one party opposed free trade. I do not want to get into a debate about who is against and who is for free trade. Everyone is for measures that will be good for the economy. In the NDP, we want to apply a little scrutiny to assess the various agreements, as we would assess any budget measure proposed by a government. That is what is central to this debate.

Rather than trying to see everything in black and white, let us see the grey a little, do our job and do what is good for the economy.

Ms. Rosane Doré Lefebvre (Alfred-Pellan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Chambly—Borduas, who explained the NDP position on free trade agreements very well.

I would like to ask a brief question. Something in this bill suggests to us that it may prompt some to fear for jobs in the manufacturing and auto industries in Canada.

Does my colleague wish to comment on that? Do we have in front of us a free trade agreement of the kind we would like to see? In addition, is he worried about jobs in the auto industry in Canada?

Government Orders

Mr. Matthew Dubé: Mr. Speaker, it does indeed prompt some concerns about the auto industry, and I thank my colleague for her question.

It is these concerns that we tried to resolve with the amendments we proposed in committee, which were unfortunately rejected. However, in spite of those concerns, we support the agreement, but there is still work to be done apart from this specific agreement.

In question period today, we heard questions from my colleague from Parkdale—High Park and my colleague from Windsor West about a strategy to genuinely support the auto industry. These issues are bigger than simply an agreement. This does concern us.

We will nonetheless support the agreement, but as I said in my speech, we will continue to ask that the government do more to support the industries affected, as is being done with the Canada-European Union agreement with respect to our dairy producers. This goes beyond a mere agreement. It concerns us, but we will continue to do the work that is needed so that these shortcomings do not have a negative impact in various communities.

Ms. Rosane Doré Lefebvre (Alfred-Pellan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House to speak to Bill C-41, An Act to implement the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and the Republic of Korea.

Before I begin, in light of last week's events, I want to thank all of the Parliament Hill staff, including the constables, the RCMP officers, the pages, the kitchen staff and all those who are always here on the Hill to support us in our work as parliamentarians. I thank them very much.

I also want to thank them for coming back the next day to support us when we decided to come back to the House, and for protecting Parliament and our lives last Wednesday. It is greatly appreciated.

My remarks on Bill C-41 will be brief because I think there have been very fine speeches and very good questions in the House today. Most of the positive and negative aspects of this bill have been raised by my colleagues.

I am extremely proud to be a New Democrat because our position on how to deal with a free trade agreement implementation bill has always been very clear, just like the way we vote. As my colleague from Chambly—Borduas said, we establish our position on a free trade agreement on certain pillars.

In this case, even though the terms of the agreement and the standards with regard to democracy, human rights, the environment and labour rights seem relatively satisfactory, we have some reservations.

I am very proud to say that we support this bill and that we use these pillars to determine our position every time. However, as my colleagues and I have already said today and at other times during the debate on this bill, we have some reservations.

South Korea is very present in the automotive industry market and competes with us. It is a healthy competition and that is good. However, given how the government treats jobs in the manufacturing sector in Canada, I am concerned about the manufacturing jobs in the automotive industry.

My colleague from Parkdale—High Park said it very well today in question period: under this Conservative government we have lost thousands of manufacturing jobs in recent years. My concern with respect to this bill is understandable, and I believe it is justified.

Other free trade agreements are in the works, and I am saddened to realize that we are unable to obtain the same terms that we negotiated for the Canada-European Union free trade agreement. Unfortunately, we were not provided with the full text of that agreement. The Conservative government shut us down, which is very sad.

We are the only party that proposed amendments to this bill. Unfortunately, they were all rejected in committee. We take our work very seriously when it comes to debating free trade agreements. Even though the amendments were rejected, overall the agreement seems quite satisfactory.

I would like to reiterate that I am very proud to be a member of the NDP, especially when we discuss free trade agreements. We are not like the third party in the House. We have a very solid position on free trade agreements.

I would like to thank my colleagues for their good comments, especially my colleague from Vancouver Kingsway, who does an incredible job when we have to analyze the free trade agreements that the Conservative government presents to us.

• (1705)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member very happily emphasized that the NDP was the only party that provided amendments at the committee stage. The only question I have for her is this. Does she realize that if those amendments had passed, we would not be on the path to a free trade agreement with Korea? Would she acknowledge that would in fact be the case?

Had the NDP amendments passed, what do New Democrats believe would have followed from that point? Would there have been new negotiations with Korea, or did they just believe that their amendments would not pass and that is the reason they brought them forward?

[Translation]

Ms. Rosane Doré Lefebvre: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my Liberal colleague for his question, which he has raised a number of times in the House today.

I am proud to be a member of the NDP, which has a solid position, as opposed to the Liberals, who have practically no position on free trade agreements, blindly accept just about anything and give the Conservatives a blank cheque.

That is not our approach on this side of the House. We have principles. In 2015, when we replace the Conservatives, we will ensure that our free trade partners respect the environment, labour law and democracy.

Private Members' Business

• (1710)

[English]

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we have been asked a number of questions by the Liberal Party during this debate. I find its position a little hard to understand, because its trade critic has already said it would sign absolutely any trade deal. Liberals are now asking questions about what they might have supported, given that they gave blind support. I also noticed that they have been willing to sign trade deals with countries with very bad human rights records, like Honduras, where civil liberties have been undermined and people have been killed.

I would like the member to reiterate the basis on which the New Democrats looked at this particular agreement and made a decision to support it, in contrast to the open-ended, frankly incomprehensible trade position of the Liberal Party.

[Translation]

Ms. Rosane Doré Lefebvre: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Parkdale—High Park for her excellent question. She is quite right.

Whenever a free trade agreement is proposed, the Liberals shut their eyes and accept it blindly, without even considering very important criteria. It is really disappointing that the third party has no position on free trade agreements.

We in the NDP have a very clear position. We have extremely strict evaluation criteria for free trade agreements. To obtain our support, free trade agreements must meet these criteria, which we decided to impose on ourselves.

After all, one must have a clear conscience. When we sign a free trade agreement, the country in question must respect human rights and have adequate environmental and labour standards for workers in the industries in question.

Is the agreement in line with our Canadian values? That is a very important question. The signing of free trade agreements is a reflection of our government and of Parliament. It is what we decide to show the international community. Who are we?

I am therefore very proud that we have such a clear, definite position, unlike the Liberals, and that we are sticking to our evaluation criteria.

[English]

The Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Deputy Speaker: 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:

Ms. Megan Leslie: Mr. Speaker, we ask that the vote be deferred to Wednesday, October 29, at the end of the time provided for government orders.

The Deputy Speaker: Accordingly, the recorded division stands deferred until tomorrow at the conclusion of government orders.

• (1715)

Hon. John Duncan: Mr. Speaker, I would seek consent to see the clock at 5:30 p.m.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: It being 5:30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[Translation]

MOTOR VEHICLE SAFETY ACT

Mr. Hoang Mai (Brossard—La Prairie, NDP) moved that Bill C-603, An Act to amend the Motor Vehicle Safety Act (vehicle side guards), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise today to introduce my first bill since I was elected, that is, since the beginning of my short career so far as an MP. My bill, Bill C-603, is being seconded by my colleague from Parkdale—High Park. This bill is very important to me, because unfortunately, too many pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists have been killed in collisions with heavy trucks.

This past summer was no different. One such death that really shocked and upset the people of Montreal was that of Mathilde Blais, which reminded us that these deaths can be prevented. The Quebec coroner's report clearly stated that her death was preventable. It is shocking. I also heard what her family had to say. It is extremely upsetting when you know that measures exist specifically to save lives.

This bill would make side guards mandatory on heavy trucks. These side guards prevent cyclists, pedestrians and motorcyclists from being pulled under the wheels of the vehicle. A number of studies have already proven how effective side guards are. For example, there was a study conducted in the United Kingdom in 2005.

A study from the United Kingdom found that side guards reduced the number of deaths by 61% in accidents where cyclists hit the side of a truck. More generally, when cyclists are involved in an accident with heavy trucks, side guards help to reduce rates of death and injury by 5.7% and 13.2%.

Private Members' Business

We can save lives. Studies have proven this. I keep mentioning studies because the government said that it would not introduce the bill. However, people have died, and there have been reports, including the Ontario coroner's report from 2012, which reiterates a recommendation made in 1998 for the introduction of mandatory side guards on heavy trucks to save lives and ensure better public safety.

It is difficult for me to understand why the government did not take action.

I will try to stay calm and avoid attacking the government. In this case, what we can do here as members of Parliament and members of this House is to force the government to take action on an issue that is important to us. That is why this is a private member's bill. It is important for the people watching us today to understand that every member here can choose how to vote on a bill that will save lives.

As I said, there are other studies. I have already mentioned the Ontario coroner's review. Following the death of Mathilde Blais this summer, Quebec's coroner took another look at the situation and produced a report. The young cyclist was run over by a heavy truck. The report contains the striking assertion that the death was avoidable.

I asked the government questions about these measures and why it was not taking action. Recently, the government said that the provinces could bring their own legislation on this, that they could take action. True, they can, but the federal government has jurisdiction too. We are talking about a federal law. The Motor Vehicle Safety Act, a federal law, is an act to regulate the manufacture and importation of motor vehicles and motor vehicle equipment to reduce the risk of death, injury and damage to property and the environment.

The point I want to make here today is that we can take action at the federal level.

For those who are still wondering why we should take action, let us look at what is happening elsewhere. I invite my colleagues to look at what happened in the European Union. In 1989, almost 25 years ago, the European Union made side guards mandatory. It did its homework and studied the issue. European Union countries know that side guards save lives. That is why European politicians made them mandatory.

We can also look at the United Kingdom. I mentioned the study showing that once side guards became mandatory, there were fewer deaths and serious accidents. Japan is another place where these measures are mandatory.

We do not have to look that far. We can look at what is happening here in Canada. The government says that the provinces can take action. Well, they have. Newfoundland and Labrador has equipped its own vehicles with side guards. In Quebec, more specifically following the deaths of a number of people in Montreal, the City of Westmount pushed to have side guards installed on all city-owned heavy trucks. This is also the case for the Saint-Laurent borough and Mayor DeSousa. They moved forward with this measure because they know for a fact that it is worthwhile. This can save lives. We can truly ensure that our loved ones are safe.

I can also talk about a very touching case.

● (1720)

[*English*]

I will read the story of Jessica Holman-Price.

On December 19, 2005, 21-year-old Jessica Holman-Price lost her life while preventing her 10-year-old brother from being crushed by the wheels of a snow removal truck in Montreal. The two were standing on a snowbank at a busy intersection waiting to cross the street. When the light turned green, the truck came around the corner and caught the edge of the mound, causing the boy to slip under the vehicle. Jessica reached for him but she too lost her footing and slid under the wheels of the truck. In a split second, she managed to push her brother out of harm's way before the massive truck fatally injured her.

I had the chance to meet with Jessica's mother, Ms. Jeannette Holman-Price. Since Jessica's loss she has been campaigning very hard. To be honest, I found her courage and her strength so powerful; it really moved me.

As members of Parliament we have to listen to the people who are close to the tragedy. They have been calling for us to act for a long time.

[*Translation*]

This bill has been in the works for many years. I am very proud to be able to debate it today, but I would like my colleagues to understand what Jessica's mother is calling for.

[*English*]

I also would like to thank her. She has given me a lot of strength in terms of how determined she is and how important this is to her. She has shown a lot of courage in explaining, time and time again, the story of Jessica so that we here in Parliament would listen to her and understand that we can act and we can do something.

● (1725)

[*Translation*]

Again, that is one of the reasons I got into politics. It is because I know we can change things. Sometimes we wonder what we can do when we have a majority government. In this case, and I am calling on all my colleagues, we can ask the government to act. The government must be forced to act, because there is a practical solution.

Unfortunately, there have been a number of victims. This is not an attack on a group, and is not in any way an attack on truckers. We are simply saying that there are devices that can help people. It was difficult in the beginning, when people were talking about seat belts. Why pay more for seat belts and airbags? These are safety measures the government can adopt by changing the Motor Vehicle Safety Act. It can raise the standards in order to save lives.

Much has been said about what can be done to move things forward. Today, we have a very practical bill, and I invite all my colleagues to read it. This very straightforward bill, which is just a few pages in length, merely changes a definition in order to put measures in place that protect people's lives.

Private Members' Business

The Quebec coroner and the Ontario coroner, who have seen the situation and have carried out studies, are constantly making recommendations on the subject. I therefore do not understand why the government does not act. I heard the government speak a few times about what is happening in the United States, saying it was going to wait and see what happened.

However, the U.S. equivalent of the Transportation Safety Board has also studied this and recommends that side guards be installed on trucks. It even says that this can protect not only pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists, but vehicle passengers as well.

Moreover, this measure, which is designed to save lives and help people, costs the government nothing. Because we are at second reading, we may hear the cost argument. However, the people from the provincial trucking association, the Association du camionnage du Québec, told me that that argument does not hold water, because everyone agrees that a life has no price. We can save lives.

As for the cost argument, studies have shown that side guards reduce gasoline consumption costs for some trucks. Side guards are already being seen on trucks on the highways. Why? Because truck drivers are saving money and side guards are good for the environment. It costs between \$500 and \$3,000 to install side guards. According to some studies and manufacturers, the cost can be recovered in less than two years.

At first, it was said that the studies were inconclusive, but that is no longer so. When we debate this bill, I invite my colleagues—especially those who oppose it—to consider the fact that other countries, including those of the European Union, as well as the United Kingdom and Japan, have taken action on side guards; some municipalities have as well. Clearly, action is needed, and the time for action is now.

I repeat: we must have leadership and we must have action. Every year, when a death occurs, the issue of side guards arises. When there are accidents involving a heavy truck and cyclists or pedestrians, we hear the same arguments every year. We also hear the same question: what if there were side guards? We can take action today.

To reassure my colleagues opposite, given that we are amending the Motor Vehicle Safety Act, we are talking about trucks that would be imported into or manufactured in Canada. I agree that we must talk with the provincial governments if we want to change what is happening on roads at present.

Nevertheless, in what area can the government take action? What falls under its jurisdiction? As parliamentarians, where can we have an impact and where can we make changes? We can change what falls under federal jurisdiction. I am proposing to change the law. Bill C-603 is important to me and to the people I have met, to Jessica's mother and the mothers of many other people. Unfortunately, it is too late for Mathilde Blais and Jessica Holman-Price, but we can take action and still save lives. I invite all my colleagues to support this bill.

• (1730)

[English]

Mr. Jeff Watson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, CPC): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I commend my colleague

opposite for his relentless focus with respect to what is really at the core of the motivation of trying to address issues and that is, of course, the unfortunate incidents where people are either injured or die in vehicle accidents.

Having conceded that, I have taken a long look at the empirical research about the nature of most of these types of collisions. Overwhelmingly, they involve right-hand turns by trucks, and the point of collision is actually up at the front-wheel passenger side of the tractor and not at the back where the trailer is.

I wonder if the member can elucidate on whether this solution is actually the best one in terms of the available options for dealing with this type of an accident, where the point of collision is actually up at the front rather than back at the trailer. Can he comment on that?

Mr. Hoang Mai: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the parliamentary secretary for his question and for his work.

The studies are clear when there is a collision on the side of a truck. It's 61% and that came from a U.K. study. We are talking about saving so many lives.

What happens at the front end is a question of sharing the road, and I think that is very true. However, it is important that when we talk about safety, there are a lot of things that we can do to make sure that our roads are safer, and that our cyclists and pedestrians are safer.

We are talking about a specific thing: side guards on heavy trucks. We know that they do save lives. It is not just me saying this, it is from the study I mentioned and also the coroners from Ontario and Quebec who have looked at this. They know more than I, and they have looked at what happens on the ground. Their recommendation is to have mandatory side guards. I think we should listen.

Mr. Frank Valeriote (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member for Brossard—La Prairie spoke of circumstances that frankly were repeated in Guelph. I have childhood friends in Guelph who lost a young daughter under the very same circumstances. The grief upon that family and the entire community was immeasurable. I thought about the same thing: side guards.

Most of us in the House are people who really believe that we come to conclusions after all the evidence is presented, not before. My experience in the House is that committee is really the proper venue for evidence to be put before many members, not just one member or the other but many members from all parties.

I am wondering if the member for Brossard—La Prairie would agree with me that to do justice for those who have lost their lives, for their families and frankly for people who may lose their lives under similar circumstances in the future, the bill at least requires a fair hearing with all the evidence of which the member speaks being brought before the committee so that we can have a better view of that evidence, ask probative questions and be better informed.

Mr. Hoang Mai: Mr. Speaker, I agree that we have to move forward and I agree that we have to look at all the evidence. Again, being on the transport committee, I understand how important it is to look at bills and to hear from witnesses and to understand what can be done and how it helps.

Private Members' Business

If we can move forward and listen to all the witnesses who come before the committee, then we can make a decision on this. To be honest, if we look at what is being done in the U.K., Japan or the European Union, with politicians who have gone forward and made side guards mandatory, the example is already there. They did a study also, but I agree we do have to look at this and we do have to listen to witnesses.

I am happy to hear that the member will support the bill so that we can study it at committee.

● (1735)

Mr. Jeff Watson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am always pleased when I get to rise in this House to participate in important debate.

We are talking today about a private members' bill, Bill C-603, an act to amend the Motor Vehicle Safety Act pertaining specifically to vehicle side guards, presented by our colleague who is the official opposition transport critic, the member for Brossard—La Prairie.

Let me say off the top what I had begun with my intervention and question for the member, that obviously we are always looking at the health and safety of Canadians and how we ensure in the best way we can that Canadians will remain safe and secure. Obviously the government takes seriously deaths as a result of collisions, whether they are cyclists or pedestrians. We also have to be careful, when we are looking for solutions, that we follow the evidence, especially when we are talking about the heavy hand of legislation or regulation being used. We want to ensure that, of course, we are pursuing measures that are the right solution and not just an action that may not be the solution.

As I said, we obviously believe in and are committed to the safety and security of Canadians. We have regulatory improvements made under the authority of the Motor Vehicle Safety Act, one of the key reasons why progressively fewer people have been killed and injured on Canadian roads, despite the increase in traffic and number of motor vehicles.

The government is not supporting the bill for three reasons. First, the government believes there is insufficient evidence to support the mandatory requirement for side guards.

Second, the government believes there may be promising advanced technologies currently under development that have the potential to actually improve the safety of cyclists and pedestrians around heavy vehicles, thereby ultimately reducing the number of deaths or injuries as a result of collisions with heavy vehicles.

Finally, there is the inadequacy of amending an act to include a technical requirement.

Canadian motor vehicle safety regulations apply to all vehicles designed to operate on public roads, from motorcycles to heavy trucks, as well as some off-road vehicles that are occasionally driven across or along the sides of roadways or on trails. Vehicle use on Canadian roadways falls under the jurisdiction of the provinces and the territories.

The government, though, has been heavily involved in improving vehicle safety for many years. The Motor Vehicle Safety Act came into effect the year I was born, 1971, and it has been updated at

various times throughout the years, with the most recent amendment being our modernization amendment, which received royal assent in June of this year.

The act regulates the safety requirements that apply to new and imported motor vehicles and to new motor vehicle equipment. It enables the development of regulations and safety standards for everything from new tires to new equipment used in the restraint of children and disabled persons within motor vehicles.

It is important to note that the renewed act supports the goals of the Canada-U.S. Regulatory Cooperation Council for the better alignment of our regulatory programs with our largest trading partner. However, it also improves motor vehicle safety for Canadians through new compliance and enforcement requirements, such as higher monetary penalties to industries if, in fact, they are found guilty of not complying with our laws.

I will first explain that placing a mandatory requirement for side guards in the act is misplaced. I understand that this is a technical argument against the member's method for trying to effect change. The Motor Vehicle Safety Act already includes the authority to mandate new technical requirements for vehicles and equipment via regulation.

Transport Canada continually assesses regulations made under the act; conducts research, including international research on the topic we are talking about today; and engages with stakeholders to ensure that the legislation and regulations continue to serve the road-using public, as well as support a competitive and efficient Canadian transportation industry.

● (1740)

Changes to the act made this summer, for example, will have many positive and significant impacts on both industry and public safety.

We believe that regulatory improvements under the Motor Vehicle Safety Act are a key reason that progressively fewer people have been killed and injured on our roads, despite the ever-increasing number of motor vehicles on the road. We are encouraged by the information we derive from our national crash data that shows steady and impressive progress toward a vision of Canada having the safest roads in the world. The latest collision stats from 2012 confirm a continuing trend of improvements in road safety. That year, the fatality rate dropped to an all-time low of six per 100,000 population. That compared to nine per 100,000 population ten years ago. Serious injuries and total injuries have also continued to fall over that same period.

While we are encouraged by the progress, we assure members that we continue to work toward our vision of having the safest roads in the world.

It is a technical argument whether that should be a regulatory change versus a change of the law.

Private Members' Business

With respect to the side guard legislation before the House today, Transport Canada has extensively considered and assessed the issue over the past number of years, both the Canadian situation and the international situation, and it has found that the body of evidence does not make the case for the mandatory installation of side guards.

To obtain a broader perspective, Transport Canada in fact commissioned research by the National Research Council, which conducted a study on heavy vehicle side guard use worldwide. That study, which was published in March 2010, as well as other international studies, show that there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate the effectiveness of side guards in preventing deaths. Among the study's conclusions, which is important, was that it is not clear if side guards would reduce deaths and serious injuries or if they would simply alter the mode of death and serious injury. It is important, whether using regulation or the law to compel, that we do so with the right solution.

It is important then to note that as alternative technologies emerge from ongoing international research, Transport Canada continues to monitor them for possible regulation here in the future. Technologies such as mirrorless commercial vehicles with side-view cameras and proximity sensors, for example, may be beneficial in preventing a broader range of collision types, such as turning manoeuvres, where side guards have not shown benefit. New stability and advanced braking systems that are currently under development will also assist truck and bus drivers in maintaining control of their vehicles in emergency situations. It is expected that the introduction of these new technologies will continue to improve road safety.

In closing, it is important, whether we are looking at regulation or at changing the law, that we actually have the right solution in front of us. It is the government's view, based on Transport Canada's research into this matter, including commissioned research here at home, that the body of evidence does not make the case for a mandatory requirement for side guards on trailers in this country.

We remain committed to monitoring and assessing the ongoing research, both at home and abroad, on promising new advanced technologies that we believe may hold the answer to reducing and preventing these types of deaths.

• (1745)

Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be here tonight to debate this important private member's bill.

I want to remind the House that the bill was introduced in the House in 2010 by former Liberal member Siobhan Coady from St. John's South—Mount Pearl. Since then two colleagues from the NDP have picked it up and reintroduced it, for which I commend them.

This is an extremely important issue. There is not a member in the House who has not been touched in their respective communities by someone who has been the subject of an accident or a death as a result of colliding with a large vehicle. This happens regularly in our urban and suburban settings. It happens along our roadways and highways.

Just recently in Ottawa a senior executive from the Ottawa Hospital, who was riding in a cancer ride over a weekend, was

tragically killed on a roadway by a large truck, while her husband and daughter waited for her at the end of the race.

This has been going on now for several years. It is important for us to understand there is an urgency to act. The member from the NDP who is proposing the bill is right, that this is about bringing in a new standard for new or imported vehicles in Canada going forward.

It is a prospective measure and a positive one. It is not asking for the complete retrofitting of the existing fleet, although if I were in the trucking business and I was seeing these kinds of accidents and tragedies happening, I might consider doing so. It costs about \$750 to retrofit a large truck of those that would be caught by this bill.

I listened carefully to both speeches, the one by the NDP member who is proposing the bill and the one by parliamentary secretary who is opposing the bill, and I am quite shocked by the government's position.

The parliamentary secretary rose to say that there was insufficient evidence for mandatory installation of side guards for new or imported vehicles, citing exhaustive studies, I assume from Transport Canada. However, we have not seen any of those studies. They have not been forthcoming.

The committee is exactly the place for the parliamentary secretary to be bringing the internal analysis performed by the Department of Transport so it can be examined in the light of day and examined in contrast to other reports and other evidence that has been brought forward. For example, for Canadians who are watching, listening or reading, there are two very important reports that have spoken to this issue.

The first is the 2010 National Research Council report which called for mandatory side guards on heavy trucks. The idea, the National Research Council said, was to keep cyclists, pedestrians and scooters from being dragged underneath a large vehicle, a large truck should there be a collision.

Then, yet again, an even more exhaustive study and analysis was performed by Ontario's Chief Coroner's Office in 2012, just two short years ago. It was an exhaustive investigation into the deaths of cyclists. It also recommended mandatory side guards on heavy trucks, arguing that there was ample evidence that this would in fact save lives. It would also prevent injury or lessen the severity of injury.

Finally, there was a third report on pedestrian deaths, which also recommended side guards. Unfortunately in 2013, a blanket disavowal or a blanket rejection of these three reports was provided by Transport Canada, which said that side guards had not been proven to have safety benefits.

As I said in French, *qui dit vrai*, who tells the truth here? Who actually has the analysis that ought to swing our vote intentions one way or the other. This is why it is important to get this bill to committee. It is important to hear from the experts that have looked at this in great detail, the National Research Council, Ontario's Chief Coroner and, according to the parliamentary secretary, Transport Canada, which has performed its own analysis. Let us get it out.

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Let us have it out in committee and find out what in fact is happening. The parliamentary secretary talked about new technologies. I would like to hear more about those new technologies. Which ones? How would they not be complementary to the installation of mandatory side guards?

• (1750)

What are these new advanced technologies purporting to do? Are they able to read the presence of pedestrians, cyclists, or people on scooters or motorcycles? Let us hear about that. Let us find out how we can enhance safety for all Canadians.

The parliamentary secretary also relied on a technical argument in saying that this is not the place to amend an act because there are regulatory powers vested in the provinces and the provinces can go it alone and do their own thing. That is not unusual, coming from the Conservative government. There is always a reluctance to take national leadership on some issues. Here is one of them. It does not want to take national leadership here.

I do not know why the Conservatives would want to have a different set of standards around the country. If the provinces go it alone, why would Canadian cyclists be subject to one set of standards in Quebec and another set of standards in Alberta? I do not get that. I am not sure why the government does not want to take a leadership role in making sure that we have a national standard to protect our citizens from coast to coast to coast.

It was also interesting to hear from the parliamentary secretary with respect to this question of insufficient evidence for the installation of mandatory side guards. Again going back to the details, that is not at all what was said by the National Research Council, the government's own chief research council. I am not sure why the government is not relying on the excellent work of the NRC and the scientists there. They have made some very conclusive remarks about vulnerable road users. Data from the European Union in areas where mandatory installation of side guards was made mandatory shows that the number of deaths and serious injuries caused by heavy vehicles to vulnerable road users has been reduced.

The document goes on to say that side guards alone would not eliminate serious injuries, but they are a huge contributing factor in making our roadways safer. They would not necessarily prevent incidents; they would simply minimize the risk that the folks who are involved would be dragged under the wheels of the vehicles.

There really is an opportunity here for us to move forward. For the life of me, I cannot understand why the Conservative government does not want to take this to committee to hear the expertise and have a balanced, reasonable discussion.

One of the areas of corollary benefit is the environment. Regardless of the safety issues, it is estimated that industry-wide use of these kinds of side guards could result in a total savings of over 400 million litres of fuel every year in Canada. That is a total reduction of 1.1 million tonnes annually of CO₂. One would think that a government that will never meet its target by 2020 and does not even pretend to do so now would want to grab this idea on that basis alone.

The human suffering, the human injury, the toll, and the tragedies that have unfolded from coast to coast to coast on this front warrant

examining this idea in great detail. We owe it to our constituents because we have all been touched by a tragedy or an injury in our communities. Therefore, we strongly support having this bill go to committee so that we can analyze it in greater depth.

Mr. Matthew Kellway (Beaches—East York, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my initial sense of pleasure at standing to speak in support of Bill C-603 has dissipated in light of the parliamentary secretary's comments today and news that the Conservative government will not be supporting the bill. It is an important bill and it certainly deserves the support of all of us in the House.

The bill would make side guards mandatory for heavy trucks manufactured in or imported to Canada, and the NDP has been calling for mandatory side guards for over eight years. This bill was tabled in 2006 and again in 2011 by my former colleague, Olivia Chow, as Bill C-344, and the bill we have before the House today replicates the content of that bill in its entirety.

This bill could save lives and prevent serious accidents and injuries to cyclists. Too many pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists have already lost their lives or sustained serious injuries because of the absence of side guards on heavy trucks. Some of those accidents could have been prevented through earlier implementation of this bill. That is what is most sad about this today.

In 2012, the Office of the Chief Coroner for Ontario released a review of all accidental cycling deaths in Ontario from 2006 to 2010, over a five-year period. The report was dedicated to Ontarians who had lost their lives while cycling, and in particular, to the 129 whose deaths were reviewed by the chief coroner. The report concluded:

In virtually every case, some modifiable action(s) on the part of the cyclist, driver, or both, contributed to the death. Uncontrollable factors, such as weather and road conditions, rarely contributed to the death.

It went on to say:

...our data support the conclusion that all of the 129 deaths in this Review could have been prevented.

One of the recommendations that emerged from that report was directed to Transport Canada. It simply read, "Side-guards should be made mandatory for heavy trucks in Canada." Side guards will obviously not address all cycling fatalities, but mandatory side guards would address a significant percentage of them. Using Transport Canada figures from 2004 to 2006, the CAA found that approximately 20% of cycling fatalities involved heavy trucks and the Ontario chief coroner found virtually an identical percentage when that office examined fatalities in Ontario between 2006 and 2010, at about 18%.

What was found in the United Kingdom after the implementation of mandatory side guards was that fatalities among cyclists who collided with the sides of these trucks were reduced by 61%. Those are statistics, but they are also lives. Take, for example, the very recent death of Mathilde Blais, a young woman hit and killed by a heavy truck while she was cycling through an underpass in Montreal. One of the three recommendations in the recently released coroner's report urged Transport Canada to make side guards mandatory on heavy trucks. The coroner said that they could have saved Mathilde Blais' life.

This message has been received in jurisdictions around the world and action has been taken. Side guards are already mandatory in the United Kingdom, the European Union and Japan, and have been adopted by several regions and municipalities in Canada. Newfoundland and Labrador has installed side guards on its snow removal and sanding trucks. In Quebec, a number of municipalities and boroughs have also put side guards on snow removal and ice trucks, and the City of Montreal is intending to install them on its entire fleet of heavy vehicles over the next five years.

Change appears to be around the corner in other jurisdictions, too. In April of this year, the United States' National Transportation Safety Board, the equivalent of our Transportation Safety Board of Canada, recommended that, "both newly manufactured truck-tractors and trailers be equipped with side underride protection systems...to better protect passenger vehicle occupants from fatalities and serious injuries."

• (1755)

They are doing so because, as Ontario's chief coroner's report says:

...it is important to note that deaths resulting from cycling collisions, just like motor vehicle collision deaths and pedestrian deaths, are not "accidents" in the sense that all of these deaths were *predictable*, and therefore *preventable*.

Here in Canada, however, the Conservative government remains stubbornly and irresponsibly opposed to their implementation. In fact, just two years ago, Transport Canada put a halt to a study by the National Research Council evaluating whether side skirts attached to trucks would reduce fuel consumption but would also prevent cyclists and other vulnerable road users from injury or death.

We have heard quotes from that study today, but in the conclusions to the first phase of that study, the National Research Council cites data from the European Union and the United Kingdom showing that significant reductions in the number of bicyclist fatalities were an outcome of side guards introduced onto heavy trucks. That is similar in both the EU and the U.K. Granted, the research council's conclusions were inconclusive. It said that it was not clear that people's lives would be saved if there were side guards, as they could have died in other ways. There was certainly enough positive information and research in that report to warrant proceeding with the second phase, but the Conservative government saw fit to stop that.

Mandatory side guards on heavy trucks are, of course, by no means the only way to prevent cycling injuries and fatalities. There are a number of things we ought to be doing to improve cycling safety and encourage this mode of active transit. With two-thirds of Canadians considered inactive, and a quarter considered obese,

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cycling is a great, healthy antidote. With estimates of lost productivity due to traffic congestion at around \$6 billion and rising in my city of Toronto alone, cycling makes sense for the economy. With anywhere between 40% and 60% of urban greenhouse gas emissions coming from transportation, it makes sense to encourage people to get around by bike.

Let me share a quote:

Imagine if we could invent something that cut road and rail crowding, cut noise, cut pollution and ill-health – something that improved life for everyone, quite quickly, without the cost and disruption of new roads and railways. Well, we invented it 200 years ago: the bicycle.

That is how the mayor of London, England, begins the foreword to the document entitled *The Mayor's Vision for Cycling in London*. London is a city with its own cycling commissioner, with significant cycling infrastructure, and with plans for more.

Copenhagen is another city that stands out. It set for itself a goal of becoming the world's best bicycle city. It says that investment in cycling is part of its goal of having "a good city life and making Copenhagen CO2 neutral by 2025." For Copenhagen, and I quote from its cycling strategy, entitled *Good, Better, Best*:

...cycling is not a goal in itself but rather a highly-prioritised political tool for creating a more liveable city.

Moreover, and important to this debate, studies in Denmark have shown that providing segregated bicycle tracks or lanes alongside urban roads reduce deaths among cyclists by 35%. This is why I am so pleased to second not just this bill but also Motion No. 527, tabled in the House by my colleague from Parkdale—High Park. It is a motion that calls for a national cycling infrastructure strategy. If ever implemented, it would make our cities more liveable places and, important to this debate today, safer places.

Anyone with access to the Internet can find on there a memorial map for fallen Toronto cyclists. That map shows 31 fatalities across my city since this bill calling for mandatory side guards was tabled in 2006.

The bill is one part, but a necessary part, in ensuring that we do what we ought to be doing in this House, which is protecting the lives of Canadians. Let me give the last word to the wife and daughter of Ulrich Hartmann, who lost his life in Toronto under the wheels of a cement truck in the year that this bill was first tabled.

• (1800)

Said his wife, Karen:

The Canadian government has a responsibility to ensure the safety of its citizens. Side guards are a no-brainer, like seatbelts and airbags.

Ulrich's daughter, who was just nine at the time of her dad's death, said this:

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If side guards had been mandatory I might still have my dad. But we as a country still have an opportunity to save other people's lives. We can prevent that life-altering phone call for other families.

•(1805)

Mr. Larry Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure today to speak to the bill.

While the government cannot support the side guard bill before us, we want to reassure all Canadians that we take the issues of vehicle and road safety very seriously. We continue to seek opportunities to improve safety on Canada's roads. Due to their size, we especially take the issue of truck and bus safety seriously.

Today I would like to share some information with members on some of the important work we have done and will be doing in the future to continue to improve the safety of heavy vehicles operating on Canadian roads.

Our government strongly believes that regulatory improvements made under the authority of the Motor Vehicle Safety Act are a key reason that progressively fewer people have been killed and injured on our roads, despite the ever-increasing number of motor vehicles on the road.

We are encouraged by the information from our national crash data that shows steady and impressive progress toward a vision of Canada having the safest roads in the world. Our most recent data show that fatal motor vehicle collisions are at their lowest since we began maintaining collision statistics some 60 years ago.

In a perfect world, we could eliminate all accidents, but unfortunately, that just is not the case. It does not matter what we do.

We must keep road safety in Canada a responsibility shared between the federal, provincial, and territorial governments.

The federal government is responsible for the regulations that govern the safety requirements for newly constructed and imported motor vehicles under the Motor Vehicle Safety Act and for operational matters for interprovincial commercial busing and trucking companies under the Motor Vehicle Transport Act. The provinces and territories are responsible for safety on Canada's roads and highways.

Transport Canada has a long history of working to improve road safety in Canada. In 1970, the very first vehicle safety regulations were developed and proposed. In 1987, the federal, provincial, and territorial ministers responsible for transportation and highway safety agreed to develop and implement a national safety code to encourage truck and bus safety, promote efficiency in the motor carrier industry, and achieve consistent safety standards in this area across Canada.

The national safety code was based on the consolidation of existing provincial and territorial legislation and regulations, supplemented with new initiatives designed to further enhance safety across the country. We are pleased that the national safety code standards have been developed to cover motor carrier safety ratings, on-road safety inspections, facility safety audits at the motor carrier's place of business, driver and motor carrier safety profile systems, commercial vehicle trip inspection reports, commercial driver hours of service, commercial vehicle maintenance, and load securement requirements.

The code's administrative standards also cover driver licensing, medical standards, driver knowledge and performance testing, and a driver-examiner training program.

The Motor Vehicle Transport Act allows the provinces and territories to act on behalf of the federal government to enforce the federal hours of service regulations for the operation of trucks and buses that operate between provinces and territories and internationally.

The hours of service regulations govern the maximum driving times and minimum off-duty times for truck and bus drivers. The regulations require drivers to keep a record of their daily driving and other work activities in a prescribed format and to make these records available to designated enforcement officials upon request. I should also note that the provinces and territories also enforce their own local hours of service regulations, which are similar to the federal regulations.

As a government, we continue to look to the future and the benefits offered by electronic logging devices. Electronic logging devices are used to track, collect, and record electronic safety data on a truck or bus driver's compliance with the hours of service regulations.

These hours of service rules are designed to limit a truck driver's driving and working hours to reduce the possibility of driver fatigue. The use of these devices could reduce the risk of record falsification and thereby improve safety.

•(1810)

Canada, through the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators, which includes the federal, provincial and territorial governments, is developing a national safety code technical standard for these electronic logging devices. In the interest of north-south trade, this standard will be harmonized with the American final standard, which is expected to be published in 2015.

Regulations represent a necessary and fundamental part of commercial driver fatigue management. They provide legal limits to the amount of work that can be done within specific timeframes and they protect drivers' off-duty time.

Regulations, however, do not represent a complete solution to addressing the problem of driver fatigue. Regulations do not provide knowledge about fatigue. Nor do they change driver attitudes, motivations or the safety culture in a company. Today it is widely accepted that in order for a fatigue mitigation approach to be comprehensive, all of these issues should be addressed.

With partners from Quebec, Alberta and the United States, Transport Canada has developed a North American fatigue management program. This program is the result of a decade long evidence-based development process. It is a voluntary, free of charge, fully interactive, bilingual web-based education program to provide motor carriers, shippers, commercial vehicle drivers and their families with resources and tools to help them understand the science of fatigue, the importance of good sleep hygiene and healthy lifestyles. It contains various strategies to reduce fatigue, improve alertness and, in doing so, enhance the safety of the truck and bus driver, other motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians. The North American fatigue management program is an ideal complement to hours of service regulations.

When it comes to truck and bus drivers, we are specifically interested in their health and wellness. While Transport Canada has a special interest in preventing fatigue, it also has a more holistic strategy to address truck and the health and wellness of bus drivers.

Last year, it conducted the first step of a multi-year research program. It mandated a team of occupational health and safety experts to draft a discussion paper that would document the importance of the issue, the relationship between the health of drivers and road safety, industry productivity, driver shortage and health care costs. The paper also reveals the importance of conducting a study to measure the health status of our truck and bus drivers, and to identify risk factors and potential counter-measures.

Transport Canada is now beginning the second phase of the program, which is the creation of a research advisory committee that will be tasked to draft a formal research proposal. This committee will unite stakeholders from government, academia and industry for the first time around this important issue and together develop a strategy that will help promote a healthier work environment and a healthier lifestyle for this significant workforce, which plays a vital role in Canada's economy.

While side guards have not shown the benefits that warrant regulation, alternative technologies have the potential to improve safety around heavy trucks for both cyclists and pedestrians. Technology such as mirrorless commercial vehicles with side view cameras and proximity sensors may be beneficial in preventing a broader range of collision types, such as turning manoeuvres, where side guards have not shown significant benefit. New stability and advanced braking systems that are currently under development will also assist truck and bus drivers to maintain control of their vehicles in emergency situations.

It is expected that the introduction of these new technologies will continue to improve road safety. Transport Canada continues to study these promising emerging technologies for potential future regulation.

Where there is a convincing argument to mandate a new safety requirement, Transport Canada has had a strong record of taking action to save lives and prevent injuries. For example, Canada has the most stringent world requirement for rear under ride guards, a device that helps protect vehicle occupants in the event of a collision with the rear-end of a trailer. Unlike the case for side guards, rear under ride guards have clearly demonstrated a safety benefit.

Adjournment Proceedings

I know I am running out of time so I am going to leave it at that. There is a lot more I could say, but I am pleased to have been able to comment.

• (1815)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The time provided for the consideration of private members' business has now expired. Accordingly, the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the order paper.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

[*English*]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Bruce Hyer (Thunder Bay—Superior North, GP): Mr. Speaker, a few weeks ago, we debated one of the most serious issues that has come before the House in many years. We decided whether we would ask our men and women in uniform to join with our allies in the fight against ISIL.

While I appreciated the government bringing the matter before the House at all, it is too bad the motion was just for show. The Prime Minister had already made up his mind about our involvement and brought the issue to Parliament as a formality.

Let us set that aside for a moment. The real issue here, and the broader issue, is often the Conservatives' pattern of limiting debate whenever and wherever they can and silencing their critics at all costs. The government moved its motion on a Monday afternoon; by Tuesday evening, the debate was over. Clearly the government had already decided and had made its commitments.

That day marked the 79th time that the government used time allocation or closure to curtail debate. The Conservatives have set the record for limiting debate in the House. Their use of time allocation and closure is totally unprecedented in the history of Canada.

It used to be the Conservatives who spoke out against this practice. When he was in opposition, the member for Calgary Southeast, now the Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Multiculturalism, gave quite an impassioned speech: "It is regretful...that the government has failed to restrain its liberal use of what really should be a rare lever to limit debate in this place", he said, calling it "the sledgehammer of debate".

I wonder if he still feels that way. I know I do, and I know many Canadians do.

These tactics have an especially undemocratic effect for independent MPs and members of small parties. It is difficult to get a chance to speak on time-allocated bills or motions on which closure has been used.

Adjournment Proceedings

I had planned to speak to the motion about entering the Iraq war when closure was moved. Our role in Iraq is important to me and to my constituents in Thunder Bay—Superior North. I was prepared for that debate, but I was denied the chance to speak on behalf of my constituents.

We are discussing defence here tonight, so perhaps the reason the Conservatives seek to limit debate is to distract from their repeated blunders in this area. The Conservative government promised to provide the light after the Liberals' decade of darkness and revitalize our military, but it failed miserably. We have been waiting over 20 years for replacements for both the Sea King and the fixed wing search and rescue aircraft, and that goal is still not accomplished.

As a former pilot myself, the status of our search and rescue fleet is particularly worrisome to me. Canada is the second-largest country on the planet, and we have the longest coastline in the world. Much of our population is remote and spread across vast regions. This makes our search and rescue planes critically important, but more than 12 years after the planes were supposed to be replaced, we are stuck with the same outdated, underperforming fleet.

The same goes for Canada's Coast Guard. Just this morning, the Parliamentary Budget Officer revealed that the Conservatives have not budgeted enough to pay for Arctic patrol ships, even after they scaled back their plans. So much for our Prime Minister's boasting about Arctic sovereignty.

The Conservatives should stop using time allocation and closure to such incredible excess. They are not succeeding in hiding their mistakes, particularly when it comes to their mismanagement of defence procurement.

Will the government please stop unilaterally shutting down debate, whether on defence or on dozens of other issues crucial to Canada?

• (1820)

Mr. Chungsen Leung (Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let me set the record straight and clarify the situation for the member.

The Government of Canada has remained committed to keeping Canadians apprised on our mission against ISIL. Unlike the previous Liberal government, it has always been the practice of this government to consult Parliament on combat missions and to hold a vote. As such, I would remind my esteemed colleague that Canada's contribution to the fight against ISIL was in fact debated in the House of Commons on October 6 and 7. I am proud to say that the majority of my colleagues made a decision to support our mission to Iraq.

Since that time, the government has held technical briefings on this issue and has also introduced a motion at the Standing Committee on National Defence requesting National Defence officials to provide committee members with an update on our mission. The motion was adopted by the committee on October 7, 2014, and the briefing will take place in the coming weeks.

The government, and our men and women in uniform, are taking strong action to respond to the obvious security and humanitarian crisis created by ISIL. Sadly, this terrorist group continues to commit

horrific acts and cause untold suffering. Canada will not stand by indifferently while ISIL operatives continue to persecute ethnic and religious minorities and drive more and more Iraqi civilians from their homes and into uncertainty.

The humanitarian and refugee emergency in the region continues. The brutal crimes committed against women and girls continue. The government has already dedicated \$10 million to fight crimes that are targeted against girls and women, especially sexual violence, in addition to other humanitarian aid measures.

Recent events have shown that extremism and terrorist sentiments can affect Canadians on our home soil. If permitted to remain in Iraq, ISIL will continue to inspire more hatred towards peaceful and democratic values. We saw this recently when ISIL called for the targeting of Canadians in their own homes.

There can be no greater responsibility for a government than the safety and security of its citizens. That is why the government has decided, supported by a vote in the House, to meet the threat of ISIL at its source.

In August the Canadian Armed Forces commenced airlifting military supplies from donor countries to the Iraqi forces. Over a million and half pounds of military supplies donated by Albania and the Czech Republic were successfully delivered to northern Iraq. Members of our armed forces have been deployed to assist and advise Iraqi forces in effectively countering ISIL.

Last week, additional military contributions to the coalition efforts in Iraq departed from several Canadian Forces bases and wings. A strike force of CF-18 fighter jets departed Canada to join our allies and partners in conducting air strikes against ISIL targets in Iraq just last Wednesday. A CC-150 Polaris aerial refueller and two CP-140 Aurora aerial surveillance aircraft will provide key reconnaissance and support capability to the mission.

Canada will not stand idly by in the face of the humanitarian catastrophe caused by ISIL.

Mr. Bruce Hyer: Mr. Speaker, obviously the Conservatives would prefer to distract from their mistakes when it comes to defence instead of considering a new course of action or, heaven forbid, actually supporting democracy here in the House. The facts speak for themselves. The replacement of crucial equipment from search and rescue planes to patrol ships has been mismanaged.

Conservatives like to talk tough, but we would rather see them really stand behind our soldiers and our veterans and provide them with the equipment they need and the missing support they need when they come home. Money would be better spent in areas like that than on needlessly changing the names of our armed forces.

Adjournment Proceedings

Do we really need to be spending millions to change the buttons on our military uniforms when we could be purchasing much more needed equipment to adequately support our forces?

Mr. Chungsen Leung: Mr. Speaker, Canada is taking action with our allies and partners to confront the serious threat posed by ISIL in Iraq and beyond its borders.

ISIL's continued presence in Iraq is the main obstacle to getting help to the people who desperately need it. More than a million people have been displaced in Iraq and their struggle to survive continues. Let us also recall that humanitarian workers and journalists have been indiscriminately murdered by ISIL. For these reasons, Canada will continue to work with our allies and partners in a coalition of over 40 countries to conduct air strikes against ISIL in order to degrade its ability to threaten us and terrorize the people of Iraq.

The government has not taken these actions lightly. They have been carefully debated in an open forum in the House of Commons.

In closing, I would like to thank the brave men and women of our Canadian Armed Forces who stand ready to protect Canada and to face the greatest of challenges with honour and dedication to duty.

● (1825)

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 6:26 p.m.)

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