



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Thursday, October 30, 2014**

—

**Speaker: The Honourable Andrew Scheer**

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, October 30, 2014

The House met at 10 a.m.

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*Prayers*

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1005)  
[English]

### PRIVACY COMMISSIONER OF CANADA

**The Speaker:** I have the honour, pursuant to section 38 of the Privacy Act, to lay upon the table the annual report of the Privacy Commissioner for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2014.

[Translation]

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(h), this document is deemed to have been permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics.

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[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 responses to 12 petitions.

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### COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

#### VETERANS AFFAIRS

**Mr. Greg Kerr (West Nova, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the fourth report of the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs in relation to Bill C-27, an act to amend the Public Service Employment Act, enhancing hiring opportunities for certain serving and former members of the Canadian Forces.

The committee has studied the bill and decided to report the bill back to the House with amendments.

[Translation]

#### FINANCE

**Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP)** moved that the second report of the Standing

Committee on Finance, presented on Tuesday, December 10, 2013, be concurred in.

[English]

**The Speaker:** Debate? Is the House ready for the question?

Is the hon. member for Winnipeg North rising on debate?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Is this a concurrence motion, Mr. Speaker?

**The Speaker:** This is the concurrence motion for the second report of the Standing Committee on Finance.

Debate, the hon. member for Winnipeg North.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to take the opportunity because in the last few days we have had a number of reports that have been concurred in. There is a great deal of curiosity as to why we have reports being concurred in, and a great deal of concern with regard to one report that I have been hoping will be concurred in, which is dealing with the procedure and House affairs committee.

After a report comes through committee, it has to then come into the House. The concurrence then is somewhat obligated, and it is important that all reports be concurred in.

I believe there is an issue in recognizing the importance of our standing committees, and I want to provide comment on the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

We are supposed to be having committee meetings. We have lost literally hundreds of hours of committee meetings because the New Democratic Party continues to deny consent for concurrence in the procedure and House affairs committee report No. 18. That is having a very profound impact on the work of this Parliament, and that is one of the reasons that I stand today to recognize the importance of the report. Therefore, I move:

That the motion be amended by inserting before the words “be concurred in” the words “and the 18th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs”.

I will sign the amendment in the hope that we will be able to get it passed today.

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Mr. Speaker, not only did the member not speak to the report that was before the House, but he is also trying to add additional reports. He is combining a motion for concurrence in one committee report with a motion for another. That is not something that is practised in this House.

*Routine Proceedings*

**Hon. Peter Van Loan:** Mr. Speaker, while there may be a legitimate question of relevance in terms of the amendment, it certainly would be in order were the amendment to go by unanimous consent.

**The Speaker:** I do find that the amendment is out of order, and I will not allow it.

We will go to questions and comments. The hon. member for York West.

**Hon. Judy Sgro:** Mr. Speaker, I am quite curious as to why we are not going forward with this. We are here to work, and that is what this is all about.

**The Speaker:** I am not sure if the hon. member for Winnipeg North, since he is the one who tried to move the amendment, would be capable of answering the question. However, I might nonetheless enjoy the answer.

The hon. member for Winnipeg North, if he wishes to respond.

• (1010)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, the member beside me is asking me to go outside to make my comments.

The member for York West has asked the question, and obviously my colleague has been very offended by the question. The answer to the question is very simple, and I think that this is why he maybe got a little upset. That is the fact that the NDP appeared to be very lazy.

**The Speaker:** We had been getting along so well until then. I do not think that was a helpful remark from the hon. member for Winnipeg North. It certainly was not a point of order. He started off the response by raising a point of order.

I see the hon. member for Sudbury rising. I will give him the floor, but I think we should very quickly try to get off this particular point about the amendment. The Chair has already given a ruling and, as members know, the Chair's rulings on these things are final.

I will give the floor to the hon. member for Sudbury, and then hopefully we can move on.

**Mr. Glenn Thibeault:** Mr. Speaker, I was referring to his taking it outside because, while everyone assumes that of someone from Sudbury, his comments were actually quite inappropriate, and he needs to remove that type of language from the House. This is the House of Parliament. If he wants to continue to act like a juvenile, he needs to do that outside.

**The Speaker:** I think the best thing for the House right now is to move on.

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:** On division.

(Motion agreed to)

**Mr. Joe Preston:** Mr. Speaker, this should be fun. Again, if the House gives its consent, I move that the 18th report of the Standing

Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, presented to the House on September 30, be concurred in.

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

**Some hon. members:** Yes.

**Some hon. members:** No.

\* \* \*

**PETITIONS**

## THE ENVIRONMENT

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to rise to present two petitions today.

The first is primarily from residents of Saanich—Gulf Islands and Vancouver Island, calling for a permanent ban on crude oil tankers on the west coast of British Columbia. This is particularly poignant and important, given the drifting Russian cargo ship that nearly went aground on beautiful Haida Gwaii.

## BOTTLED WATER

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition calls for the discontinuance of the purchase of bottled water for personal use in federal institutions. This petition primarily comes from residents of Nanaimo and Saanich—Gulf Islands.

## EATING DISORDERS

**Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition regarding eating disorders. Eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia are serious mental illnesses that incapacitate more than 600,000 Canadians and can be fatal.

The petitioners call upon the government to work with the provinces, territories, and stakeholders to develop comprehensive pan-Canadian strategies for eating disorders, including better prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and support.

## SEX SELECTION

**Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon (Mississauga East—Cooksville, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise in the House to present a petition on behalf of many Canadians.

The petitioners are asking members of Parliament to condemn discrimination against girls occurring through sex-selective pregnancy termination.

• (1015)

## ROUGE NATIONAL PARK

**Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan (Scarborough—Rouge River, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I stand today to submit petitions on behalf of residents from all throughout the greater Toronto areas with respect to the Rouge national urban park.

*Government Orders*

The petitioners request that the Government of Canada protect the irreplaceable 100 square kilometres of public land assembly within a healthy and sustainable Rouge national park. Since this land is the ancestral home of the Mississauga, Huron-Wendat, and Seneca first nations and their sacred burial and village sites, people would like to see the cultural and historical aspects of these lands protected, as well as assurance that there is an enjoyable nature experience and agricultural experience for people who live within the greater Toronto area.

## ANIMAL WELFARE

**Mr. Joe Preston (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have a petition from citizens of London and St. Thomas and the rest of the riding who are looking for a ban on dog and cat fur imported from China.

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## QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Question No. 668 will be answered today.

[Text]

Question No. 668—**Mr. Matthew Dubé:**

With regard to the Fryer Island Dam, located on the Richelieu River in Quebec and forming part of the Chambly Canal National Historic Site: (a) how much has been spent, per year, on maintaining and repairing this dam since it was built; (b) what is the number of dam inspection reports since 2005, what are their titles, and what is the inspection policy for this dam; (c) what are the longer term plans of the government or Parks Canada for the dam's repair and modernization; and (d) how much money has been set aside to repair and modernize the Fryer Island Dam in the coming years?

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of the Environment, Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and Minister for the Arctic Council, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, regarding part (a) of the question, the Fryer dam was built in 1938 and has never been operational. Access to the structure has been prohibited for several years and additional security measures have been put in place to ensure public safety near the structure. Parks Canada has not undertaken maintenance or repairs due to the fact that the dam was never operational and access has been restricted.

Regarding part (b), since 2005, two inspection reports have been produced by consulting firms on the Fryer dam. Staff conduct rounds of the Chambly Canal area and inspections are conducted as required.

Regarding parts (c) and (d), at this time, no funding for the Fryer dam is identified for repair or modernization.

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[English]

## QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, if Question No. 678 could be made an order for return, this return would be tabled immediately.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 678—**Mr. Rodger Cuzner:**

With regard to Part III of the Canada Labour Code: (a) which recommendations from the 2006 comprehensive review of Part III of the Labour Code conducted by Commissioner Harry Arthurs has the government (i) implemented, including when and why, (ii) not implemented and why; (b) what measures has the government implemented since 2006 besides those listed in (a), including (i) the rationale for implementation, including listing any studies and their document or reference number that was done to support the change, (ii) when the changes were implemented; and (c) what studies has the government undertaken on making changes to Part III of the Canada Labour Code since 2006 not listed in (b), including the rationale for undertaking each, and their document or reference number?

(Return tabled)

[English]

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski:** Mr. Speaker, lastly I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

## ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN 2014 ACT, NO. 2

## BILL C-43—TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

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

That, in relation to Bill C-43, a second Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 11, 2014 and other measures, not more than three further sitting days shall be allotted to the consideration at second reading stage of the Bill; and

That, 15 minutes before the expiry of the time provided for Government Orders on the third day allotted to the consideration at second reading stage of the said Bill, any proceedings before the House shall be interrupted, if required for the purpose of this Order, and, in turn, every question necessary for the disposal of the said stage of the Bill shall be put forthwith and successively, without further debate or amendment.

Of course, this motion would result in there being four days of debate here at second reading.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Pursuant to Standing Order 67.1, there will now be a 30-minute period.

[Translation]

I invite hon. members who may wish to ask questions to rise in their places so the Chair has some idea of how many wish to participate in the question period if debate.

[English]

**Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, here we are again. Eighty times now the Conservative government has chosen the path of what some have called bulldozer politics when it comes to Parliament. Eighty times they have shut down debate, breaking every record set by any government under any circumstances in Canadian history.

*Government Orders*

When the Conservatives sat in opposition, they detested this exact same procedure when it was used by the Liberals. Now that they are in government and are a little long in the tooth, having been here a number of years, they are running out of ideas and do not like the conversation that happens around a 460-page omnibus bill—

• (1020)

**Mr. Costas Menegakis:** You sound like a broken record.

**Mr. Pierre Lemieux:** If only you'd work with us, Nathan.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** Mr. Speaker, if they want to get into the debate, they can rise, but at this moment I have the microphone, and they will listen to the question that I have for them.

We are speaking of a 460-page omnibus bill that has virtually nothing to do with the economy.

I would also suggest to my Conservative colleagues that they do not have a clue about what is in this legislation, because when we count the number of Conservatives who showed up to listen to departmental officials at the technical briefing just two nights ago, the answer is none. Is that not amazing? Is it not amazing that we had a six-hour technical briefing on this very bill?

Opposition members of Parliament are meant to do one specific thing: hold the government to account. That applies also to backbench Conservatives, although they do not do that job because they vote as they are told to vote.

This bill proposes changes to the Refugee Act, the Public Safety Act, the Judges Act, and all sorts of things that have nothing to do with affairs of the budget and the government of the day as our economy sits in fragile territory.

I have a specific question for my colleague across the way. Is stripping social assistance from refugee claimants something that was important for the government to do to restore Canada's fiscal capacity and put Canadians back to work?

**Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Minister of State (Finance), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure again to stand in the House and to move the motion.

Canadians expect their government to make decisions and to make those decisions in a timely manner. We have made commitments in platforms and during the budget period. Our government is now doing something that is novel for the other parties to understand, because we are living up to our commitments. We are keeping our promise. We will continue to make our commitments to Canadians and we will then introduce the proper legislation and pass that legislation because of the commitments and the promises we have made.

My colleague spoke about the size of this legislation. It is common practice to include various measures in a budget and subsequent budget implementation bills. This budget has been before Parliament since February. We introduced the budget in February, over 250 days ago, over eight months ago. There has been debate in the House on the first part of the budget, and now we have the second budget implementation bill.

The member asked a question in regard to social assistance. The measures in this bill would simply allow the provinces their rightful

jurisdiction to implement timelines in which residency must take place before individuals receive social assistance.

We look forward to the debate.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there is a genuine lack of respect for parliamentary procedure. This is the second time. On the one hand, parliamentary committees that should be meeting have lost hundreds of hours of opportunities to hold the government accountable on aboriginal affairs, foreign affairs, and other things because of a bunch of lazy New Democrats. On the other hand, the government brings in time allocation and—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. The hon. member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley is rising on a point of order.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** Mr. Speaker, this is regrettable. You have just come into the chair, but the Speaker of the House of Commons, just minutes ago, asked the member to use language other than what he just used. The debate before us is about time allocation being used by the government on the second budget implementation bill. If the member from the Liberal Party would like to have some other debate or use personal invective against members in the House, he knows exactly what he can do: he can do that elsewhere. However, the rules that govern us here seek some level of civility. The member knows that the personal has to stay out of our conversations; otherwise, civility and decorum are lost in this place.

Therefore, could he return to the topic and, I suggest, retract the comments he just made about the New Democrats and actually speak to the motion at hand? That would encourage the debate that we need to have in this place in the limited time we have.

• (1025)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I am not new to this. I have listened to many New Democrats speak inside the House of Commons and inside the Manitoba legislature and I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that I have heard a great many exaggerations and offensive words come from NDP benches.

Everything I said in my comments in posing the question in regard to time allocation is completely relevant. What I was talking about was our wonderful institution and how important it is that we have certain privileges. We have the privilege to hold government accountable. Time allocation is, in essence, preventing members of Parliament from standing up to speak. The same principle applies in parliamentary committees. In parliamentary committees, we are supposed to be meeting and allowing MPs the opportunity to question the government.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The point of order was on the use of what the Speaker has already indicated was uncivil language. I was in the chamber when the Speaker ruled that way. I would ask the member for Winnipeg North to cease using that language and to finish his question.

I would point out that these questions are supposed to be no longer than one minute, and we have now been on this question for six. Would the member for Winnipeg North ask the question that he wishes to ask of the government so that we can get on with the debate?

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I take it by your ruling that the word “lazy” is not unparliamentary, but rather it was the context that I suspect you are referring to. I understand that I have offended a number of members from the New Democratic caucus. If some of them feel personally attacked by it, I will withdraw the comment and apologize.

That said, it is an issue in terms of allowing for parliamentary accountability. Every time the government uses time allocation, it prevents or puts limits on members of Parliament being able to hold the government accountable on a wide variety of issues. Given the importance of this legislation, which is of a budgetary nature, why has the government chosen to use time allocation just one day after the bill was introduced?

**Hon. Kevin Sorenson:** Mr. Speaker, this is not so much a point of order, but I feel disappointed that the last point of order has taken nearly 10 minutes, and this budget implementation bill is such a good bill that I want to be certain that my time is not going to be cut short as we talk about the very good measures brought forward in the bill. I do not think the differences between the Liberal and New Democratic parties should prevent us from talking about the budget implementation act.

The commitments and measures that we brought forward in the budget implementation bill are important to Canadians. Canadians listened last February when the budget was being brought down. They know ways and means motions have been brought forward because of the technical changes that must happen. Changes must be made first to the Income Tax Act, but other good measures must happen as well.

We can have four days of debate in the House. It is important that we give everyone those days to focus on the budget and then get it to a committee to be studied there. We want that process to happen. We want committee members to debate this bill and then bring it back to the House.

**Mr. Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Lindsey Jill Nicholls disappeared in 1993 on her way to meet friends in Courtenay, B.C. This is a tragedy that far too many families have had to face.

With the support of missing persons advocates, police groups, and other families of missing persons, Judy Peterson, Lindsey's mother, has worked enthusiastically to change Canadian law to allow DNA matching of missing persons, known as Lindsey's law. Ms. Peterson championed the cause for the creation of a national DNA-based data bank to compare the DNA of missing persons with that collected through crime scene investigations and from convicted offenders. Her hope is that linking the DNA profiles of missing persons to a national DNA data bank will provide information that in some cases may bring closure to years of suffering.

Can the Minister of State for Finance please update the House about this important clause?

• (1030)

**Hon. Kevin Sorenson:** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for Provencher for the question. This is a bill that the former member for Provencher, a former justice minister and public safety minister, was very involved in as well. The member for Provencher had big boots to fill, and he is doing it.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to all families that have had to live through such a tragedy as losing children. They have to live through never having closure, never being able to locate the children, and in some cases never being able to locate the remains of those children. As a father, I can only imagine the genuine heartbreak that families have to face.

We are both proud of and inspired by the determination and courage of those who have advocated for the rights of victims. Once this DNA index of missing persons is brought forward, it will support missing persons and unidentified human remains investigations, as well as strengthen the current criminal application of the national DNA database. The index, once created, would help bring closure to those families that have an empty place at the table each and every night and are reminded every night of the missing children when they walk by their bedrooms. These are the kinds of measures that are brought forward in this budget implementation bill.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I would again remind all members that both the questions and responses are supposed to be one minute and no more. I am going to hold the chamber to that today.

The hon. member for La Pointe-de-l'Île.

**Ms. Ève Pécelet (La Pointe-de-l'Île, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by saying I am not lazy and no member of the House is lazy. It shows a great deal of disrespect when a member of the House makes that assumption and says that any of the members sitting here are lazy. I would like the member to retract his comments, because it shows a great deal of disrespect to my constituents and his constituents.

I might or might not be able to talk about this budget, because the government says we only need a couple of days to discuss this bill. I would like the minister to tell my constituents why the government thinks members do not need to discuss their constituents' interests and needs. What does he say to the people of La Pointe-de-l'Île?

**Hon. Kevin Sorenson:** Again, Mr. Speaker, I would encourage her to talk to her House leader and ask to speak on the budget implementation act.

Are you here tomorrow?

She is saying that she is not here tomorrow—

**The Deputy Speaker:** The minister of state knows not to address his comments directly to any other member but to the Chair.

**Ms. Ève Pécelet:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I am here tomorrow.

**Hon. Kevin Sorenson:** Mr. Speaker, she says that she is available to speak tomorrow, so we would encourage that hard-working member to bring her thoughts to Parliament tomorrow. There are four days of debate on this measure. There are going to be many members who will have ample opportunity to speak, and we encourage them to do so.

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the hon. Minister of State for Finance, because I fully support Lindsey's law. Judy Peterson is one of my constituents, and I was thrilled to see it in the budget.

*Government Orders*

However, a 450-page omnibus budget bill, the second such omnibus bill this year, with yet another time allocation, bringing it to 80 time allocations in the 41st Parliament, is a breach of privilege of individual members in this place. We cannot do our work as members of Parliament when we are forced to go through enormous bills.

For example, this bill involves the Canadian Polar Commission, which has no relationship to the budget. It involves many measures that are not budgetary. With 450 pages to be scrutinized in a time allocation debate, we will never do justice to those individual measures, including Lindsey's law.

My question of privilege remains. I hope that at some point the Speaker will find time to rule on the objection to these time allocations that I made on September 15.

• (1035)

**Hon. Kevin Sorenson:** Mr. Speaker, again, in relation to the size of the bill, it is 460 pages long. There are some very technical measures, technical in that there are changes to income tax. For example, there is one measure dealing with intellectual property changes. I think there are over 35 pages on that specific measure. What it does is it bring us in international compliance with the Madrid protocol, the Singapore protocol, the Nice agreements, and other agreements that all deal with international property rights. It puts us in compliance with international protocols. Because it deals with all these protocols, there are 35 pages that deal just with that.

It is technical. I think everyone can agree that we need to be in compliance with international law. These measures list the different protocols we live up to.

**Mr. Adam Vaughan (Trinity—Spadina, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, being new to this chamber, it is a little odd not to have committees meeting and to have every budget circumvented. I am beginning to question what exactly this institution is supposed to be trying to achieve by not working. I do not think it is a question, necessarily, of defining people's personalities, but there is obstruction at play, and it concerns me.

The hon. member said, in representing this motion, that this was a budget tabled months earlier, that it is just housekeeping being tabled today, and that we are simply trying to be efficient.

However, there are measures in this process that were not tabled in the spring budget. I would like to know how those measures will be properly dealt with. Measures that were never announced in the budget are now being slipped into this process. How are we supposed to fully debate and understand those and represent our constituents' needs when those measures were not presented or tabled earlier?

**Hon. Kevin Sorenson:** Mr. Speaker, in regard to the committees, I look at the New Democratic members. They say that they are meeting and that their committees are meeting. Our committees are meeting. I used to chair a committee. I found the work of committees very important. I had good members to work with from all parties of this House.

Is there some obstruction going on? Yes, there may be by other parties. Certainly committees are meeting. I think all members want to work and work hard.

The member talked about the implementation bill bringing forward different pieces of legislation. I would just remind the hon. member, as he is new to the House, and we look forward to working with him over the next year, that the previous Liberal government's last budget implementation bill amended dozens and dozens of different pieces of legislation. It is a common practice.

It is not the size of the budget legislation the opposition really cares about. We have had larger bills. It is that they want to stop the necessary and vital—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments. The hon. member for Surrey North.

**Mr. Jasbir Sandhu (Surrey North, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of State for Finance talked about having enough time for every member to speak in the House.

The fact of the matter is that in moving time allocation, not every member is going to have time to speak to this bill.

Budget bills are very important. This is where we work for Canadians. This is where we provide funding for pensions, seniors, and all sorts of projects.

This is a very important bill. There are a number of concerns from my constituents, who would like me to represent them here in the House. How would the minister of state explain to my constituents that I am not going to be able to speak in the House on this budget?

**Hon. Kevin Sorenson:** Mr. Speaker, again, I would encourage the member for Surrey North to speak to his House leader to make the request to speak. I am not certain how the New Democratic Party brings forward the list of members who want to speak on this. I would encourage the member to speak to his House leader. We have four days to speak to it here. We have a committee that is going to study it.

The member makes reference to things that were not in the budget. One of the examples is the temporary foreign worker program that was announced in June. We knew in April or May about the changes that were coming. That is one of the measures.

Another one is ending pay-to-pay practices. Day after day the opposition stands and questions us in regard to pay to pay. This measure ends pay to pay for the telecommunication industry. No Canadian should have to pay extra to get a bill from a telecommunication company. This bill would stop that practice.

• (1040)

**Hon. Ron Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, last week we were standing in this House in unity among all parties. The Prime Minister said that we were in opposition but we were not enemies. We can have a healthy debate and respect the fact that some of us might have an oops moment. I have had them myself. I know that members of the Liberal caucus have had them.



*Government Orders*

My colleague, the Minister of State for Finance, is a hard-working member. I just wonder if he could clarify this for the House. My understanding is that recently, the member for Wascana was forced to apologize for misleading the House by misquoting support from a Laval economics professor. Then the Liberal finance critic misquoted Jack Mintz, who said that the Liberal EI scheme would encourage employers to fire older workers. Then yesterday, the member for Kings—Hants accidentally tried to cite reputable economist Jack Mintz right after Mr. Mintz had a letter published, entitled “Bad Policy”, about the Liberal plan. I understand that last Friday the leader of the Liberal Party, in a speech, indicated that he was going to hike pension payroll taxes, which would be a concern for my constituents of Kelowna—Lake Country.

I would ask the hon. Minister of State for Finance how the budget implementation bill would help small businesses across Canada and keep payroll taxes low.

**Hon. Kevin Sorenson:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Kelowna—Lake Country made reference to the Liberal Party. The Liberal Party scrambles to cover up for its leader.

We are delivering action for the Canadian economy, and that is what this budget would do. This budget bill would legislate our small-business job credit that would lower EI payroll taxes by 15% and save small and medium-sized businesses in Canada \$550 million. About 780,000 businesses in Canada are expected to benefit from these measures in this bill. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business says that the credit would create 25,000 person-years of employment.

While we are lowering payroll taxes for 90% of businesses in Canada, the Liberal leader has pledged to raise pension payroll taxes. Not only that, but the Liberal EI agenda would give EI benefits to prisoners, pay for a 45-day work—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. The minute is up.

The hon. member for Scarborough—Rouge River.

**Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan (Scarborough—Rouge River, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the minister of state mentioned earlier that talking about the New Democrats' and Liberals' differences is taking time away from this very important budget implementation bill and that he would like to see more debate in this House.

Why is the minister actually stopping debate from happening before it even starts? This minister of state is supporting the time allocation motion that would end debate in this House.

I come from a constituency that represents almost 140,000 constituents, and when I say that I may not be able to speak to this because he is moving time allocation and ending debate, cutting the time here, he says to talk to my people and that it is my fault that I am not speaking. Actually, no. I am here. I want to speak to this budget implementation bill, but he is not allowing me to, because he and the government are stopping debate before it even happens by moving time allocation. They are making sure that I might not be able to speak to this. He is blaming the victim. Why is he doing that?

**Hon. Kevin Sorenson:** Mr. Speaker, all Canadians need to understand that the measures we have taken today are not to end debate but to begin debate. That is what we are going to do here. We are going to start debate. We are going to move quickly into four

days of debate. We are not a debating club; we are a Parliament. Canadians expect that we will introduce legislation, debate it, move it, take it to committee, and study it. Those are the measures we take in a Parliament.

Contrary to what the hon. member for Scarborough—Rouge River says, our plan is to move to debate on the budget. I would encourage those members to look at the budget. It is a good budget implementation bill. There are good measures in it that the members of the Canadian public are asking for.

Four days of 10-minute speeches, with questions and answers, will give ample opportunity for all those members who want to speak to speak. Let us start that debate.

• (1045)

**Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the minister said a few moments ago that omnibus bills were common. They have been common since the current government started putting 600-, 700-, and 800-page bills together and forcing them on the House through time allocation, which is also becoming common. It is 80 times that the current government has used either closure or time allocation to limit debate on measures before this House.

I want to ask the minister of state this. Canadians are not clamouring, to my mind, for rules that would allow provincial governments to cut off refugees from social assistance and welfare, even though they are not allowed to work in this country while they are refugees. Is that something the minister of state thinks people are clamouring for that must be put into a bill? It has nothing to do with the budget itself.

**Hon. Kevin Sorenson:** Certainly, Mr. Speaker, I think Canadians understand that this government is committed to helping all newcomers, including genuine refugees, integrate into Canadian society and fully contribute to our economy and our communities.

Canada has one of the fairest immigration systems in the world. However, we also have, in this parliamentary system and in this country of Canada, a federal government. We have provincial governments, we have municipal governments, and we have territorial governments. Each of those governments has jurisdiction for certain responsibilities. The provinces and territories are close to those taxpayers who believe that refugees need to have the proper social programs. As we all know, we transfer monies from the health and social transfer fund to the provinces so that they can administer social programs.

This is not about cuts for refugees. This is something that would allow the provinces to help those refugees in their—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands.

*Government Orders*

**Ms. Elizabeth May:** Mr. Speaker, I just heard the hon. minister revive the assurance that every member in this place will be allowed to stand to debate this omnibus budget bill. Could we take this as an undertaking?

There are now 12 members of Parliament who represent ridings equal in importance to the ridings of any other members of Parliament. In doing our due diligence as members in this place, we have the right to participate in examining legislation. There are now 12 members of Parliament who are not members of the Conservative, Liberal, or New Democratic parties. Does the minister give us assurance that each one of us will have a 10-minute speaking slot on the bill?

**Hon. Kevin Sorenson:** Mr. Speaker, again, we are moving this motion today so that we can get into the debate on the budget implementation bill and have four days of debate and see it move from here. I mentioned earlier 10-minute allocations. I do not know how many speeches that would be. For four days members can stand and speak for 10 minutes in debate.

There are other opportunities. The member is not from one of what we would call the recognized parties in this House, but she certainly has the rights of every member of this House. There are times for questions, when the member can stand and question anyone who is speaking. She can make a point. It is not that she would have to try to stump one of her New Democratic friends or her Liberal friends or her Conservative friends. She may want to make a point on this budget—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order, please.

Is the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley rising on a point of order?

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** No, Mr. Speaker. I wondered if we were drawing near to the end of the time for this.

**The Deputy Speaker:** We are drawing near to the end of the time.

The hon. minister of state may complete his statement. He only has about 30 seconds.

**Hon. Kevin Sorenson:** Mr. Speaker, I will defer my time to the opposition so that it can ask more questions.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Since we are down to less than 20 seconds, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings at this time and put forthwith the question on the motion now before the House.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion ?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

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

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

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

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

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

*And five or more members having risen:*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Call in the members.

● (1130)

[*Translation*]

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

(*Division No. 266*)

## YEAS

## Members

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

*Government Orders*

Williamson  
Yélich  
Young (Vancouver South)  
Zimmer — 143

Wong  
Young (Oakville)  
Yurdiga

## NAYS

## Members

Allen (Welland)  
Atamanenko  
Bélanger  
Bennett  
Bevington  
Borg  
Boutin-Sweet  
Brisson  
Caron  
Cash  
Charlton  
Chisholm  
Christopherson  
Côté  
Cuzner  
Day  
Dion  
Donnelly  
Dubé  
Duncan (Etobicoke North)  
Dusseault  
Eyking  
Fortin  
Garneau  
Giguère  
Goodale  
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)  
Hsu  
Kellway  
Lapointe  
Laverdière  
MacAulay  
Marston  
May  
McGuinity  
Michaud  
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)  
Nantel  
Nunez-Melo  
Papillon  
Péclet  
Pilon  
Rafferty  
Rathgeber  
Sandhu  
Scott  
Sgro  
Sitsabaiesan  
Stoffer  
Thibeault  
Turmel  
Vaughan — 103

Angus  
Aubin  
Bellavance  
Benskin  
Blanchette  
Boulerice  
Brahmi  
Brosseau  
Casey  
Chan  
Chicoine  
Choquette  
Cleary  
Cullen  
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)  
Dewar  
Dionne Labelle  
Doré Lefebvre  
Dubourg  
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)  
Easter  
Foote  
Fry  
Garrison  
Godin  
Gravelle  
Harris (St. John's East)  
Hughes  
Lamoureux  
Latendresse  
LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)  
Mai  
Mathysen  
McCallum  
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)  
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)  
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)  
Nicholls  
Pacetti  
Patry  
Perreault  
Quach  
Rankin  
Rousseau  
Scarpaleggia  
Sellah  
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind-  
sor)  
St-Denis  
Sullivan  
Toone  
Valeriotte

## PAIRED

Nil

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

I wish to inform the House that because of the proceedings on the time allocation motion, government orders will be extended by 30 minutes.

## SECOND READING

The House resumed from October 29 consideration of the motion that Bill C-43, A second Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 11, 2014 and other measures, be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the amendment.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member for Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques has 10 minutes to finish his speech.

**Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my speech was split into two parts because of last night's votes. I will quickly come back to what I talked about yesterday to complete and conclude my remarks this morning. Yesterday, I mentioned that the Conservative government seems to use eight criteria when introducing a budget bill. We have seen these eight criteria in all of the budget bills that this Conservative government has introduced to date, at least since the last election, in this Parliament.

I would like to quickly list those eight criteria. First, the bill must be big. This one is 460 pages long. In fact, it is 78 pages longer than the last one, which was the first budget bill for 2014. The bill must amend at least a dozen laws. In this case, there are about 40 laws that are being created, eliminated or amended. The bill must deal with many subjects that have absolutely nothing to do with the budget, including some subjects that may appear to be related to the budget—such as the amendment to the fiscal arrangements between Canada and the provinces—but that, in the end, have no impact on federal finances. The bill must create a number of non-budgetary laws that should be examined outside the Standing Committee on Finance as stand-alone bills.

A perfect example of that is the creation of a DNA data bank to facilitate the search for victims or missing persons. That has no place in the budget. It should be studied thoroughly, on its own. I will come back to that.

The fifth criterion is that this type of bill must concentrate powers in the hands of the ministers. We have seen that with every budget bill, and we are seeing it again, particularly in the changes being made to the Aeronautics Act and the provisions of the new Extractive Sector Transparency Measures Act and the Canadian Payments Act. More discretionary power is being given to ministers when it should be here, in Parliament.

The final three criteria focus on including legislative amendments to restrict the rights of workers and immigrants, as well as a law and order measure. All of these measures, these eight criteria, can again be found in this bill.

I want to come back to the question of law and order because we are once again talking about a proposal, found in a division of part IV, that would create a DNA data bank. We are in favour of the measure from a philosophical point of view, and we proposed this same tool in the past.

However, creating this type of data bank raises some major ethical issues. That is why a committee such as the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security or the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights should have the opportunity to closely examine the consequences of creating a data bank like this. Right now, it is buried in part IV, where there are 31 divisions and this one, with respect to creating a data bank, is only one of those 31 divisions. I am not even talking about all of the tax measures in the first three parts.

*Government Orders*

We are MPs in the House of Commons. We represent our constituents and all Canadians. Despite the fact that most of the parties in the House cannot oppose these things as a matter of principle, we could strongly oppose them if the consequences of including these things presented a major ethical problem regarding the privacy of Canadians and the security of their person. Why, then, include such a measure? I can already hear some Conservative members telling us it will be referred to the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security. It will not be referred. The committee might discuss it quickly at one meeting, or two at the most, given that the time allocated to the minister in question already takes up much of the meeting. This usually comes back to us without amendment and without any opportunity for the members of the Standing Committee on Finance to really understand the nature of the committee's deliberations.

• (1135)

Contrary to what the member for Vancouver South said yesterday evening, these measures were not included innocently and without consequences; quite the contrary. This is not the usual practice. Before the Conservatives came to power, omnibus bills were about 100 pages in length, at most. Now we are routinely asked to study bills that are between 400 and 800 pages long and sometimes up to 950 pages.

It is impossible to govern or demonstrate good governance by taking an attitude like that and introducing bills that ultimately form the cornerstone of how the federal government operates. Debating such bills is something that not only the opposition, but also the Conservative Party members who are not cabinet ministers should be able to do; however, they refuse to engage in real debate. In the end, they simply repeat the talking points given to them and support the bill without even reading it. I can guarantee that out of the 160 or so Conservative Party members, only about 15 really understand the contents of this bill. They will not gain a better understanding through debates in this House, either, because they do not listen to the debates. Nor do they read the committee evidence to find out about the main issues discussed.

This government tends to view this side of the chamber as a non-essential part of House operations. It does not see the opposition as being able to assist in better governance. As the official opposition, quite often our role is to oppose, but we diligently fulfill another more fundamental role, and that is to point out to the government flaws in its regulatory or legislative proposals.

To the government, any proposal from the opposition is an obstacle, even if after multiple warnings, the details we submit to them or the flaws that we point out in the bills end up being authentic and valid.

In those cases, the government makes the necessary changes itself, or has them made by the other place, or uses subsequent budget bills to correct the mistakes that it made and we pointed out.

We see very little that is positive, despite what most Conservative MPs will say. Very little has anything to do with job creation. Very little has anything to do with economic growth. There certainly is not much that has anything to do with Canada's long-term prosperity. The only measure they can debate is the small business tax credit, and even then they are wrong about it, since it targets only those

employers that pay less than \$15,000 in employment insurance premiums. As government officials and the government itself have confirmed, this measure will cost at minimum more than half a billion dollars in lost revenue for the federal government.

What will we get in return for this lost revenue? According to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, this measure will create 800 jobs, at a cost of \$700,000 per job.

The government says that the Canadian Federation of Independent Business is very much in favour of this measure. Naturally it did a study and found that this measure will create 25,000 jobs. The Parliamentary Budget Officer says it is more like 800 jobs. The government's only argument is the consent or approval of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, which, at the end of the day, represents the people who are going to benefit from the half a billion dollars.

What we want, in the House, is an independent study to prove that this is an appropriate and effective job creation measure. The people in this chamber know very well that this measure will not achieve the objectives set by the government. Therefore, we are rejecting the only measure that even comes close to being a job creation measure or an economic measure.

We will have no choice but to oppose this budget bill at second reading. Given that the government has a majority, the bill will be passed and go to committee with the same shortcomings and the same mistakes.

We, the opposition, will continue to work diligently. We will point out the shortcomings and the main problems in this bill.

• (1140)

We hope that as the election approaches, MPs, especially the Conservatives who are not in the cabinet, will realize that this is not a good budget bill and that at least the shortcomings must be addressed.

[*English*]

**Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague indicated that on this side of the House we have not taken time to look through the bill. I wonder if my colleague understands that Bill C-43 has a very technical amendment in it that would extend the capital gains exemption for farm property.

In my riding, my farmers are a part of the prosperity of my area; not only the primary producers but the food processing that goes on in Waterloo county is very important. This measure would make it easier for family farms to be passed on to the next generation. This is an important aspect of our food security in Canada.

It is too bad that the NDP in the past has not stood up for the protection of family farms. This time, NDP members have chance to stand up for the protection of family farms and to ensure the good produce that our farmers produce year to year by passing this measure in the bill.

*Government Orders*

• (1145)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Guy Caron:** Mr. Speaker, my colleague's argument is the perfect argument against omnibus bills.

There are some things that we could agree to in the 460 pages and 401 clauses. However, just because we support two, three or four measures does not mean that we could vote for a budget bill that we reject for the most part. How can we agree to spend more than half a billion dollars with no guarantee that even one job will be created?

Just like the member who asked the question, I represent an agricultural riding. I recognize that there is a problem with passing on family farms. I am quite willing to discuss the possibility of facilitating the transfer of family farms, but not if this measure is buried among 400 other items. We cannot support most of those items because they have nothing to do with the budget or with prosperity, growth and job creation.

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I do have a question, but prior to that, I have a point of order that I would like to raise.

I would ask for unanimous consent to move the following motion: that the 18th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs presented on Tuesday, September 30, be concurred in.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Does the member for Winnipeg North have unanimous consent to move his motion?

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Seeing there is no unanimous consent, the member for Winnipeg North can proceed with his question.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is disappointing that unanimous consent was denied by the New Democrats.

Having said that, my question is in relation—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. The hon. member for St. John's East is rising on a point of order.

**Mr. Jack Harris:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows that his remarks are out of order. He was ruled out of order before when he raised this, but he insists on raising points of order and then when he is denied, he continues to want to talk about it.

My point of order is on how the member gets to have two speaking opportunities by having a point of order and then wanting to speak. That seems to me to be out of order.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All members have the right to rise on a point of order and to seek unanimous consent. That was certainly in order. Also, in terms of the rotation that we have for questions in the House, it was the third party's turn for a question. I assume the member for Winnipeg North has that responsibility for his party, so he may continue with his question.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate your ruling and comments.

Many aspects of this particular budget could be debated and discussed in parliamentary committees. The question I have for the

member is on the benefits of having debates on a wide variety of issues in parliamentary committees.

Does the member believe that discussions of accountability and transparency can in fact take place in parliamentary committees? Would he not agree that there is a very important role for parliamentary committees in dealing with accountability and transparency, especially on issues such as the budget?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Guy Caron:** Mr. Speaker, it is very important to be able to debate issues in committee. Moreover, we want most bills to be debated in different committees.

Take, for example, the amendments made to the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. They need to be studied. We would like this bill to be split so that the committee can do its job. This also applies to the provision to create a DNA database. The appropriate committee needs to conduct the study.

The Standing Committee on Finance has expertise in financial matters, and it uses this expertise wisely. However, it makes no sense for this committee to study and vote on a budget bill like this, which contains all kinds of other measures that have nothing to do with the budget itself.

We would like the government to start showing good governance by referring the budgetary and fiscal measures to this committee and making sure that all the other measures that have nothing to do with this bill are studied by other committees.

• (1150)

**Mrs. Djaouida Sellah (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, as my colleague mentioned, this omnibus bill contains 401 clauses and is 478 pages long, and it amends various federal policies, from the DNA data bank to social services for refugees.

I would like to know what my colleague thinks about how the Conservatives are attacking the least fortunate. Protecting these people is the responsibility of the government and part of our Canadian values.

Why is the government targeting people who have been persecuted and subjected to trauma and violence? Why is it eliminating what is sometimes their only source of income?

**Mr. Guy Caron:** Mr. Speaker, clearly, the measure set out in the amendment to the Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements Act is a fundamental issue. As I was saying, we are talking about an amendment that seems to be a budget measure. However, it does not in any way affect the transfers between Ottawa and the provinces. Ultimately, it allows the provinces to include a residency period in their austerity measures, which will prevent refugee claimants who are awaiting the determination of their claims—not those who have had their claims rejected—from collecting social assistance. The provinces did not ask for this.

In the technical briefing, we learned that only one province asked a question about this amendment and that the province in question was not very receptive to it.

*Government Orders*

It is not as though refugee claimants can work to support themselves. The system we had in place allowed us to fulfill our obligations as a host country while waiting for the process to be complete.

I was shocked to hear the answers given by the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration during question period. When he was asked the specific question, his answer was very far from the truth. It is obvious—and it has been confirmed by experts and government officials—that this measure is not limited to, but specifically affects, refugee claimants.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his speech, which was very interesting, particularly with regard to two points.

The first deals with the approach the government is taking by introducing this huge 460-page omnibus bill. The bill contains many measures, some of which are good for our country's economy, but most of which are bad.

I would like to ask my colleague a specific question about employment insurance. We now know that most Canadian workers who have contributed to the employment insurance fund cannot use it. What is the point of this fund? It should be used to help workers who have lost their jobs.

How can the Conservatives justify using over \$550 million from this fund, which does not belong to the government? The fund belongs to Canadian workers and employers. However, the government used this fund to create 800 jobs. It is unbelievable that the Conservatives would think of doing such a thing and that they are saying that this program will improve the economy and help Canadians. How can the government justify its abuse of this program?

**Mr. Guy Caron:** Mr. Speaker, that is a very important question. Once again, it goes to the very heart of the only really relevant measure, a massive one, that talks about job creation.

According to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, the government would be investing \$550 million to create 800 jobs. Apparently, the finance minister conducted an internal assessment on this, but the government refuses to disclose the results. I am certain that if the assessment backed the government's arguments, the Minister of Finance would be the first to table it in the House in order to support what he is saying. However, that is not the case. We must therefore conclude that the job creation measures will not live up to what the Conservatives are promising.

The most frustrating aspect is that the projected employment insurance fund surplus would be obtained primarily by restricting workers' access to employment insurance. That is a real-life situation that is playing out in regions like mine in particular, where the economy still relies heavily on seasonal industries. Workers will continue to make their contributions while premiums for business owners will drop, yet there is no guarantee that jobs will be created. That is extremely frustrating for workers.

•(1155)

[*English*]

**Hon. Laurie Hawn (Edmonton Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Nipissing—Timiskaming.

I am privileged to rise today to speak to the second budget implementation act, 2014. I would like to share with the House some of the important measures contained in the legislation that stem from budget 2014 and other important actions of our government.

In the 2011 election campaign, our government made a number of promises to the Canadian people that we said we would bring in once the budget was balanced. We are well on our way to fulfilling our promises. One of the first promises we are fulfilling is the doubling of the children's fitness tax credit from \$500 to \$1,000 and making it refundable.

It is well known that regular exercise is essential to the successful development of children. It is a great way to get them started on a lifetime of healthy, active living. That is why our Conservative government introduced the children's fitness tax credit in the first place. This measure makes it affordable for Canadian families to register their kids in fitness activities. This tax credit currently benefits approximately 1.4 million Canadian families by providing them with much-needed tax relief.

With the doubling of this tax credit to \$1,000 and making it refundable, it would become even more beneficial to low-income families. These enhancements to the children's fitness tax credit would help bring further tax relief to about 850,000 families that enrol their children in sports or other fitness activities. As a government, we have been strongly committed to making life more affordable for hard-working Canadian families, and doubling the children's fitness tax credit and making it refundable does exactly that.

Our government has also committed to supporting job creation and economic growth in Canada's economy. We recognize that the most important driver of Canada's economic growth and success is the private sector, small businesses and entrepreneurs. These companies and individuals are the ones driving our economy forward, putting in long hours, and hiring our friends and neighbours.

According to the Business Development Bank, small and medium-sized enterprises make up 99.8% of all Canadian companies. It is because small businesses are so important that our government has introduced the small business job credit. The aim of this measure is to help small businesses save money and therefore have more resources to hire more workers. The small business job credit would apply to employment insurance premiums paid by small businesses in 2015-16.

*Government Orders*

The credit will be calculated as the difference between the premiums paid at the legislated rate of \$1.88 per \$100 of insurable earnings in each of those years. Since employers pay 1.4 times the legislated rate, this reduction in the legislated rate is equivalent to a reduction of about 39¢ per \$100 in insurable earnings. That is in EI premiums paid by small employers. The 39¢ premium reduction would apply in addition to the premium reduction related to the Québec Parental Insurance Plan. Any firm that pays employee EI premiums equal to or less than \$15,000 in 2015 or 2016 will be eligible for the credit in those years.

As an example, a small business employing 14 employees each earning \$40,000 would ordinarily pay about \$14,740 in EI premiums in 2015. However, since the total EI premiums paid by the employer are less than \$15,000, it would be eligible under the small business job credit for a refund of about \$2,200. That is the difference between the employer premiums paid at the legislated rate versus the premiums calculated under the reduced small business rate.

Businesses will not have to apply. The small business job credit will be automatically administered by the Canada Revenue Agency, which will determine eligibility and calculate the amount of the credit. Once calculated, the credit will be applied against any outstanding debt and then the remaining amount, if any, will be refunded to the small business. We expect this measure to save small employers more than \$550 million in 2015-16. This is just another way that our government is helping foster the conditions for private sector jobs and growth in the Canadian economy, which is the foundation of our long-term prosperity.

The budget implementation act would also take action to help amateur athletes and students, and I want to highlight those measures briefly as well.

First, for amateur athletes, the budget implementation act would permit income contributed to an amateur athlete trust to qualify as income earned for RRSP contribution limits. This is another important way we can help encourage and fund our young athletes on their journeys in their respective sports.

The budget implementation act would also extend the tax credit for interest paid on government-sponsored student loans to interest paid on a Canada apprentice loan. This is also vital in encouraging young Canadians to consider the trades as they prepare to enter the workforce or prepare for their post-secondary education. It is well known that there is a shortage of skilled tradespeople in the country and this is another important step in encouraging young Canadians to consider a career in that field.

●(1200)

I would like to turn to a subject that is close to my heart. Anyone who has spent time with me knows my passion for caring for men and women in uniform, and for continuing that care once these individuals are out of uniform and become part of Canada's veteran community.

With so many young veterans now, our care for them must change, it has changed, and it continues to change and improve.

One of the primary goals of the government and of the Department of Veterans Affairs is care for our veterans, helping them transition to a new career and establish a new life with as much

independence as possible. This includes helping the seriously ill and injured veterans have their house renovated to accommodate diverse needs, such as wheelchair access and things like that, as well as providing up to \$75,800 in career retraining funding for either the injured forces member or their spouse.

The aim of that fund is to get veterans of the Canadian Armed Forces working again in meaningful and gainful employment. We want them to use their trade, leadership and people management skills in the public or private sector where they can be put to good use.

For our part, our government is taking action to ensure that veterans are welcomed and hired into the public service in a way that recognizes the service they have already given to the country.

Each year, approximately 7,600 Canadian Armed Forces personnel leave the service, including about 1,000 individuals who leave for medical reasons beyond their control. Finding meaningful employment for them is a very important factor in them making the successful transition to civilian life.

In recognition of their service to Canada, budget 2013 promised to enhance employment opportunities in the federal public service for medically released Canadian Armed Forces personnel by creating a statutory hiring priority in the Public Service Employment Act for forces members who were medically released for service related reasons and by extending the duration of priority entitlements from two to five years for all medically released Canadian Armed Forces personnel.

Our government also proposed, in budget 2014, to amend the Public Service Employment Act to give preference to eligible veterans in external public service job competitions and to allow Canadian Armed Forces personnel with at least three years of military service to participate in internal public service job competitions.

To that end, our government has tabled Bill C-27, the veterans hiring act. That bill would build upon our previous commitments and previous legislative, giving honourably released forces members better access to job openings in the federal public sector. This is all part of our efforts to ensure there are more opportunities for Canada's veterans to build meaningful second careers as they transition from military to civilian life.

As part of this effort, veterans and Canadian Armed Forces personnel with a minimum of three years service would be allowed to participate in advertised internal hiring processes for a period expiring five years after their release date.

This measure would be in addition to a previous announcement by our government that eligible veterans whose military service was cut short by a career-ending illness or injury suffered in the line of duty would be given statutory priority access to job opportunities in the federal public service.

*Government Orders*

The duration of priority access for all medically released personnel would also be extended from two years to five years.

These are clearly all initiatives designed to help our veterans achieve “re-establishment in civilian life”. That short quote comes from the list of responsibilities that the Minister of Veterans Affairs, and therefore the Government of Canada, is charged with in relation to Canada's veterans. These priority hiring measures are simply another way that our government is trying to help our veterans successfully re-establish themselves in civilian life.

This is the key concept in the overall philosophy of service to veterans by the Department of Veterans Affairs

The aim of veterans programs is not lifelong financial dependence, unless that is the only option. The aim of the programs is to give the veteran every support possible to help those who cannot or do not wish to continue to serve in the military the tools they need to succeed in carving out a good future on their own terms. It is a goal I know all members of the House and all Canadians share.

The measures from the budget implementation act that I have highlighted today are ones I believe are in the best interests of all Canadians, whether they be children, amateur athletes, working moms and dads or veterans.

Where government can help Canadians, we want it to help and be as effective as possible. Where it is simply in the way of ordinary Canadians achieving their best possible quality of life, we want government out of the way.

The bill would help us improve that balance. That is why I am pleased to speak to it and support it.

• (1205)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Philip Toone (Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague opposite for his speech.

Clearly, I do not agree with the bill before us, if for no other reason than the gag order that will limit debate.

He said that the government is taking a step back from its public role and that the bill before us will help with that. Meanwhile, the government is once again dipping into the employment insurance fund to subsidize companies that do not need the support. The government is going to create 800 jobs at nearly \$500,000 each. The Parliamentary Budget Officer was clear about that.

I want to hear the member's comments on that because, frankly, if the Conservatives are unable to create jobs for less than \$500,000 a piece, not only is the government not taking a step back, but it is also alienating Canadian employees and employers.

It is high time they were shown some respect.

[*English*]

**Hon. Laurie Hawn:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his comments. Of course, I do not expect him to agree with the budget bill, or it would not be this place.

However, when he is talking about money spent to create jobs and to help small businesses, I would remind him that 99.8% of companies in Canada are small businesses. The member might want

to go and talk to some of the small-business owners to see what they think about this. The organization that represents a lot of those folks is the CFIB, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. It does not agree with the Parliamentary Budget Officer. Not everybody agrees with the PBO on lots of things. I certainly do not agree on this and on a few other things as well.

Whether it is 800 jobs, according to the PBO, or 25,000 jobs, according to CFIB, probably the answer is somewhere between those numbers, and those are pretty widespread numbers. I would encourage the member to talk more to the people who are actually charged with creating jobs, and they are the small-business owners.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Massimo Pacetti:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. It is nothing urgent, but as my colleague from Winnipeg North did previously, I would ask for unanimous consent for the following motion: That the 18th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, presented on Tuesday, September 30, 2014, be concurred in.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton):** Does the hon. member for Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel have the unanimous consent of the House for this motion?

**Some hon. members:** No.

[*English*]

**Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his speech outlining many of the positive initiatives in this budget implementation bill. He drew attention to the one that relates to the doubling of the amount that parents could claim for the children's fitness tax credit. As the father of three children and the grandfather of nine grandchildren, I am very concerned that our next generation continue to stay active and involved in community sports and things like that.

I wonder if my colleague could comment on the fact that not only would this be doubled but we would also make it refundable. That is a point that is often lost on the part of Canadians.

**Hon. Laurie Hawn:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question. He does make an important point, and I did mention that it would be refundable. That really takes it down to the lower-income families and allows them to get their children into sports activities. Right now, it benefits about 1.4 million Canadian families. This would bring it to about 850,000 more Canadian families, and many of those would be the folks who would rely on the refundable aspect of this to put their children into the activities, which we know are very healthy.

I have only two children and only two grandchildren, so I am a bit jealous, but I want to see them grow up healthy and active as well.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Philip Toone:** Mr. Speaker, it is important that we have as much information as possible from my hon. colleague. The bill contains mistakes and does not deserve the support of this House, especially since we are under closure.



*Government Orders*

My colleague made some comments regarding the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. The Parliamentary Budget Officer is an expert in this area. He is neutral and will always give the best advice based on the best science. Therefore, if he says that this will create only 800 jobs at nearly \$500,000 per job, we need to listen very carefully to him.

If this bill passes second reading and is sent to committee, this will likely come up many times. I plan to push very hard on this, because the government is raiding the employment insurance fund, which is completely unacceptable.

Does the member believe that raiding the EI fund is the way to go, or will the government finally be straight with Canadians and admit that it is raising taxes through the back door because it does not have the courage to do so through the front door?

• (1210)

[English]

**Hon. Laurie Hawn:** Mr. Speaker, that was a bit rambling, but I have a couple of quick points. It is not closure; it is time allocation, and there is a difference.

On the other point about whether it is 800 jobs or 25,000 jobs, the PBO has a legitimate job to do and he legitimately provides advice. The government considers that along with other advice and input that we get. This is an important area of job creation, of giving small and medium-sized businesses as much help as we can. The simple fact is that we are not sacking the EI fund; that is a ridiculous statement. It is all about helping small businesses create jobs, keep jobs, and keep Canadians working.

**Mr. Jay Aspin (Nipissing—Timiskaming, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to stand in the House and speak in favour of Bill C-43, also known as budget implementation act number 2.

Since 2006, our Conservative government's budgets have consistently delivered for Canadians by always putting their priorities first. Canadians have told us that they want a strong, stable economy and access to good, well-paying jobs.

Each budget has done exactly that. Since 2006, Canada has one of the best economic performances among all G8 countries, particularly during the recession and current recovery. During this period we have created more than one million net new jobs, the overwhelming majority of which are full time. We have accomplished this without introducing new taxes, in direct contrast to the policies that the opposition parties advocate. In fact, Canadian families pay about 10% less in personal income tax. Adding all the various tax reductions we have introduced since 2006, the average family of four pays \$3,400 less in taxes each and every year.

Our strong economic performance has come without increasing the deficit. In fact, we have progressively been reducing the deficit and the size and cost of government. We are now in a position to balance the budget in 2015, as well as deliver a surplus.

Our budgets have achieved these goals without sacrificing the quality of federal services or investments. Various federal services have been streamlined over the years to provide the same, if not better, services to Canadians for lower costs. As well, our Conservative government has been carrying out the most ambitious

infrastructure investment plan in our nation's history. In 2007, we introduced \$33 billion in flexible and predictable infrastructure spending. Recently we committed another \$70 billion over the next decade to continue investing in world-class infrastructure. These funds have supported dozens of important projects in my riding of Nipissing—Timiskaming, particularly municipal priority projects.

Therefore, consistent with the successes of our previous budgets, Canadians can be reassured that the 2014 budget will continue to be more of what they have come to expect from their government: responsible, targeted, accountable, and inclusive of the necessary changes to keep taxes low and our economy growing.

Although there are many components to the budget, I will focus on measures most relevant to the needs of my constituents in Nipissing—Timiskaming. One of the important measures is the small business job credit, which has recently been announced by our government. This credit would lower payroll taxes for small businesses by 15% over the next two years.

Overall, it is estimated that Canadian small businesses would save \$550 million, thanks to this measure. For the many small businesses in my region, this would mean increased capacity to grow their business, as well as more money becoming available for investments, as opposed to paying employer payroll taxes.

Our government recognizes the fundamental importance of small businesses in fuelling the Canadian economy. In my riding, small businesses employ thousands of people and are the backbone of our communities.

The introduction of this credit would further build upon our government's strong support of small businesses since 2006. We froze EI premiums to provide certainty and flexibility for small businesses. We have cut red tape by eliminating more than 800,000 payroll deduction remittances to the CRA made every year by more than 50,000 small businesses. We reduced the small business tax rate from 12% to 11%.

We also increased the small business limit to \$500,000 in taxable income, which had the effect of expanding the number of businesses that could take advantage of these benefits and save costs, costs that could be reinvested in growth and job creation.

The results are clear. A typical small business is now seeing savings of approximately \$28,000. Since we took office, small businesses have seen their taxes reduced by 34%.

*Government Orders*

While we are discussing measures in the budget that would help small businesses, here is another measure in the bill that I would like to highlight, as chair of the clean-tech caucus in Parliament.

● (1215)

Bill C-43 would expand the eligibility for accelerated capital cost allowances for clean energy generation and conservation equipment. Let me quickly outline what capital costs are.

Capital cost allowance is a mechanism by which businesses can lower their taxable income by claiming the cost of depreciation of their equipment. Accelerated capital cost allowances simply allow companies to claim more of their costs. This measure is important because it incentivizes businesses to use cleaner technology and equipment. The health of our environment is very important to my constituents, and I know they will appreciate these measures.

The next measure I would like to highlight concerns families, particularly children. Our government believes that fitness is an important part of a healthy lifestyle and a habit that should be encouraged, particularly in childhood. That is why we introduced the children's fitness credit in budget 2006, which provides non-refundable tax credits of up to \$500 annually in fees for the registration of a child under the age of 16 in an eligible program of physical activity.

In October 2014, our Prime Minister announced that our government would double the children's fitness credit from \$500 to \$1,000 and make it refundable, which would increase benefits to low-income families claiming the credit.

The increase of this tax credit would greatly benefit families in Nipissing—Timiskaming, many of which have very active children. In our communities, it is commonplace for children to enrol in hockey, soccer, or baseball camps. The increase of this tax credit would make it affordable for families to get their children involved in all these physical activities. Ultimately, greater access to physical activity would improve the health of children in my riding, but also their social skills, as very often physical activities are team or group activities as well.

Since 2006, Canadian families have benefited from significant, broad-based tax cuts introduced by our government. For example, we have reduced the GST to 5% from 7%; increased the basic personal amount, the amount that all Canadians can earn without paying federal income tax; reduced the lowest personal income tax rate to 15% from 16%; and introduced the tax-free savings account, which has helped thousands of families save money.

These and other actions have given individuals and families the flexibility to make the choices that are right for them. This is why, as I mentioned earlier, Canadian families pay on average \$3,400 less in taxes every year.

Bill C-43 includes an important measure that would assist law enforcement in locating missing persons. Many constituents have expressed concern over various disappearances of Canadians, particularly first nations Canadians.

I know many of my constituents will appreciate Bill C-43's amendment of the DNA Identification Act to create new indices in the national DNA data bank. This would contain DNA profiles from

missing persons, from their relatives, and from human remains to assist law enforcement agencies, coroners, and medical examiners to find missing persons and identify human remains.

The bill also includes various changes to the income tax and excise acts and various other statutes; however I will leave those changes for my honourable colleagues to address.

At the outset of my speech, I articulated the intent and record of our government's previous budgets, and I stated that from Bill C-43 Canadians could expect a continued focus on keeping taxes low and improving the economy. From the main measures I highlighted, it is clear that as a result of the budget implementation act, families would save more money through an increase in the children's fitness tax credit. Also, business would benefit from reduced costs through the changes in payroll tax and capital cost allowances. These changes would help businesses invest more of their money in expanding their businesses and, as a result, create more jobs for Canadians.

Whereas our honourable opponents continue to propose various tax hikes and increased intervention into the lives of Canadians and businesses by government, we on this side of the House continue to focus on jobs and the economy in a responsible, pragmatic, and non-intrusive manner. We firmly believe that Canadian families and businesses, not Ottawa, know what is best for them and their interests.

● (1220)

We are, and have been since 2006, able to help remove obstacles, regulations, and unnecessary and restrictive taxes on Canadians and businesses.

I encourage all members of the House to support the pragmatic and necessary measures in Bill C-43 so that we may continue to grow Canada's economy for the benefit of all Canadians.

**Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan (Scarborough—Rouge River, NDP):**

Mr. Speaker, my question for the hon. member is with respect to the pay-to-pay fees the government has said it would like to get rid of. The government says it is unfair for broadcasting and telecommunication companies to charge Canadians a \$2 fee to receive their bills to pay their bills.

Why does the government continue to allow banks to continue this unfair practice?

**Mr. Jay Aspin:** Mr. Speaker, it is clear in this budget that we are addressing regulatory impediments. We are reducing taxes, and we are making it easier for families and individuals to live their lives without government interference. We will continue to implement these measures. It is part of our DNA.

*Government Orders*

**Ms. Lois Brown (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague spoke about the benefits to children of the sports tax credit that has been implemented and that will now be doubled. This is a remarkable opportunity for parents.

I wonder if the member could speak about the businesses in his riding that are providing services to young people, such as coaching. Could he talk about how this will impact their opportunity to thrive in the member's community?

**Mr. Jay Aspin:** Mr. Speaker, my riding is in northern Ontario. It has a host of sports and recreational activities, and businesses are involved in promoting those activities. The sports tax credit will improve that situation. It will make more activities available for children in families that do not have the income. As members know, hockey is our lifeblood in Canada, and it is becoming increasingly difficult for families to have their children involved in it. This measure will help that situation, along with all other sports.

• (1225)

**Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it has taken a long time, but I am glad the government is now proposing some measures in the budget with respect to a refundable tax credit for children's sports activities. Liberals have long said that this was a failing of the government's earlier proposals in budgets. It will spread it a little further. For once, maybe the government has listened.

The member talked a fair bit about the DNA missing persons section in this particular bill. I strongly support that. It has been a long time coming. For those that have missing children, it will go a long way toward settling some of that tragedy and anxiety.

Could the member tell me why this would be part of what is basically a budget implementation bill? Why would it not be a separate bill, a bill in its own right, that could maybe go through the House more quickly? Although this is a good measure, why complicate the budget bill with other measures that have no relation to the budget?

**Mr. Jay Aspin:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to say, with regard to these particular measures, which he complimented, that the Liberals do have good ideas from time to time. We are not at all hesitant to adopt good ideas.

With respect to the DNA identification for missing persons, the answer is simpler. There is a cost. As a cost, it would have to be budgeted for, and therefore, it is in the budget implementation bill.

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

Before I go on, I will be sharing my time with the member for Trois-Rivières.

Where do I start? Let me start with this omnibus business. The Conservatives brought in this massive bill, which has, as we have heard before, more than 450 pages and more than 400 clauses. Everything is in there but the kitchen sink. The Conservatives are trying to make changes to many different laws in this omnibus bill.

I have heard Conservative members talk about the importance of moving some of this legislation. They have said that it is consistent with the norms of the House to bring in omnibus bills. The norm is just starting. It is actually the Conservatives who started this business of omnibus bills in which they combine 50 or 60 bills in one so-called budget bill. A number of the clauses in this bill, Bill C-43, have nothing to do with the bill itself.

On top of this, we have had time allocation, which was moved this morning. Time allocation basically shuts down the debate. The Conservatives do not want Canadians to know what is in this bill. We have had two days of debate on 400 pages of very technical language. I know that you know, Mr. Speaker, that these bills are very complex and that we have to dig deeper to find out exactly what is in them, because the government is not telling us.

As the opposition, we have an obligation to Canadians to ensure that whatever the government brings in, and it has tried to rush it through with time allocation, we rip it apart. We have to look at it in great detail so that Canadians know exactly what is going on.

I am fortunate enough to have time this morning to talk about some of the provisions in this bill, but other members in the House, whether they are Conservative members or members on this side of the House, would surely like to represent the people who elected them. Actually, the Conservatives may not want to talk about this bill. Unfortunately, because of time allocation, members on the opposition side are not going to have enough time to speak to the bill, especially about what their constituents are saying in their communities.

There are a number of concerns I can bring up in the short period of time I have. One is the small business job credit. Basically, it would provide small businesses with \$550 million in tax credits. The Conservatives claim that this would create 25,000 jobs. The Parliamentary Budget Officer, who is independent and is appointed by the Conservatives, said that at a maximum this would create 800 jobs. We would spend \$550 million and create 800 jobs. That translates to roughly \$700,000 per job. Any Canadian would understand that this is not an efficient way to invest in creating jobs in this country.

What the Conservatives could have done in this bill is look at youth unemployment and underemployment. There is nothing in this bill that would generate jobs or create jobs for our youth. That is where we need to make investments, yet the Conservatives are going to use \$550 million and maybe come up with 800 jobs.

There are experts that have spoken up on this. I will quote Mike Moffatt, from the Ivey Business School at the University of Western Ontario. He said:

...the proposed "Small Business Job Credit" has...structural flaws that, in many cases, give firms an incentive to fire workers and cut salaries.

*Government Orders*

● (1230)

Not only would it create 800 jobs at a cost of \$750,000 in taxpayers' money each, it may even cut some jobs. That is the kind of math the government works with.

There is also nothing in the bill on youth unemployment and youth underemployment. There is nothing to enhance opportunities for our young people to get into the workforce.

My second point is on the pay-to-pay issue. Lately we have seen the telecom companies, the banks, and other companies charging Canadians for sending them bills that they are expected to pay. The official opposition has advocated the elimination of this pay-to-pay billing practice. The Conservatives have listened a little bit. They would eliminate it for the telephone companies. What about the banks? Canadians will still have to pay the banks for the bills they will be receiving.

This morning I went to the bank machine, because I needed money. I deal with a credit union. I went to get some money out and was charged \$2.00. Some ATMs charge \$3.00 and \$4.00. We have been asking the government to put a flat rate on ATM fees so that the banks are not gouging or nickle and diming people when they want access to their money. That happened to me this morning. Canadians and people in my community are asking about changes with respect to banks and telephone companies. These companies are nickle and diming our citizens.

The Conservatives say that they want to put money back into people's pockets. On the other hand, they are giving billions of dollars away to their friends in the oil industry. When will they eliminate the \$1 billion in subsidies to the oil companies? They are saying that they want to give money back to families, yet they are giving billions of dollars away to their friends in the oil industry. We have been asking the government to eliminate tax subsidies for the oil companies.

Since the Conservatives have been in government, they have accumulated not only a deficit but also a debt that future Canadians will have to pay. They will have to pay that debt because of its incompetence in handling the finances of Canadians.

I could go on, but the limited amount of time I have will not allow me to even scratch the 460-odd pages of this omnibus bill. The Conservatives want to ram this through. They do not want to discuss the nitty-gritty of it, because they know that would expose what is not in there.

They could have borrowed the ideas we have. We have laid out a plan for a child care program for under \$15. We would be more than happy to support them if they borrow our idea. Those are the kinds of changes and programs we need in the community.

Research has shown that for every dollar spent in child care, we get close to \$2.00 back. We believe in the kind of math where if we make an investment, we get a return on every dollar and double our money. The Conservatives' math is to spend \$550 million to create 800 jobs. That is \$750,000 per job. That is the kind of math we do not need. That is incompetence in trying to manage our economy. Canadians expect better. They expect us to scrutinize these bills and everything that comes through.

● (1235)

Unfortunately, the Conservatives are trying to ram this through without any solid discussion in the House. That is not acceptable to the official opposition and I can assure members, it is not acceptable to Canadians.

**Ms. Lois Brown (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I listened to my colleague across the way give his ongoing commentary. There are measures in the budget bill that would be beneficial to the people who live in his riding. He has families who have children in sports of all kinds who would like to see that tax credit doubled so that they could make use of it for their income tax. There are small businesses in his riding that would benefit from the changes in EI.

Therefore, how does my colleague go back and tell those families that he voted against putting money back in their pockets?

**Mr. Jasbir Sandhu:** Mr. Speaker, my constituents are telling me exactly the opposite of what the member said. I talk to my constituents in my city. I have been a small business person myself. I talk to the small business people in my community. It is the merchandise fees that small businesses pay to the big credit card companies that are a big concern. That is taking away the livelihoods of many restaurants and small businesses in my community.

People in my community are worried about the \$1 billion in tax subsidies the government is refusing to look at so it can give that money to its friends. That is the kind of thing families in my community are worried about. They want child care for their children so that women and men can go back to work and two parents can work. Unfortunately, none of that stuff is in the bill.

If the Conservatives were really concerned about some of these things, they would split the bill up. There are provisions in the bill that we would actually support. Therefore, let us get them separated, get our House leaders together, vote on them and get them to our families as soon as we can, rather than having this omnibus bill rammed through the House.

● (1240)

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his speech on the budget implementation bill.

He just replied to a Conservative colleague by talking about the number of things in this bill and the differences between each of them. As parliamentarians, we are forced to vote on all of these things together, rather than vote on each proposal individually.

I would like to take a moment to talk about the proposal regarding refugees. Would my colleague like to comment on the new provisions the government wants to bring in regarding refugees, who will find it harder to access social assistance programs in the provinces?

*Government Orders*

These people fled threatening situations in their own countries to settle in Canada, so it is unfortunate to see the government treating them so poorly.

What does my colleague think of that measure and of all the measures in the bill?

[*English*]

**Mr. Jasbir Sandhu:** Mr. Speaker, we saw the cuts to refugee health care that were implemented by the government. The Federal Court called it cruel and unusual. The member for Sherbrooke is absolutely right. Some of these refugees are coming from war-torn countries and they need assistance settling when they arrive here. Not only that, we charge them for the airfare when they come here. They do not have any money when they get here. To have these kinds of provisions in the budget implementation bill for these very vulnerable people who are supposed to be seeking refuge, I do not think that is aligned with our Canadian values.

There are a number of things the government could have done to help families or to help our young people get into the job market. With the underemployed and high unemployment of our young people, the government could have taken some steps to provide a pathway for these young people who are graduating, from universities even, to help them get into the job market. However, the government has allocated \$550 billion for a small business tax credit that would create only 800 jobs. That is about \$750,000 per job. That is the kind of math we do not believe in.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is with mixed emotions that I rise to speak to Bill C-43. First of all, I would like to sincerely thank my colleague from Surrey North who agreed to share his time with me so that I could rise in the House to speak to a bill as important as the budget implementation bill—or at least, that is what it is supposed to be.

At the same time, I am extremely frustrated, because not only will I not have enough time in these 10 minutes to say everything I have to say and speak on behalf of my constituents in the House on this measure, but many of my colleagues are also being muzzled and will simply not be allowed to speak—not to mention that this is the 80th time this has happened in this Parliament.

The democratic rights of all Canadians are being trampled here, not just those of the members who represent them in the House. It is frustrating. I hope the message is being heard and that in 2015, we will have a government that respects democracy under the leadership of the member for Outremont, who has proven himself in the past and who upholds the values that Canadians and Quebecers want to see reflected in their democratic institutions.

The budget bill is without a doubt a fundamentally important tool that allows Parliament to debate the government's fiscal policies and its public policy decisions. However, the form of the bill has to be conducive to transparent debate and consistent with our democracy, as I was saying earlier.

Once again the government is introducing a mammoth piece of legislation with only one objective, namely to stifle debate and prevent us from truly discussing the scope of this bill. In this bill we find another series of features that are the hallmark of this

government's bills, namely time allocation motions for the most important bills, which we should be discussing for much longer. We have spent more time in the House debating bills that are just a few pages long than this one, which is between 400 and 450 pages.

I am certainly not saying that a bill that is just a few pages long is less important, but it is easy to see how the math works. We should devote less time to studying five pages than 400 pages. It makes perfect sense. Anyone who knows basic math can figure that out.

There are also many laws that will be affected, amended or even created by this inappropriate bill that introduces new measures that were not announced in the budget. Furthermore, the bill concentrates powers in the hands of the minister and also includes some bills that, logically, should not be studied by the Standing Committee on Finance, but by other House committees that carry out in-depth studies of important issues concerning the environment, transportation and other areas.

We will have one vote on the set of measures contained in this bill, and we will say yes or no. We no longer have any illusions, and everyone figured out years ago that the Conservatives' strategy is to stuff as much as possible into one bill, including bills and reasonable amendments that deserve to be supported as well as bitter pills that obviously are unacceptable.

The ultimate and purely political objective is not to put in place the best law with the best amendments, but to rise as often as possible in the House to say that the NDP voted against it. However, the solution is quite simple: we should split this bill and study the different measures on their own merits.

If we were to do that, Canadians would see two things: the NDP will support measures that make sense and can amend bills in order to improve them, and our democracy and our system can function properly. However, the government does not seem to want that.

● (1245)

As my party's employment insurance critic, I want to focus on one specific proposal in this mammoth bill.

In keeping with its firmly entrenched practice, the Conservative government, through this bill, is once again using the employment insurance fund for something other than its intended purpose. This time, the government is creating a tax credit for small businesses whose EI premiums are less than \$15,000 a year. The Minister of Finance claims that this measure will create jobs.

This measure for small businesses is the same one that was brought in a few months or even years earlier to grant credits to big businesses. The former minister of finance urged big business to reinject that dead money into the economy. The government does not seem to learn from its mistakes; it is taking that measure for big business and applying it to small business, even though it will get the same poor results.

*Government Orders*

The Parliamentary Budget Officer, who is neutral and capable, has flat out denied this claim. He said that just 800 jobs will be created at the expense of workers' contributions, and he provided figures to support this statement. Furthermore, each of these jobs would cost on average \$555,000.

If I were given \$550,000 to create jobs in a struggling region like mine, where the unemployment rate is high, I would not be creating one job—I would be creating 10, 12, 14 or 15 stable, permanent jobs.

However, it seems that, once again, that is not the path that the Conservatives chose to take. In other words, the Conservatives are attacking employment insurance on all sides. What is more, they froze employment insurance contribution rates. That may seem like a good idea, but in reality, 10,000 jobs will be lost in 2015 and 2016 because of the current employment insurance measures and the frozen contribution rates.

I am not the one saying this. I also took this information from a report of the Parliamentary Budget Officer. The Conservatives have maintained artificially high employment insurance contribution rates, which means that the amount of money going into the fund will be much greater than what is necessary to cover the benefits that will be paid out under the Conservative reform.

Some might say that it is good that the fund is running a surplus. However, workers will be contributing more than necessary, which will weaken their purchasing power and decrease market opportunities for the products produced by these same companies.

I have a lot more to say, but since time is short I will just comment briefly on the measure pertaining to the Social Security Tribunal. Bill C-43 indicates that new money will be invested in hiring people to deal with the backlog of cases before the tribunal.

This seems like a good thing, and it seems as though the Conservatives have finally understood what is needed, but the problem is much more serious than that. The Social Security Tribunal has such complex measures that since it was created, many workers, who are unfortunately without jobs, have given up their right to benefits.

What is more, just this morning, a report published in *Le Devoir* by a research group at the Université du Québec à Montréal indicated that:

...the avenues for redress are less accessible and less effective, which is depriving even more people of their right to benefits and forcing them to accept whatever job they can get because they do not have any other source of income...

The government therefore has not fixed any problems in Bill C-43.

● (1250)

It is all well and good to hire a few extra people, but how long will it take to train them before they become effective? We saw how long it took to fill all the positions.

I will stop there, but there is still so much to say and there are so many criticisms I could make. Clearly, I am going to vote against this bill. I will now let some of my other colleagues speak. I hope that they will be given 10 minutes to express their views.

**Ms. Ève Pécelet (La Pointe-de-l'Île, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the hon. member on his excellent speech. As usual, he used the right words to explain to Canadians how completely ridiculous this bill is.

Something our Conservative colleagues do not often talk about is social housing. The NDP has repeatedly called on the Conservatives to adopt social housing programs. We are the only OECD country that does not have a national infrastructure plan.

Nonetheless, once again the Conservatives are introducing a budget in the House that makes absolutely no mention of the important role social housing plays in bringing homelessness to an end.

Would my colleague care to comment on the Conservatives' lack of vision?

● (1255)

**Mr. Robert Aubin:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for La Pointe-de-l'Île for her question.

If there is one word that sums up this budget, in terms of the measures that are lacking, that word is “pathetic”. I think that Bill C-43 is nothing but a pathetic proposal in a country as rich as Canada.

Fortunately, there is an alternative: the NDP. We will propose—as we have been doing for years—social democratic measures that we will have the opportunity to implement in 2015 with the support of all the people of this country. These measures will ensure that we can enhance wealth in this country and distribute it more equitably so that no one is left behind.

Just last week, some people who work in social housing in my riding came to my office. They painted a very sombre picture of both social and rental housing.

We could have taken time to talk about what is not included in this pathetic bill, Bill C-43.

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the budget implementation bill takes into consideration the expenditure of literally billions of tax dollars. What is really important to all Canadians is that there is accountability and transparency when it comes to spending tax dollars. One of the ways we assure Canadians that sense of accountability, at least for the most part, is through parliamentary committees.

Could the member comment on the important role parliamentary committees, as part of our institution, play in holding government accountable?

[Translation]

**Mr. Robert Aubin:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

*Government Orders*

I am not sure how to answer that question. Should I talk about how important our committees should be to parliamentary debates or about how important the government seems to think they are since it has had its majority? To be sure, committee work was supposed to be less partisan. Of course, the opposition does not control the legislative agenda because that belongs to the government.

However, once these bills are sent to committee, it is up to all of the members around the table to improve them to make them accountable, if not acceptable. Once again, the opposition members' contribution is being completely ignored.

Considering the number of amendments that have been accepted for all of the bills, it is clear that the Conservatives think they have a monopoly on truth and knowledge.

This way of governing cannot go on. The 2015 deadline is fast approaching.

[English]

**Mr. Leon Benoit (Vegreville—Wainwright, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to have an opportunity to speak to this budget implementation bill. Before I start, I will be sharing my time with the remarkable, hard-working, thoughtful member for Don Valley West.

I am here today to talk about the budget, but before I start I want to talk a bit about the amount of time the opposition members spend on complaining about not having enough time to talk about various pieces of legislation. If they added that up, it would be hundreds if not thousands of hours of House of Commons time, precious time that we need in the House to talk about important legislation. It is thousands of hours they spend complaining about not having enough time. Does that make sense?

It maybe does to the New Democrats and maybe to some Liberals, but it certainly does not to me. They could just talk about the issues at hand, about which they have several opportunities to speak in the House and when it goes to committee where they have all kinds of opportunity to propose amendments and to talk about the issues. Instead of that, they complain about not having enough time. I think the public has seen through that and people really will not buy into it anymore.

I will mention a few things about what past budgets leading up to this budget have really done for Canadians. Then I want to talk a bit about a couple of specific changes that apply to farmers and fishermen. These are not changes that may be important to hundreds of thousands of people, but they can be very important for family farms and for families involved in the fishery. However, I will talk about that at the end of my presentation.

As Canadians know, since taking office eight years ago, the Conservative government has been focused on jobs and the economy. We have focused on lowering taxes to families and to businesses, which are the job creators in our country. We have focused on making things better, allowing families to move ahead and to do better, have a little more money in their pockets and have more opportunity for them, their children and their grandchildren.

We have looked at protecting the incomes and opportunities for seniors as well, making the point that just because they are seniors does not mean they can no longer contribute to society. We have

made several changes that make it a little easier for seniors to continue to contribute to society over the long term. That is important too.

We have focused on these things, and we have done it in a very organized fashion, one budget building on the next.

I take a lot of pride in what we have accomplished. However, it is not just me saying that. I can refer to several different think tanks and world-renowned agencies like the International Monetary Fund, for example, and the OECD, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, which expect Canada to be among the strongest growing economies in the G7 over the next couple of years. In fact, I do not remember the details and the year, but I remember a study predicting that Canada would be the number one economy in the world well in the future. The OECD is saying that what we are doing now is setting a foundation, not only to create jobs now, because our government has put in place the environment that has allowed business to create 1.2 million jobs since this recession was at its worst, and we should take a lot of pride in that. It is good for us and good for Canada.

The OECD and the International Monetary Fund think tanks recognize that we have set this foundation that makes things better for Canada than for most countries that went through the recent recession. In the decades ahead, Canada will stand in good stead.

● (1300)

The leader of the third party had focused for the longest time on the middle class in Canada, saying that it was not doing as well as it should be. If we want to have a look at that, here is what an analysis in *The New York Times* has said, "After-tax middle-class incomes in Canada", substantially different from the way it was in 2000 when the Liberals were in government, "now appear to be higher than in the United States."

The leader of the third party talks about middle-class incomes and wants things to be better, but he should realize that they are much better relative to our competitor nations than they were just a few years ago, when the Liberals were in office.

Those are some things for not only the opposition parties to think about, but for Canadians to think about as well.

I know I have taken a little long getting to the particular details that I want to talk about, but I want to mention a couple of issues to do with farming and fishing. These are issues that are not, as I say, important to a large number of Canadians, but they are certainly important to certain Canadian farm families.

Before I got into politics, I farmed, and I still have farms, but I also worked as a farm economist. I worked with farm families on how they could grow their farms and in some cases, unfortunately, how they could exit the farming business in the best possible way. In the eighties, in particular, it was a very difficult time for grain farming and for the livestock sector. Certain things were in place that clearly were there only because of technical reasons.

I want to mention a couple of those things.

*Government Orders*

The first has to do with the tax deferral or the rollover provision for capital gains. This was put in place a long time ago. It gave farmers and fishermen the ability to pass the capital property over to the next generation without being taxed on it at that time. In effect, the tax liability was passed to the next generation so the current generation, let us say the parents, could exit the industry and be paid off in some fashion, but in a way that would allow the farm to continue. That was extremely important.

However, there were certain quirks about that which did not make any sense. We have fixed those in this budget. For example, if people were both farming and fishing, which is the case certainly in Atlantic Canada, in a lot of cases in the west and even on the Prairies, where there are some various commercial fishing operations, the rules were set for either farming or fishing. They had to have a substantial part of their income, 90% or more, from either farming or fishing. However, if they were farming and fishing and they had income under that percentage, then they simply did not qualify.

We have changed that so they can put the two together and if they qualify with both the farming and the fishing components of their business, then they qualify for these rollover provisions. It is an extremely important change that would allow many farming and fishing families to pass this on to the next generation.

One final thing is that in many years, parts of our country are hit by drought, floods or by excessive moisture. There has been a provision in place that can be enacted by governments to allow farmers to, in severe cases, where they simply cannot keep their livestock anymore, to sell off their breeding stock and not have to pay tax on it that year. That tax would be paid the year after. If they sell off their cow herd, for example, they are not taxed on it that year and that allows them to buy back breeding stock the year after, if there is grass again because it has rained or the fields have dried. In effect, the purchase price of the replacement breeding stock is balanced off against the income from the breeding stock they sold a year earlier.

In 2014, our government has extended this tax deferral to bees and to all types of horses, which may not sound very important. We have a lot of horses in Alberta. It is very much a commercial business. Horse owners have been asking for this for some time.

Again, these things are very important to those particular farm families that are directly affected by this. Our government takes care of this kind of detail.

• (1305)

I appreciate the opportunity to speak on the budget bill. I very much look forward to questions from the members opposite.

**Mr. Philip Toone (Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, in the budget there are things that should be looked at in a positive light and there are certainly things that need to be looked at in a negative light, at least by the opposition side.

We have seen a lot of reasons why this bill should not be adopted at second reading. Of course, we are going to hear from more Conservative members who will give us their point of view as well.

Let us talk about farmers and agriculture. There has been a disaster out west with regard to shipping grain by rail. I do not see

much in the budget that is going to address that problem. It is nice that there are going to be measures for farmers, but the major issue for farmers this year has been the fact that their grain cannot make it to port.

The rail industry right now is a shambles. A lot of capacity is being displaced, especially by the petrochemical industry. What is the government going to do to come to the aid of farmers so that the product they are so laudably trying to produce can actually be sold on the open market?

• (1310)

**Mr. Leon Benoit:** Mr. Speaker, we probably will not see a lot in the budget about that issue because, quite frankly, it does not involve a lot of government spending. It involves commitment and it involves improvements, and money spent by the railways themselves will provide that.

What need is there for it to be a budget item? The railways, because of their monopoly positions, have a responsibility to move the commodity. Earlier we put in place measures that set requirements for the amount of grain that railways had to move. For the most part, they met those requirements. In fact, I think they have moved a record amount of grain over the past year in spite of the terrible months they experienced a little earlier.

Why is there a need for that to be a budget item? It is an important issue, and we are going to have to continue to watch it. Members can be assured that we will, because Conservatives represent most of the farming areas in this country.

**Mr. Adam Vaughan (Trinity—Spadina, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to the comments the member opposite made regarding a *New York Times* article and Canada's middle class. I would like to quote a few excerpts from that article.

Members of the middle class in Canada worry about whether they can afford college for their children and whether their children will find jobs afterward. Housing costs are a major concern, as are everyday costs for transportation and mobile-phone plans. Middle-class Canadians worry about inequality.

It goes on, and it does not describe a very happy middle class in this country, I might add. To get a sense of how those trends are affecting people, they talked to a number of them. One person, Deborah Mustachi, said:

When you have a family to raise and you are middle class, you are on a treadmill. It's very difficult to save when you have to live for today.

She means paycheque to paycheque.

The article goes on to add one last comment about the fact that Canadians credit labour unions for giving them a decent pay raise. Those are interesting comments.

If that is the information the member opposite wishes to cite as evidence that the government's plan is working, can he explain why *The New York Times* talks about so much anxiety, so much fear, so much stress, so much struggling, and why the budget addresses none of it?



*Government Orders*

**Mr. Leon Benoit:** Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to have that question, because the answer is relatively simple.

The information that the member is quoting has come from a few individuals, and quite frankly there are a lot of families in this country that are having a difficult time making ends meet, in particular when they are trying to put kids through college and have all those commitments. Even when kids become more active in sports, it is expensive.

However, overall, the middle class has benefited from what our government has done over the past few years. An average-income family of four benefits by \$3,400. That is how much better off they are than they were when that party was in government. That is an awful lot of difference. That helps to deal with their concerns to a great extent.

Furthermore, the article went on to say that in fact these concerns expressed by these people, while they are real for them, do not reflect what is happening with the middle class generally. The middle class in this country is doing better than before, and better than in most countries on the face of the earth.

**Mr. John Carmichael (Don Valley West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today and contribute to the debate on Bill C-43, economic action plan 2014 act, No. 2.

I will be focusing my remarks today on three fundamental components of economic action plan 2014. It will have a true and lasting impact in Canada and in my riding of Don Valley West, namely by investing in skills and training, supporting entrepreneurship and innovation, and providing support for small businesses.

Since 2006, our government's top priority has been jobs and economic growth. While Canada has the best job growth record in the G7, too many Canadians are still looking for work or are underemployed. Indeed, an increasing number of jobs across Canada are going unfilled because of a lack of people with the right skills. That is why economic action plan 2014 introduces new measures to support skills training and to connect Canadians with available jobs.

This includes implementing the Canada job grant, which will connect Canadians looking for skills training and a job with employers looking for skilled workers. It also includes creating the Canada apprenticeship loan, which would provide apprentices in registered Red Seal trades with access to over \$100 million in interest-free loans each year.

Economic action plan 2014 would strengthen the apprenticeship system by introducing the flexibility and innovation in apprenticeship technical training pilot project to develop new approaches to expand training for apprentices. It would also ensure that Canadians are first in line for available jobs by launching an enhanced job-matching service to match job seekers and employers on the basis of skills, knowledge, and experience.

On this note, the government has a strong record of support for apprentices and for the employers who hire them. Through the apprenticeship incentive grant, the apprenticeship completion grant, the tradesperson's tools deduction, and the apprenticeship job creation tax credit, our government has provided tangible support for apprentices and the employers who hire them.

That is not all. Our government has also extended the fees eligible for the tuition tax credit to include those for examinations required for certification as a tradesperson in Canada. We have made an effort to use apprentices in federal construction and maintenance contracts, and we have encouraged provinces, territories, and municipalities to support the use of apprentices in infrastructure projects that receive federal funding.

Our government is also supporting Canadians with disabilities who are looking for meaningful and fulfilling work. We are doing so by making key investments in the ready, willing, and able initiative. By the same token, our government will create vocational training programs for persons with autism spectrum disorders.

Further, in 2013-14 our government invested \$2.7 billion to support skills and training programs. This includes \$1.95 billion to provinces and territories through labour market development agreements, \$500 million to provinces and territories through labour market agreements that were introduced in budget 2007, and \$218 million to provinces through labour market agreements for persons with disabilities.

Since 2006, our government has provided support for skills training for youth through the youth employment strategy, with investments of over \$330 million per year. We have also provided skills training for persons with disabilities through the opportunities fund, with annual investments of \$40 million per year, and for older Canadians through the targeted initiative for older workers and the ThirdQuarter project. Economic action plan 2014 would build on these successes.

Our government recognizes that entrepreneurship and innovation are key to Canada's future prosperity. By supporting innovation, our businesses will become more productive and continue to fuel job creation and economic growth in Canada. That is why economic action plan 2014 introduces new measures to support entrepreneurship and innovation by making a landmark investment in post-secondary education.

● (1315)

Through the creation of the Canada first research excellence fund, \$1.5 billion will be made available over the next decade to Canadian post-secondary institutions. This investment would secure Canada's international leadership in science and innovation.

*Government Orders*

Economic action plan 2014 also supports leading-edge research by investing \$46 million a year, ongoing, to granting councils across Canada in support of advanced research and scientific discoveries. Further, our government will be fostering world-leading research by investing \$222 million in the TRIUMF physics laboratory to support leading research and the launch of cutting-edge spinoff companies.

Our government will also support technological innovation by investing \$15 million in support of the Institute of Quantum Computing for research and commercialization of quantum technologies and \$3 million to support the creation of the open data institute.

These and other investments build on our government's strong record of supporting entrepreneurship and fostering innovation in Canada. Since 2006, our government has invested over \$11 billion in new funding to support entrepreneurship and innovation, including more than \$2.3 billion to support advanced research through the federal granting councils.

Our government has also provided funding to support cutting-edge post-secondary research infrastructure through the Canada Foundation for Innovation and has provided funding to universities and colleges for repairs, maintenance, and construction through the knowledge infrastructure program.

Our Conservative government recognizes the vital role small businesses play in the economy and job creation. That is why we are committed to helping them grow and succeed. Through economic action plan 2014, our government will invest \$15 million for up to 1,000 post-secondary graduates to intern in small and medium-sized businesses across Canada. We will also maintain the freeze on employment insurance premiums in order to provide certainty and flexibility for small businesses in the years ahead.

Our government is also working to cut the red tape burden. We are doing so by eliminating over 800,000 payroll deduction remittances to Canada Revenue Agency made every year by over 50,000 small businesses.

Economic action plan 2014 builds on our government's significant actions to support small businesses since 2006, which included reducing the small business tax rate from 12% to 11%, lowering the federal corporate income tax rate to 15% to help create jobs and economic growth for Canadian families and communities, and eliminating the corporate surtax for all corporations in 2008. This change was particularly beneficial to small business corporations, as the surtax represented a larger proportion of their overall payable tax.

All this is to say that a typical small business with \$500,000 of taxable income now saves \$28,600 as a direct result of our Conservative government's low-tax plan. Economic action plan 2014 is great news for my constituents in Don Valley West and to all the small and medium-sized businesses that sustain our growing economy.

I urge all members of the House to join me in supporting jobs, growth, and long-term economic prosperity.

● (1320)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, as we all know and as many of us have said, this bill is huge and affects many different sectors. The member talked about some of those elements. I would like him to comment now because I am sure he has read this bill.

Can he tell us about the changes to electoral provisions for the Northwest Territories, which are in Part 4 of this bill? I would like to know if he can explain the logic behind the changes the government is making in Bill C-43.

[*English*]

**Mr. John Carmichael:** Mr. Speaker, I am not sure that my colleague was listening to my speech. Clearly I spoke on three areas that were extremely important to me and to the business community, especially in Canada: investing in skills and training, supporting entrepreneurship and innovation, and supporting small business.

Clearly our government has been focused on job growth, economic growth, and prosperity for all Canadians. This budget, economic action plan 2014, continues to deliver on that premise, and I would encourage the opposition to get on board and support this budget as a means of supporting Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

**Mr. Adam Vaughan (Trinity—Spadina, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, before I start my question, I would like to congratulate the member opposite. His daughter has been elected to Toronto City Council, an elected body that I am well familiar with.

I guess it also gives me an interesting point on which to start a question. The member opposite endorsed the winning candidate in the mayor's race, who made a pointed campaign platform that included a set of requests to the federal government, in particular around transit funding and housing funding. He talked about the problems of the city that he represents, and the city that the member opposite recommended that he be elected to represent. He made a particular point that the federal government had to get back into the transit and housing game if Toronto was going to succeed.

The member endorsed this mayoral candidate and this budget, yet there is no money for transit and no money for housing. None of the issues that his daughter will have to deal with at Toronto City Council are addressed by the current policies in front of us today. How does he square that circle?

● (1325)

**Mr. John Carmichael:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend opposite for his kind remarks. It is truly a challenge for anybody going into city council in Toronto these days, as he well knows. I appreciate his comments.

*Government Orders*

I did endorse the newly elected mayor of Toronto, because I believe that he is the person who can best, as the member said, square the circle and can bring a new level of dignity and respect to the city of Toronto.

One of the elements of this government, particularly with regard to transit, is that we have been very clear with Canadians that we will wait for the discretion and judgment of each city and regional council to determine what their needs are before they approach us. We are not going to go to the City of Toronto and say that we want to spend  $x$  millions of dollars on a particular project that might be a favourite of my colleagues opposite. We are going to wait for it to come to us with its request and then, through the appropriate channels, we will make the decisions that are right for Canadians, particularly those, in this case, in Toronto.

**Mr. Colin Carrie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I wanted to thank my colleague for an excellent speech. I would like to see if he could comment on the importance of returning to a balanced budget. We see in the House every day, for example, the opposition and the NDP, which has \$56 billion worth of unfunded promises.

Let us put that into perspective first. With 17 million Canadians working, that comes out to about \$3,300 more in taxes per person under the NDP that Canadians and businesses would have to pay for.

Going to my colleagues over here in the Liberal Party, we have seen in Ontario a horrible record of balancing budgets. It is so bad in Ontario that its deficit this year, if we add all of the deficits of everyone else in Canada together, including the federal government, its deficit is going to be even greater. The green energy policy, for example, is killing new business.

Could my colleague comment on the importance of returning to a balanced budget, and what it means to Ontario and to creating new jobs?

**Mr. John Carmichael:** Mr. Speaker, what a great question because that is what the budget is all about. That is what we, as Canadians representing the government, should be focused on day in and day out.

As a businessperson, when I ran my business and was saddled with debt, it stopped me from being productive. It curtailed any creativity. It did not allow me to do the things that I would have liked to do with my business. Clearly, the same applies to the government from the perspective that the more debt, the more burden on Canadians, the less likely we are as a government to be able to be creative, create innovation and do all of the things that this budget so clearly outlines.

We committed to delivering a balanced budget and we are going to do just that this year. That is a commitment of the Conservative government, which is clearly getting the job done, creating jobs, creating growth and creating prosperity for future generations of Canadians.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Hélène LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to inform you that I will be sharing my time with the member for St. John's South—Mount Pearl.

It is Halloween, and the monsters are back. This is a monster budget. I rise today to speak in this debate to oppose Bill C-43, A second Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 11, 2014 and other measures, as well as the undemocratic process being used by this government and the Prime Minister to amend 30 or so pieces of legislation.

As the member for LaSalle—Émard and the official opposition's critic for co-operatives, I would like to express my deep concern about this shocking process, which consists of forcing the approval of hundreds of changes without giving members of the House or the stakeholders involved time to study them.

I am especially concerned about the changes included in division 22 that will have an impact on credit unions. However, before I go into detail about division 22 of Bill C-43, I would like to remind members of the House, especially government members, of the important role our credit unions play in Canada.

Excluding Quebec, there are 317 credit unions in Canada with 1,740 branches and over 5 million members. They have assets worth over \$165 billion and are present in every province of this country. The Mouvement Desjardins has 360 credit unions in Quebec with 6 million members and over \$212 billion in total assets. It is the largest private sector employer in the province, supporting 40,000 direct jobs and 25,000 indirect jobs.

• (1330)

[*English*]

The numbers speak for themselves. Credit unions are a big part of our economy and financial landscape, and their contributions are extremely important. I can assure everyone that every member of the House has thousands of constituents who are members of a credit union and/or use their services.

[*Translation*]

Nonetheless, beyond the numbers, credit unions really matter to all our communities. They are in the municipalities or regions of Canada that the traditional banks have abandoned. They offer products and services that meet the needs of the people and they reinvest in their community.

What is more, credit unions are more resilient to economic uncertainties. With regard to the riding of LaSalle—Émard, I can attest to how the LaSalle caisse populaire contributes to the vitality of community organizations. It contributes a great deal to the vitality of our community organizations and our community.

Despite the major growth in credit unions and their significant financial performance, the Conservative government is introducing another bill that does not take into account their needs or the differences between them and the banks.

I have said before that the Conservative government is incapable of taking into account the unique characteristics of credit unions or recognizing the benefits of that uniqueness. The same goes for SMEs. When drafting bills, the government is incapable of taking into account the inherent differences between large companies and small and medium-sized businesses. The same goes for the co-operative movement.

*Government Orders*

This proves it. Division 22 of Bill C-43 seeks to make changes to the regulations on credit unions. More specifically, it amends the Bank of Canada Act by eliminating the central bank's role as lender of last resort for credit unions, forcing them to rely on provincial guarantees in order to get a loan.

It also amends the Bank Act and the Co-operative Credit Associations Act in order to facilitate the entry of provincial cooperative credit societies into the federal credit union system and to discontinue supervision of provincial central co-operative credit societies by the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions.

Instead of addressing the reality and the needs of credit unions—especially their request for the creation of a new tax credit enabling them to access other sources of capitalization—these amendments seek to make our financial system homogeneous by trying to subject credit unions to the same conditions and rules that apply to major banks.

Do members acknowledge that we can have a multi-faceted economy and financial system? That is what the regions, credit unions and big cities are asking for. We have to recognize that credit unions meet community needs and that chartered banks and credit unions can co-exist.

The proposed measures are once again in keeping with the Conservatives' philosophy of opposing, for ideological reasons, the expansion of the Canadian co-operative movement. The 2013 budget measures unfairly increased taxes on credit unions. The proposals in this mammoth budget bill represent an effort by the government to subject credit unions to the same rules as banks.

In other words, and I have said this before, the Conservatives are not taking into account how credit unions are inherently different. In Canada, chartered banks have their way of operating and they are favoured by the government. Meanwhile, the government does not stop creating obstacles for credit unions thereby preventing them from growing and meeting the needs of regions and communities that are not served by large financial institutions.

I am wondering whether the government would dare demand that banks rely on the same type of guarantee from the province where their head office is located in order to access Bank of Canada loans. I am also wondering whether this government consulted the provinces before proposing the risk transfer resulting from the amendment and whether it assessed what impact this measure would have on their finances.

I am concerned that the government seems to want to encourage provincial credit unions to transition to the federal system without taking into account their unique characteristics and the challenges they would face in making such a transition.

Finally, we must remind the government of the importance of working with the credit unions to find solutions that will help them to grow. This government cannot continue to ignore the demands of a sector that plays such an important role in our economy.

This government did not even include in these 460 pages provisions that would help promote the capitalization of credit unions and give them the means to assist families and small and

medium-sized businesses, namely through a capital growth tax credit.

The government did not consider modifying the legal framework, which would have allowed credit unions to compete with the big banks without losing their status as a co-operative and while maintaining their commitment to serving their members.

Once again, these 460 pages do not take into account credit unions, which contribute to a sustainable, democratic and 100% Canadian economy.

• (1335)

I bitterly regret it, but I must oppose this monstrous bill that does not in any way take into account the interests of Canadians, co-operatives or credit unions.

**Mr. Claude Gravelle (Nickel Belt, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my colleague from LaSalle—Émard for her very good speech.

She spoke a lot about credit unions and co-operatives. Last week, the manager of the Caisse populaire de Verner, which is in my riding, visited my Ottawa office. He was very concerned about the government's plans to tie the hands of credit unions. Could my colleague tell us more about how the government is preventing credit unions from doing what credit unions do?

• (1340)

**Ms. Hélène LeBlanc:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Nickel Belt for bringing this up, because he gave a perfect example of how credit unions help keep regions and communities—especially francophone communities across Canada—strong. He also shared the concerns of credit unions.

Credit unions and caisses populaires have unique structures, which is why they are so valuable. This is what makes our economy democratic. Under this government, they also have to face increasing amounts of regulation, and they comply, in order to keep up. These regulations put a considerable administrative burden on credit unions, and this government does not seem to care. As a result, they are not able to keep up with all of these regulations and the accompanying administrative burden.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my dear colleague for her excellent speech on this omnibus bill—or mammoth bill, as we say. I think that is what it is.

I have a question for the government about this policy and credit unions. They are very different from banks. A number of Conservative members think that credit unions and banks are exactly the same. The new changes are harmful to credit unions, which use a lot of their money to help small and medium-sized businesses in Canada to create the jobs we need.

*Government Orders*

[English]

My question very specifically is this. Conservative MPs in particular who have said, in committee and other places, that they do not see any difference between a chartered bank and a credit union expose a grave concern for me, because last year the government inadvertently—maybe by accident, we do not know—heaped millions of dollars of extra taxes on top of credit unions through one change. Now they are coming in with something else that will deny credit unions access to funds.

It should be noted that credit unions, much more so than chartered banks, move money to small and medium businesses, particularly in smaller communities, many of which have lost their chartered bank representatives entirely.

If an economy like Canada's right now has not created virtually any new jobs in the private sector industry, and small businesses create upwards of 80% of all jobs in Canada, why would the government not take the initiative to help out groups like the credit unions, which do great good for our communities and help move money, loans, guarantees, and what not to the small businesses, the true job creators in Canada?

**Ms. Hélène LeBlanc:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, our finance critic, for his comments and for his question.

I think he recognized, as I do and as should a lot of members on the Conservative side, how a simple capital growth tax credit would have a multiplier effect on the regional economy, on regional revitalization, which would have an effect of boosting small and medium-sized businesses, contributing to their growth and success, contributing in creating jobs, which we all want here.

Why not have something like a capital growth tax credit for credit unions, to make sure that these contributors, the credit unions, which are great contributors to our economy, can again do their job?

**Mr. Ryan Cleary (St. John's South—Mount Pearl, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, this is my first opportunity to speak in the House since the events of last week. I am proud of how the House conducted itself in the wake of such terror, such atrocities, such shocking tragedy. It was good for Canada that we resumed sitting the very next morning, that we stood strong, that our leaders addressed Canadians, and that our leaders embraced. It was good for the nation to embrace.

It has been three years, and last week was the first time as a member of Parliament that I felt partisan lines dissolve, momentarily at least. I felt somewhat that way after Jack Layton died and after the passing of Jim Flaherty, but not to the degree I felt it here a week ago today. The House came together as one.

It is not every day that I stand up and applaud the Conservative Prime Minister. It is not every day that the Prime Minister stands up and applauds the leader of Her Majesty's opposition, the New Democratic Party of Canada, or the third party Liberals. It is not every day I personally compliment the Prime Minister. In fact, it never happened until last week.

The Prime Minister made a statement in the House last Thursday that I have since repeated a number of times, because it struck a chord, and I agreed with the statement. The Prime Minister said, “In

our system, in our country, we are opponents, but we are never enemies.”

We are united in the House by the desire to better our country. As opponents, we disagree on how to get there, but we all strive for a better Canada, for this country to be the best country it can be. We are opponents, but we are never enemies. That is why it is so infuriating to see the government introduce, yet again, an absolutely massive anti-democratic omnibus bill. It is a bill that amounts to an affront to the principles and spirit that this precious institution was built on.

The Prime Minister said we are opponents but we are never enemies. I say we are Canadians but we are never fools. We are members of Parliament, but we are never puppets, at least we should never be puppets. We are elected to serve, to stand on guard for the Canadian way, for democracy, for our communities and our constituents. However, omnibus bills such as this are an attack on Parliament. Omnibus bills undermine Parliament.

In the words of former auditor general Sheila Fraser, “Parliament has become so undermined it is almost unable to do the job that people expect of it.”

Bill C-43 is a budget bill, but it is so much more than that. It is an omnibus bill, meaning it is a proposed law that covers a number of diverse or unrelated topics. In this case the number is a truckload. It could fill a boat to the gunwales. The bill is 400 pages long. It has more than 400 clauses. It amends dozens of acts. The bill contains a host of measures that were not even mentioned in the original budget. This is the Conservatives' sixth straight omnibus bill. It is too much for one bill.

There are some things in it that we like, such as ending pay to pay billing so Canadians are not forced to pay for a paper copy of their bills. We like that, although even that does not go far enough. The bill only bans pay to pay billing for telecom and broadcast companies. What about banks? Why should banks still be allowed to gouge Canadians? That is what they are doing. By charging Canadians for their paper bills, they are gouging Canadians, and the Conservatives are letting them get away with it.

There are also some things that we outright disagree with in this omnibus bill, like denying access to social assistance for refugee claimants. What else do they live on if not social assistance, in so many cases? This attack on the most vulnerable comes on the heels of Conservative cuts to refugee health care, a move that the Federal Court called “cruel and unusual”.

● (1345)

Denying access to social assistance for refugee claimants was a backbench private member's bill that was rammed into this omnibus bill after the media and anti-poverty and labour groups tore it apart.

*Government Orders*

There are parts of this omnibus bills we like; there are more parts of this omnibus bill that we do not like; and there are more parts of this bill that I will not even get to. It is not possible. In the end, there is no way that I, as the member of Parliament for St. John's South—Mount Pearl, can critique this omnibus bill, let alone analyze details of more than 400 clauses, given such limited debate and limited time, with so much stacked and rammed into one bill.

Here is how one parliamentarian described the use of omnibus bills. This is from a column by Russell Wangersky in today's *The Telegram*, the daily newspaper in east coast Newfoundland. This parliamentarian stated:

In the interest of democracy I ask: how can members represent their constituents on these various areas when they are forced to vote in a block on such legislation and such concerns? ... I would argue that the subject matter of the bill is so diverse that a single vote on the content would put members in conflict with their own principles.

Who was the parliamentarian who was so outraged about the Liberal blockbuster omnibus bill? It was none other than the Prime Minister of Canada himself, when he was in opposition in 1994.

When the Conservative government and the Liberal governments before it ram so much legislation into omnibus bills it leads to mistakes. Who pays for those mistakes? Canadians pay for them. Newfoundlanders and Labradorians pay for those mistakes.

The Conservative government used a 2012 omnibus bill to create the new Social Security Tribunal, which hears appeals related to the Canada pension plan, disability benefits, employment insurance, and old age security. My constituency office has officially been told that the backlog of cases is one year. Unofficially the backlog is three years. That 2012 omnibus bill capped the size of the tribunal at 74 full-time staff. It also removed limits on the number of hours part-time staff can work—thus, the backlog.

Now the Conservative government is using this latest budget bill to expand the Social Security Tribunal. The government has said that the change would allow it to add employees to respond to a backlog of nearly 11,000 cases across the country related to CPP and OAS. That mistake would likely not have happened if that piece of legislation had not been lost in an omnibus bill and if members of Parliament had been given an opportunity to better scrutinize the bill. However, we were not given that opportunity, and Canadians have paid the price.

The journalist Michael Harris, who is well known in Newfoundland and Labrador for his work with the *Sunday Express* newspaper and for books such as *Unholy Orders* and *Lament for an Ocean*, has a new book called *Party of One*, reflections on a prime minister.

He quotes Peter Milliken, former speaker of the House of Commons, who stated:

Parliament can hardly be weakened any more than it already is. [The Prime Minister] can't go much further without making the institution dysfunctional...

Michael Harris also quotes the late Farley Mowat, who stated that the Prime Minister is “The most dangerous human being ever elevated to power in Canada.”

We are opponents; we are never enemies. The Prime Minister is right. We are opponents, and the Prime Minister has to stop treating us with contempt. The Prime Minister has to stop treating us like fools.

● (1350)

**Mr. Ray Boughen (Palliser, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this is just a comment rather than a question.

I have been listening to the debate this morning, and the opposition members keep talking about this mammoth number of 400 or 450 pages. There is only half a page here. It is in column print and there are two columns on every page, so they cannot be counting that as a full page because it is a half page. Therefore, if there are 400 pages, that is about 200 pages.

● (1355)

**Hon. Wayne Easter:** It is small print.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** That is a good one. It is in eight font.

**Mr. Robert Chisholm:** Do not let him get away with that.

**Hon. Wayne Easter:** Tell him he needs a magnifying glass to see it.

**Mr. Ray Boughen:** Mr. Speaker, whether they like it or lump it, that is just the way it is. If they take a look at the page, they will see it.

It was just a comment, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Ryan Cleary:** Half a page—half a wit. What I would say to that, Mr. Speaker, is that we are talking about 400 clauses, we are talking about amendments to dozens of acts and we are talking about a host of measures that were not even mentioned in the original budget. There are hundreds of clauses and amendments to dozens of acts.

Do not let that Conservative member fool you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague from the great province of Newfoundland and Labrador for his speech, but I just wanted to let him know that the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs just did a unanimous report with recommendations for the government in order to improve the new veterans charter. The Conservatives said we have to study it more, which means more delays. Now they bring forward an omnibus bill that includes everything but the kitchen sink.

I would ask the hon. member if he has read through the entire thing, or realized the word “veteran” is not anywhere in that bill whatsoever. How can the government cram everything into that legislation and completely ignore our veteran community in Canada?

**Mr. Ryan Cleary:** Mr. Speaker, it is not only veterans that are not mentioned in this omnibus bill; housing is not mentioned at all. Housing is a problem from coast to coast to coast, from one end of this country to the other.

I am glad the fantastic critic for Veterans Affairs will be visiting my riding of St. John's South—Mount Pearl next month. There is a quote that resonates with the people in my riding and it is that if you can't look after veterans, don't send your people to war.

We are not looking after our veterans. The current Conservative government is not looking after our veterans, and we are going to war.

*Statements by Members*

**Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, this is nominally and allegedly something to do with the budget. As has been described by my friend from Newfoundland, in these 460 pages are dozens of laws changed and hundreds of clauses, with so little to do with the economy.

However, the one piece that the government is hanging on to is to take more than half a billion dollars from the EI scheme, which the Conservatives even admit is money that does not belong to the government but belongs to the people who paid into it, the employers and the employees, and create, according to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, 800 jobs. This is the great solution the Conservatives have to the fragile and flat economy that exists in Canada right now.

There were almost zero private-sector jobs created in the last 18 months, and the Conservatives' answer to this—

**Mr. Rick Norlock:** Not true.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** This is according to StatsCan, by the way. The Conservatives can yell out “not true” as much as they want, but the truth is that what Canadians are also experiencing is that the private sector is not growing. Their one so-called solution is to rip off the EI fund for more than half a billion dollars to create 800 jobs, which the PBO said would cost about \$550,000 per job.

Therefore, with just a little over one-third of Canadians even being able to get employment insurance when they need it, is this a proper use of something such as that fund, to create 800 jobs at a cost of more than half a million dollars per job?

**Mr. Ryan Cleary:** Mr. Speaker, the Conservative government has been lauded in the media in some quarters for what it has done with the economy, for leading us through some turbulent economic times better than other countries around the world. However, the Conservative math is absolutely out of whack; it is absolutely out to lunch.

As the hon. member just mentioned, \$500 million would be stolen from the EI fund to create 800 jobs. That is a joke.

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

• (1400)

[*Translation*]

### WORK OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

**Mr. Jean-François Fortin (Haute-Gaspésie—La Mitis—Matapédia, FD):** Mr. Speaker, tomorrow I will have the pleasure of opening debate on Motion No. 535, which is designed to empower MPs so that they can defend their constituents' rights and advocate for their interests in the House.

We are elected to represent the people in our respective ridings, yet power is being increasingly concentrated within the political establishment, the group that surrounds each party leader.

Those leaders impose their will, make all the decisions, and even deprive members who are not in their good books of precious time that should be reserved for championing the needs of those who elected us. It is not right that an MP's ability to do his or her job well

depends entirely on the goodwill of party leaders and the unelected people in their entourage.

I invite all parliamentarians who care about getting back to the very core of democracy to take part in this debate. Together, we will combat the cynicism that has taken hold of the entire political class. Together, we will give constituents MPs who really serve them.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

### POPPY CAMPAIGN

**Hon. Ron Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, tomorrow as we approach Remembrance Day, our Kelowna—Lake Country community will come together to join Royal Canadian Legion Branch 26 in Kelowna and Branch 189 in Oyama for this year's annual poppy kickoff campaign.

Under the dedicated leadership of John Broughton, 94 years' young Syd Pratt, and their tireless team of volunteers, the poppy campaign will once again raise funds to support veterans and their families. Last year, the Kelowna Legion broke a record, collecting \$165,000, a record it hopes to break again this year.

The red poppy is an enduring symbol of collective remembrance, which Canadians wear with great pride. In the days leading up to Remembrance Day, I encourage all of my constituents and all Canadians to help our Legions succeed in reaching their poppy drive goals. Let us show our support for our veterans and the dedicated uniformed men and women who serve Canada.

As we have learned so acutely in recent days, freedom comes at a price, and it is our sacred duty to remember them. We will remember them.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

### THE FUTURE OF OUR RIVER, RAPIDS AND CANAL FORUM

**Ms. Hélène LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, on October 8, over 120 people got together at the André-Laurendeau CEGEP in LaSalle for a forum that I organized called “The Future of our River, Rapids and Canal”. They all agreed on the importance of better protecting our ecological, historical, and cultural heritage. Rich and inspiring discussions led the participants to the idea of creating an urban national park.

[*English*]

This park would become the second national urban park in Canada, located in the second-largest urban centre in Canada.

[*Translation*]

I am committed to working with them on this project, which would be a major legacy to Canada for the 150th anniversary of Confederation and the 375th anniversary of the founding of Montreal.

*Statements by Members*

[English]

**FIRST RESPONDERS**

**Mr. John Carmichael (Don Valley West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, every day first responders put their lives on the line to serve and protect Canadian society. Police, firefighters, paramedics, and members of the armed forces: these brave men and women embody the true essence of what it means to serve and protect.

Recent events in Ottawa and Quebec have shone a light onto the remarkable work these Canadians do to serve our nation abroad and to keep our streets and communities safe here at home. It is no easy task and often comes with little recognition.

On behalf of my constituents in Don Valley West and all Canadians, I offer my heartfelt thanks to all who put their lives on the line, put others before themselves, and keep us safe every single day.

\* \* \*

**HOUSING**

**Mr. Adam Vaughan (Trinity—Spadina, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, a report released yesterday from the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness indicates there are now 235,000 homeless people in Canada.

As that number grows, the government's response is to cut funds for housing. In Toronto, half of the people who go to sleep in a shelter every night are children. It is bad enough that the government has cut daycare; now it seems not to care about night care for the city's most vulnerable.

What is worse is that this very same report shows that despite a budget surplus on the horizon, even more cuts for housing are in the forecast.

Instead of reducing funds for housing, the government should increase funding for provinces and for municipalities, and it should solve this crisis now. If the only way the government thinks it can solve a problem is by cutting taxes, why will it not cut the taxes on private sector developers who are trying to deliver rental housing? Why is that tax not addressed in the omnibus bill?

This country has an affordable housing crisis. It also has a housing affordability crisis, in particular out west. The government is silent. I remind the ministers opposite—

• (1405)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton):** The hon. member for Fleetwood—Port Kells.

\* \* \*

**THE ECONOMY**

**Mrs. Nina Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, our Conservative government is focused on what matters to Canadians: jobs and a healthy and growing economy.

Employment has grown by over 10%. Over 1.1 million net new jobs have been created since the global recession. That is almost 20% more jobs per capita than our closest G7 competitor.

Meanwhile, we have cut taxes over 140 times, saving the average family over \$3,400 per year. Our government is on track to balance the budget in 2015, promising even further possible tax cuts on the horizon.

GDP is up nearly 14%, and we are further strengthening the economy by signing a record 38 free trade agreements. In Surrey, there has been record investment of more than \$1.4 billion, and I have personally made over 60 federal funding announcements worth over \$60 million.

Our Conservative government can be trusted to stand up for Canadians and deliver real economic results.

\* \* \*

**CANADIAN CITIES**

**Mr. Matthew Kellway (Beaches—East York, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we are a vast country made up of many landscapes, many ways of life, but for 80% of us, the life we lead is urban, from downtowns to suburbs and the places in between.

Successive federal governments have ignored our urban reality. However, we know that the success of our cities is vital to our national interest, that there can be no national agenda that is not also an urban agenda. Such an urban agenda must finally put into place a modern, innovative economy, the means of mitigating global warming, and a prosperity more equally shared.

An NDP government would be a reliable friend and partner to provinces and cities. We would play our part in building into Canada's cities the infrastructure that will ensure that Canada's cities are prosperous, fair, and sustainable places to live.

We will provide to all who live in them the opportunity to realize all that is possible. That is the NDP way.

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**HOUSE OF COMMONS SECURITY SERVICES**

**Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon (Mississauga East—Cooksville, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the strength and resolve of Canadians was tested by despicable attacks in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, on Parliament Hill, and at the National War Memorial in Ottawa. These brutal attacks sadly took the lives of two members of our armed forces, Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent and Corporal Nathan Cirillo.

Thanks to the bravery of our House of Commons Security Services, the attacker was stopped before he could do further harm.

On behalf of the parliamentary assistants, it is a privilege to express to this House how deeply appreciative they are for those who kept them safe in the face of danger. I have been asked to present to you, Mr. Speaker, a special certificate of thanks, signed by assistants from all parties, and respectfully request that this be given to your dedicated security team.



These cowardly acts were an attack against our values and our way of life. However, where these terrorists sought to tear us apart, we became stronger. Canada will not be intimidated.

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### ELECTIONS IN UKRAINE

**Mr. Ted Opitz (Etobicoke Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, today is Ukrainian Day on the Hill. Canada and Ukraine have a rich history, one that has continued to grow since Canada became the first western nation to recognize Ukraine's independence in 1991.

Canada stands with the people of Ukraine, and last week assisted in election monitoring. With parliamentary colleagues from both sides of the House, we deployed across Ukraine. With the member for Selkirk—Interlake, I observed the election in Odessa. I am honoured to inform the House that Ukraine elected an overwhelmingly Eurocentric parliament.

This was a critical election, with remarkable results in the face of continuing Russian aggression. Ukraine ran a democratic election in defiance of attempts to undermine Ukraine's independence and sovereignty. This is also the first time since the Bolshevik revolution that Ukraine's parliament is absent of any Communist representation.

I am proud of Ukraine's move toward reform and stronger and more resilient democracy. It was an honour to contribute to it. Therefore, in recognition of Ukraine and today's celebration of Ukrainian day on the Hill, I offer on behalf of us all: *Slava Ukraini*.

\* \* \*

• (1410)

### NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Northwest Territories, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, sometimes the actions of the government are so single-minded that people resort to writing books like *Party of One*. When it comes to northern policy, this really applies.

Last winter, the government wanted to devolve authority over lands and the environment to the Northwest Territories and to make it simpler for developers by doing away with the regional board structures that were negotiated with land claims, against the voices of 90% of northerners, particularly first nations. Now two first nations governments have taken it to court over the change, just as they said they would.

Where is the certainty for development with this kind of action? Now it wants to do the same thing in Yukon through Bill S-6. The Council of Yukon First Nations has already said that if this bill passes, it is going to court.

What is wrong with the government? What is it that makes it so single-minded that it creates these conflicts? Could it be the Prime Minister, the party of one, in all his glory, who listens to only one voice, his own?

\* \* \*

### CANADIAN ARMED FORCES

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, today the Royal Canadian Navy destroyer HMCS *Athabaskan* returned to her home port of Halifax after a successful deployment

### Statements by Members

on Operation Caribe. Operation Caribe is Canada's contribution to a multinational campaign against illicit trafficking by organized crime in the Caribbean and the eastern Pacific Ocean. I would like to welcome her home after a job well done. HMCS *Athabaskan* spent 53 days away from home and 37 days at sea, sailing over 14,600 nautical miles.

We are proud of their accomplishments and commend their efforts. HMCS *Athabaskan* seamlessly conducted joint operations, supported multiple aircraft patrol sorties, and participated in six intercept operations, one of which resulted in the successful seizure of 820 kilograms of cocaine.

Canada's commitment to Operation Caribe has contributed to the reduction of illegal narcotics on the market. The Canadian Armed Forces have been involved in this operation since 2006 and remain committed to working with our partners to improve regional security and to deter criminal activity across the western hemisphere.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### INSTITUT MARITIME DU QUÉBEC

**Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, today I want to acknowledge the 70th anniversary of the Institut maritime du Québec. Celebrations are being held all year long.

Since 1944, the Institut maritime du Québec has made Rimouski the maritime training capital of Canada, with the only French-language school for trades in this field in the country. The Institut has trained more than 2,216 graduates since it was founded. Every year, 350 students enter the Institut to learn navigation, naval architecture technology, marine mechanical engineering technology, shipping logistics, or even professional diving.

Today these men and women are sailing the seven seas, promoting their school as well as Rimouski, Quebec, and Canada, thanks to their expertise that is world-renowned both on land and at sea.

I want to thank the teachers and the management and staff at the institute. May the ocean professionals, those who pilot, maintain and guide the ships or the brave souls who don a dive suit and go underwater to repair and build boats and structures, these future mariners ready to sail around the world, may they continue to learn their trade in Rimouski and make us proud for many years to come.

Happy 70th anniversary and continued success to the Institut maritime du Québec.

*Statements by Members**[English]***CANADA BORDER SERVICES AGENCY**

**Ms. Roxanne James (Scarborough Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to a safe and effective border where legitimate travel and trade are expedited but drug smugglers are stopped in their tracks. Yesterday a shipment that originated in Argentina was intercepted by the Canada Border Services Agency. Upon inspection, officers identified several large black duffle bags filled with bricks of cocaine. Nearly 500 kilograms of cocaine, with a street value of approximately \$57.5 million, were seized.

On behalf of all Canadians, I would like to thank the Canada Border Services Agency officers for keeping these dangerous drugs off our streets and for keeping our communities safe.

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**ROYAL MONTREAL REGIMENT**

**Mr. Marc Garneau (Westmount—Ville-Marie, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in three days, we will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Royal Montreal Regiment. This regiment, authorized on November 2, 1914, served in numerous campaigns, earning many battle honours, including at Ypres, Vimy Ridge, and the Somme in the First World War and at Leopold Canal in the Second World War.

*[Translation]*

The regiment also served under the United Nations during the Korean War and took part in many peacekeeping missions, including in Cyprus, Egypt, the Congo, Bosnia, and Sudan. More recently, it deployed 49 soldiers to Afghanistan.

The Royal Montreal Regiment was designated a bilingual regiment in 1968. It enjoys the Freedom of the City not only in Westmount, where its headquarters are located, but also in the municipalities of Hampstead and Pointe-Claire and the city of Montreal.

•(1415)

*[English]*

I am very proud to have the Royal Montreal Regiment based in my riding. I know that it will continue its distinguished service as it begins its second century.

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**NATIONAL WAR MEMORIAL**

**Mr. Parm Gill (Brampton—Springdale, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, our National War Memorial looks a little different today. Yes, it still has that remarkable statue of Canada's First World War veterans, and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier remains stronger than ever. Today the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier is blanketed with hundreds of poppies of remembrance, each left by one Canadian or another who has come to the memorial to pay his or her respects. More touching is the wall of flowers, flags, and letters Canadians have set beside the members of our armed forces, who resumed their sentry posts late last week.

However, colleagues, the most remarkable difference at the National War Memorial is the hundreds of Canadians who are still out there, showing their bravery, solidarity, and respect.

Yet again, Canada's proud traditions have been strengthened by the sacrifice of our veterans. This is something we shall never forget.

\* \* \*

*[Translation]***ALAIN GERVAIS**

**Ms. Alexandrine Latendresse (Louis-Saint-Laurent, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, last week's events shocked Parliament Hill and the entire country. My colleagues and I went through something very difficult that day.

Today I would like to commend one person who risked his life to protect us. Alain Gervais, a House of Commons security guard, did not hesitate for one second to come into the room where we were and stand in front of the door to keep us safe.

While shots were ringing out, I kept my eyes on him. I could not look anywhere else. At an extremely scary time, I felt reassured by his quick thinking, composure, and determination and the fact that he knew exactly what he was doing.

Even when a bullet lodged in the door he was guarding, he did not budge. This man was prepared to sacrifice his life to protect ours.

From the bottom of my heart and on behalf of all members of Parliament, thank you. You a true hero.

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*[English]***HALLOWEEN**

**Mr. Corneliu Chisu (Pickering—Scarborough East, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is Halloween. It is very scary. While children from across the land celebrate with candy and trick-or-treating, Canadians from coast to coast to coast are frightened by the very scary NDP.

Mr. Speaker, Count Dracula himself is scared of the NDP leader's very spooky QP. The Count says, "Lighten up and the very scary vampires and the spooky taxes will go with the gargoyles." It is very scary.

The Liberal leader raising taxes and the budget balancing itself are spooking the Count.

Canadians are calling on the Prime Minister and us to put a stake through the heart of the horrendous taxes.

Only then—

**The Speaker:** Order, please.

I could not tell exactly what the hon. member was wearing, but I do hope that members do not get inspired to do anything funny tomorrow. We want to keep our usual attire and our business dress.

*Oral Questions***ORAL QUESTIONS***[English]***PUBLIC SAFETY**

**Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, today three former federal judges, all experts on national security, are warning the Prime Minister not to rush into passing new national security legislation in the wake of last week's tragic event. They include former Supreme Court Justice John Major, who said that the government should "rationally consider what powers they already have enacted, rather than a knee-jerk reaction to a present existing circumstance."

Instead of rushing through partisan legislation, why not work together, strike a special committee, and conduct a thorough review of Canada's existing security measures before proposing a host of new ones?

● (1420)

**Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the member has in front of him a very rational bill, Bill C-44, which would help to protect Canadians. I invite the member and all parties to support this very reasonable bill. I can also assure the member that we are moving forward.

Let me be clear. On this side of the House, a terrorist act is a terrorist act, as Secretary of State John Kerry said, as the RCMP said, and as the Criminal Code of Canada says.

*[Translation]*

**Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, what this former Supreme Court justice is telling the government is to stop riding the wave of emotion and to rationally examine the tools already at our disposal. If the Conservatives are not partisan, they should agree to work with everyone.

In the wake of last week's attacks, the Prime Minister made a solemn commitment to put aside partisanship and to work with the other parties on security issues.

With this in mind, will the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness agree to strike an all-party committee and consult Canadians before introducing new legislation? Or, as he just demonstrated, will he be partisan at all costs?

**Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are putting in place effective tools to protect Canadians. Today all political parties will be briefed on Bill C-44, a balanced bill to protect Canadians.

However, let me be clear. It is not partisanship to call an incident a terrorist act based on the definitions found in the Criminal Code. That view is shared by the RCMP and the U.S. Secretary of State, John Kerry.

*[English]*

**Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, even Stockwell Day, the former leader of the Prime Minister's own party, and a former public security minister at that, is calling for better civilian oversight of Canadian security agencies. He wants a select committee of MPs to be given security clearance so that they can examine classified security programs.

Why does the Minister of Public Safety oppose his own Conservative predecessor's proposal to improve civilian oversight?

**Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we certainly agree that there is a need to have robust oversight of our national security intelligence agencies. The fact of the matter is that this robust oversight exists. It is SIRC.

SIRC is there to protect Canadians and make sure that CSIS is exercising its mandate within the scope of the law. It has members such as Deborah Grey, Gene McLean, and Yves Fortier. We trust in their capacity to keep us safe and to make sure that CSIS is working within its mandate and the law, for which it was created.

\* \* \*

**TAXATION**

**Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, two out of the five positions are vacant. The last time the Prime Minister consulted on this, he got an answer for us from Deborah Grey. He completely ignored her advice. This time we hope there will be a real consultation, in the public interest, not in the Conservatives' interest.

Three years ago, the Prime Minister proposed a tax plan that would cost billions of dollars but give absolutely no benefit to 86% of Canadian families. Today the Prime Minister proposed to replace that ill-thought-out scheme with a new scheme that will cost billions of dollars and will still give absolutely no help to 86% of Canadian families. It is a tax plan that does nothing for nine out of 10 Canadian families. As Jim Flaherty asked, how does that benefit our society?

**Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Minister of State (Finance), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will encourage the leader of the opposition to stay tuned. There will be very good announcements coming shortly.

Income splitting is good policy for Canadians. It is good policy for Canadian seniors. It will be good policy for Canadian families. Our government is also making life more affordable for Canadian families by doubling the children's fitness tax credit to \$1,000 and then making it refundable.

Shamefully, the New Democratic Party and the Liberal Party vote against each one of these measures, vote against every tax cut that will put money into the pockets of Canadians.

● (1425)

**Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, a policy that helps 14% of the population and excludes 86% is not good policy.

*[Translation]*

It will not be just the middle class that will be unfairly made to pay for income splitting. The provinces will also be saddled with the bill.

The Conservatives' gimmick will be of absolutely no benefit to 86% of families, but will cost the federal and provincial governments billions of dollars.

*Oral Questions*

Why do the Conservatives want to exacerbate the fiscal imbalance with a measure that will only benefit the 14% of the population who are the wealthiest Canadians?

[*English*]

**Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Minister of State (Finance), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, seniors across the country are saving thousands of dollars each year because of pension income splitting. Now the leader of the New Democratic Party says that he would take it away from them.

Income splitting is good policy for Canadian seniors. It will be good policy for Canadian families.

That party has never seen a tax that it did not like. It has never seen a tax that it would not hike. Every tax measure that we bring forward to put money in the pockets of Canadians, it votes against.

**Hon. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the late Jim Flaherty said, “I think income-splitting needs a long, hard analytical look...because I’m not sure that overall, it benefits our society.” He was right.

The Conservatives may have tinkered with their scheme, but it still does nothing to help 86% of Canadian families. It will not help the 1.5 million single parents who are struggling, but it will cost billions of federal and provincial dollars.

Will the Conservatives listen to the late Jim Flaherty and experts across Canada, and will they scrap this tax scheme?

**Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Minister of State (Finance), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians know they are better off with this Conservative government.

Let me simply quote one of the many individuals who had supported income splitting, “We should change the tax system to treat single income or dual income identically under the tax system in order to stop penalizing Canadian single income families.” Who said that? The Liberal member for Kings—Hants.

**Hon. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I said a few stupid things when I was a Conservative. That is why I joined the Liberals: so I would no longer have to say stupid things.

Income splitting does nothing to create growth or strengthen the economy. It costs the provinces over \$1 billion a year, which is money that will be taken out of health care and education, and it puts the federal government back into a structural deficit, according to the PBO.

When will the government listen to reason and scrap this bad plan?

**Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Minister of State (Finance), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the member's record still continues on. It did not end just when he left the Conservative Party. He still says many things that are stupid.

The Liberal leader has pledged that if he is elected, he will hike taxes on Canadian families. That is what the Liberal leader said. According to media, the Liberal leader is even looking at reversing the doubling of the children's fitness tax credit. He even said that Canadians could be convinced to accept a tax hike.

He is lobbying for a tax—

**The Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member for Bourassa.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg (Bourassa, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think we need to watch the level of language in the House.

Many independent think tanks, and the late former Conservative minister Jim Flaherty as well, spoke out against income splitting, saying that it would benefit only the richest of the rich. The original plan was tweaked, but this is still a regressive measure. Will the Conservative government have the decency to tell Canadians that income splitting will not benefit 86% of them?

● (1430)

[*English*]

**Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Minister of State (Finance), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, our government stands with Canadian families. We stand with Canadian seniors. We continue with measure after measure to put money back into the pockets of Canadian families.

Again, seniors across Canada are saving thousands of dollars every year thanks to pension income splitting. What is good for seniors will be very good for families.

\* \* \*

#### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, as the government rushes to respond to the events of last week with more legislation, one thing remains clear. Canadians expect that any new legislation should improve public safety and protect civil liberties. Inadequate oversight of our intelligence agencies continues to be a major concern. It has been eight years since the Arar inquiry recommended improvements.

Why have the Conservatives persistently refused to boost intelligence oversight despite these recommendations?

**Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the first responsibility of a government is to protect its citizens. We are promoting reasonable policies such as Bill C-44. We are seeking support from the opposition.

In the meantime, there is robust oversight. SIRC is doing a remarkable job. I want to congratulate Deborah Grey, Gene Mclean and Yves Fortier for keeping an eye on CSIS, which is there to keep us safe.

[Translation]

**Ms. Rosane Doré Lefebvre (Alfred-Pellan, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, as parliamentarians, we have a duty to ensure that Canadians are safe while also protecting their rights and freedoms.

The Minister of Justice seems to have forgotten that duty when he talks about his new legislative measures to control content on the web. Even the hon. Conservative member for Moncton has expressed reservations about this.

Can the justice minister tell us what he considers to be a crime of opinion and what sort of sentences offenders will face?

**Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, what we have before us today, which was introduced on Monday, is a bill to clarify the powers of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, CSIS. It will facilitate the activities of the review committee by making the rules clearer and better defined. We are making things clearer. We have an oversight body and we will make sure that this committee's recommendations are implemented so that CSIS can continue to protect Canadians.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### TRANSPORT

**Mr. Matthew Kellway (Beaches—East York, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, on May 7, the Minister of Transport told the House that her department was “not aware of an ignition switch issue prior to receiving its first notice from GM Canada”. However, CBC has revealed internal documents that prove that this absolutely was not true. Transport Canada was aware of the issue eight months before the GM recall.

Did the minister knowingly mislead the House?

**Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Transport, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, obviously with respect to this incident, our thoughts and our prayers are always going to be the victim of the accident.

That being said, I found out about the notice of defect in February 2014, as I have told the House. Now I am informed by my officials that they knew about the notice of defect as well at that time just prior to the recall by GM Canada.

[Translation]

**Mr. Hoang Mai (Brossard—La Prairie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, Transport Canada knew that the Chevrolet Cobalt's ignition switch was a problem eight months before the safety recall. If people had been told, lives could have been saved. GM has accepted responsibility for 29 deaths related to these defects. There are claims related to 150 more deaths. Her department knew of the problem eight months before the recall.

How can the minister tell the House that she knew nothing?

[English]

**Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Transport, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, with respect to this incident, in June 2013, Transport Canada did receive a report of a crash in Quebec where the air bags did not deploy, the vehicle went off the road late at night and struck multiple trees. Officials commenced an investigation at that time. They continued in their investigations. After the notice of defect was

#### Oral Questions

received by officials in February 2014, they went back and looked again at that fatal collision from June 2013.

That is the first time I learned about this accident or this investigation and the conclusions that Transport Canada reached.

\* \* \*

● (1435)

[Translation]

#### RAIL TRANSPORTATION

**Mr. Hoang Mai (Brossard—La Prairie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Transport's rail safety promises are disappointing. The mayor of Lac-Mégantic wanted the minister to do more. She is calling for tougher regulations and stricter oversight.

Will the minister heed the mayor of Lac-Mégantic's call and force rail companies to follow the rules?

[English]

**Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Transport, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I very much value the recommendations, the advice and information we received from the mayor of Lac-Mégantic. She has been instrumental in ensuring we do what is right vis-à-vis the community.

We did speak to the mayor prior to our announcement yesterday. What she told us and told the media as well is as follows: “The town of Lac-Mégantic recognizes that the additional security measures announced today will make rail transport safer in Canada.”

Indeed, we will continue to work with the mayor of Lac-Mégantic and all municipalities to ensure we are working together on rail safety.

**Ms. Chris Charlton (Hamilton Mountain, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I do not think Canadians are reassured by the minister's words, and they should not be.

In fact, the Public Accounts released yesterday show that in spite of all her talk of rail safety, the Conservatives actually cut funding for rail safety in each of the last two years. Last year, they failed to spend nearly \$4 million of the budget that was left.

Why do the Conservatives say one thing and do the other when it comes to ensuring rail safety?

**Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Transport, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in the Public Accounts that were published yesterday, actual spending was lower, but the reason why actual spending was lower than what was budgeted was because there was a reduction in the grade crossing improvement contribution program. Fewer people applied for the funding and, in fact, some of these projects came in under budget.

Most important though, if members continue to read into the numbers, they will realize that on the operation side, where the salaries and people are, we increased spending there by \$1 million.

*Oral Questions*

[Translation]

**Ms. Nycole Turmel (Hull—Aylmer, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the real problem is the lack of resources and inspectors to enforce the rules.

Yesterday, the Minister of Transport put on a big show to tell us how important rail safety is to her. At the same time, we learned from the public accounts that her department's rail safety budget dropped from \$38 million to \$33 million over two years.

How can the minister say she is strengthening rail safety when the budget is being cut?

[English]

**Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Transport, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it gives me the opportunity to reiterate that on operational matters and rail safety, our department has responded, and has spent an increase of \$1 million as compared to the year over.

Also, in terms of the department involved with transportation of dangerous goods, it spent approximately \$2 million more to ensure we had appropriate people looking at these accidents, looking at these incidents and ensuring we had the right policies.

Quite frankly, Transport Canada is working very hard to ensure we get rail safety right in our country.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION**

**Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives' indiscriminate cuts have affected more than just rail safety.

This morning the CBC announced that it is laying off another 392 employees. CBC employees in my riding will once again be affected. This will also affect the quality of information available in both official languages across Canada.

When will the minister finally recognize that these cuts on top of cuts are preventing our public broadcaster from properly carrying out its mandate?

**Hon. Shelly Glover (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as the president of the CBC said himself, the decline in the number of viewers in certain demographics and lower advertising revenues are what have caused this situation at the CBC.

Once again, it is up to the CBC to figure out what programming Canadians want in French and English. It has enough taxpayers' money to fulfill its mandate under the Broadcasting Act.

\* \* \*

[English]

**CANADA REVENUE AGENCY**

**Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Public Accounts show the Conservatives lapsed more than \$7 billion in approved funding last year. That is a whole lot of mismanagement.

They also show that the Canada Revenue Agency is failing to collect millions of dollars from tax cheats. Of \$220 million reported missing, CRA collected just 1%, and appears to have no plan to

collect the rest, to say nothing of the billions stashed by Canadians in offshore tax havens.

Why does the minister keep coming up empty-handed when it comes to going after tax cheats?

● (1440)

**Hon. Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay (Minister of National Revenue, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the amounts the member refers to are in active collection. These are the facts.

The amount recorded is for cases that are still before the courts, which means these amounts are verifiable and recoverable.

Collection action is a process. Once these cases move through the courts, further collection tools available to the CRA will be pursued.

Last year alone, we resolved over \$46 billion in outstanding taxes. We continue to aggressively pursue tax cheats.

\* \* \*

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

**Ms. Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, a national security committee of parliamentarians from all parties is about making sure that our intelligence and security agencies have the tools and the funds they need to protect Canadians and to protect Canadians' rights.

We are the only country among our major intelligence partners that does not have such a committee. Why is the Conservative government unwilling to give Canadians the confidence in their security agencies that all our major allies already enjoy?

**Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Security Intelligence Review Committee was established in 1984 as an independent external review body that reports to the Parliament of Canada on the performance of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, CSIS.

I have full confidence in SIRC and its honourable members.

**Mr. Sean Casey (Charlottetown, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in a moment of seemingly unscripted candour, the Minister of Justice indicated yesterday that our security services and police already have significant and robust legislative tools in the Criminal Code to combat terrorism.

Is that still his view today? If so, could he assure the House that these robust terrorism provisions are being used in national security investigations?

**Hon. Peter MacKay (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC):** Yes, Mr. Speaker.

[Translation]

**Mr. Sean Casey (Charlottetown, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness also said that he believes our anti-terrorism laws are robust. At least 80 individuals have come back to Canada and violated those very anti-terrorism laws.

Can the minister tell the House if those individuals have been arrested and if not, why not?

**Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is the role of politicians and Parliament to make laws, and it is the role of the police to arrest criminals and terrorists.

That is why it is our duty to put laws in place. As an example, we introduced Bill C-44 on Monday to make it easier for the Canadian Security Intelligence Service to do its job.

Otehr measures will follow to ensure that our approach is balanced and responsible in order to protect Canadians.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### NATIONAL DEFENCE

**Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Forces Ombudsman has called the universality of service rule for the Canadian military “arbitrary and unfair”. Members across the country have also been saying that the rule makes it harder for them to come forward with mental health issues. They fear being discharged.

The number of members who are being forced out for medical reasons before getting enough experience to receive a pension is large and growing. Does the minister still believe that it is a reasonable, fair, and effective policy for the Canadian military?

**Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of National Defence, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, our government has made significant investments in the whole area of mental health and reaching out to the men and women in uniform who are suffering from PTSD and other problems. This is why we have approximately 415 full-time medical health care workers. We have one of the highest ratios of mental health professionals to soldiers in NATO. We want to work with the men and women in uniform to make sure they get all the possible care that they need.

[Translation]

**Ms. Éline Michaud (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, last year, 1,190 soldiers, like Louise Groulx, lost their jobs for health reasons.

Ms. Groulx sustained a workplace injury that resulted in a number of complications. When she returned to work a year later, she was able to do 90% of her duties. Nevertheless, she was discharged from the Canadian Forces. Ms. Groulx's case is a perfect example of why the universality of service policy does not make any sense.

Does the minister sincerely believe that the universality of service policy serves the interests of our soldiers and the Canadian public?

• (1445)

[English]

**Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of National Defence, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, no member of the armed forces is let go until they are ready to move on. This is why our service and the level of care that is provided by our armed forces is unprecedented. This is why this has continued to be a priority for our government. We want to reach out

to those men and women in uniform and give them all the help they need.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

**Ms. Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe (Pierrefonds—Dollard, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Federal Court found that the changes that were made to the interim federal health program in 2012 were invalid and even cruel.

Rather than admitting that it made a mistake, the government has appealed the decision. This appeal means a lot of time lost on this sensitive issue and needless suffering for refugee claimants and their children.

Rather than cobbling together a contingency plan in case they lose their appeal, why do the Conservatives not simply reinstate the program that was in place in 2012?

**Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, yes, we were disappointed by the court's decision last summer. That is why we are appealing it. We are going to continue to protect the well-founded interests of refugees and the interests of Canadian taxpayers as well.

[English]

**Mr. Andrew Cash (Davenport, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it has been four months since the Federal Court told the government that its cuts to refugee health care were cruel and unusual. Now the government is scrambling to come up with a contingency plan just days before the court deadline to reinstate the program.

We have a suggestion for the government. Instead of dragging its feet and coming up with more excuses and trying to circle the rules, why does the government not just reinstate the interim federal health program?

**Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the interim federal health program continues to serve refugees extremely well. We were disappointed by the Federal Court's decision on July 4, and that is why we have gone into appeal. We await the court's decision.

We will continue to uphold and defend the rights of refugees as well as the interests of Canadian taxpayers.

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#### INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**Hon. Ron Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, with one in five jobs in Canada dependent on exports, our government understands the importance of opening new markets. That is why we have launched the most ambitious pro-trade plan in Canadian history.

Before 2006, Canada had free trade agreements with only five countries. Since then, the Conservative government has concluded agreements with 38 countries.

Could the hard-working Minister of International Trade please update the House on the status of the government's pro-trade plan?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Ed Fast (Minister of International Trade, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, last night the House passed third reading of Bill C-41 to implement the Canada-Korea free trade agreement. This is an historic agreement that will increase Canada's economic output by close to \$2 billion and increase our exports to Korea by 32%

The bill is now in the Senate, where it will be sponsored by my colleague, Senator Yonah Martin. It is my hope that the Senate will pass the bill quickly so that Canadian exporters can take advantage of this remarkable economic opportunity as soon as possible.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, according to a report issued by Germanwatch, Canada has the worst record of all OECD countries when it comes to combatting climate change, ranking just below Australia and Turkey. The Conservative government's failing grade can be attributed to its withdrawal from the Kyoto protocol, its unambitious greenhouse gas reduction targets, and its lack of a plan to reduce the emissions of large emitters.

Speaking of large emitters, when will the government present its plan for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the oil and gas industry?

[English]

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of the Environment, Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and Minister for the Arctic Council, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, our government's record is clear. We have taken decisive action on the environment while protecting the economy.

Everyone internationally has to do their fair share. Building on our record, I announced a number of actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and pollution from vehicles. Recently I also announced our intent to regulate the HFCs, one of the fastest-growing greenhouse gases in the world. We are accomplishing this without the job-killing carbon tax that the NDP wants.

**Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, surely the government can change its talking notes now that it is ranked last among all OECD nations.

Members of Parliament from all parties have been briefed on the laudatory actions by higher-ranked OECD nations, including Germany and Denmark. Many of those initiatives and investments made to transition to cleaner energy sources are readily available to Canada. What our country needs is a government with the will to act.

What on earth is it going to take to make the government act in the interests of Canadians and invest in a cleaner energy future?

• (1450)

**Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of the Environment, Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and Minister for the Arctic Council, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are very proud of our record. We are a founding member of the Climate and Clean Air Coalition. We have made significant investments to help support green energy and infrastructure. Internationally, we have

provided \$1.2 billion to developing countries to address climate change.

Recently I announced new regulatory initiatives that will lower pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from cars, trucks, and heavy-duty vehicles. Thanks to these actions, carbon emissions will go down by close to 130 megatonnes from what they would have been under the Liberals, and we are not introducing a carbon tax.

**Mr. Robert Chisholm (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, October 31 is the two-year anniversary of the groundbreaking report from the Cohen commission, which made 75 recommendations to protect B.C.'s sockeye salmon. However, the Conservative government has failed to take this report seriously and has failed to move on any of the key recommendations in the report.

When will the minister finally recognize that something has to be done and implement the key recommendations in this report before it is too late?

**Hon. Gail Shea (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure as well to inform the House that the 2014 returns of salmon to the Fraser River are in the area of 20 million healthy fish.

The government has introduced several measures that are consistent with the recommendations from the Cohen commission, including a moratorium on aquaculture development in the Discovery Islands and an investment of \$25 million in recreational fisheries conservation partnership.

All revenues from the Pacific salmon conservation stamp are now provided directly to the Pacific Salmon Foundation to be invested in the salmon industry.

**Mr. Fin Donnelly (New Westminster—Coquitlam, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, this is not complicated. The Conservative government spent over \$26 million for the advice in this report.

It should not have taken two years for the Conservatives to understand findings that are so clear. Wild salmon are in trouble, and Justice Cohen's recommendations offer a road map to saving them.

The government does not understand the economic and cultural importance of wild salmon to British Columbia. Will the Conservatives stop ignoring Justice Cohen's report and finally implement his recommendations?

**Hon. Gail Shea (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are addressing many of Justice Cohen's recommendations through the department's day-to-day work, and we will continue to consider his recommendations as part of our ongoing work.

We have just recently invested \$54 million to enhance regulatory certainty for the aquaculture sector and to provide greater support to science directed at aquaculture, part of Justice Cohen's recommendations.



*Oral Questions***ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS**

I am happy to report that it is not just the Fraser River. There are many rivers that are reporting record numbers of salmon this year.

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**TRANSPORT**

**Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in May of this year the Minister of Transport told Parliament that Transport Canada was “not aware of an ignition switch issue” prior to receiving notice from GM in February 2014.

It turns out this was not true.

We now know that her department was fully aware of these problems in June 2013, eight months before the minister said she was told about the problem.

Did the minister mislead the House and Canadians on this very serious issue? If she did not, how could she possibly not have known?

**Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Transport, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as I said before, and I will be very clear on this matter, I did not know of a notice of defect from GM until we received it. I did not know about that until just prior to the recall.

I will also say that the officials have indicated the same to me. They were not aware of the notice of defect before then.

The particular incident to which the hon. member is referring is an unfortunate accident that happened in June 2013, an accident that Transport Canada investigated. In the course of its investigation, it took a look at why the air bag did not deploy when the vehicle went off the road. It came to the conclusion that the ignition switch was not part of the reason that the fatal collision occurred.

That said, Transport Canada reopened the case and looked at it again once it heard of the notice of defect to take a look at it in a new light.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the problem is that the facts do not support what the minister is saying.

The chronology is clear. Documents show that Transport Canada was well aware of the ignition switch issue with GM vehicles in June 2013. That is eight months earlier than the date the minister gave when she was asked when Transport Canada knew about this.

In light of these facts, again, will the minister explain why she deliberately misled the House?

• (1455)

[*English*]

**Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Transport, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I knew of the defect from GM when we received the notice of defect in February 2014. I said that last year and I say that today as well. My officials told me the same thing. They knew of the notice of the defect in this fleet at that point in time.

Transport Canada inspectors were investigating an accident in June 2013. Through their investigation, they determined there was a problem with the ignition switch. After the notice of defect and the recall, they went back and looked at the accident again in a new light.

**Mr. Dennis Bevington (Northwest Territories, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the deadline for the Indian residential school personal credit for educational programs and services is tomorrow, yet out of around 80,000 former survivors who are eligible, only 10,000 have applied. This is pushing leaders like Dene National Chief Bill Erasmus to ask the government for an extension of the deadline.

Will the minister heed this call? Will he work with other signatories to the agreement and get the deadline extended so that more survivors can access compensation for these large sums of money that are owed to first nations peoples?

**Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, although reminder notices were mailed to close to 75,000 of those recipients and although there has been an email and social media campaign to inform them, yes, indeed, we are going to work with the partners in the agreement to try to get an extension.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Romeo Saganash (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's apology in 2008 was to be the start of a reconciliation process. For that to happen, the survivors need to have access to the programs and credits owed to them so that they can continue to learn and pursue their healing process.

I will repeat the question: will the minister work with the courts and the other signatories to the agreement and get the deadline extended, and can he confirm that in writing today?

[*English*]

**Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is obvious he will not take “yes” or “no” for an answer.

I just stated that, indeed, we are presently in negotiations, talking with our partners, in order to give this extension so that the victims of residential schools who are eligible for this education credit may get it.

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**NATIONAL DEFENCE**

**Ms. Joan Crockatt (Calgary Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, today, there is joy in Halifax. The Royal Canadian Navy destroyer HMCS *Athabaskan* is back in her home port after a successful mission, Operation *Caribbe*.

This was an international campaign to target illicit trafficking by organized crime in the Caribbean and in the eastern Pacific. I would like to congratulate and welcome home her crew after a job well done.

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Would the Minister of National Defence please update us on HMCS *Athabaskan's* activities?

**Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of National Defence, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I join the hon. member in welcoming home the crew of the HMCS *Athabaskan*. I am proud of their accomplishments and commend them for their efforts.

The HMCS *Athabaskan* seamlessly conducted joint operations, supported multiple aircraft patrol sorties, and participated in six intercept operations, one of which resulted in the successful disruption of 820 kilograms of cocaine.

Canada's commitment to Operation Caribbe has contributed to the interception of a significant quantity of illegal narcotics. The Canadian Armed Forces has been involved with this operation since 2006. We remain committed to working with our partners to improve regional security and deter criminal activity in the western hemisphere.

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### COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the chair of the PROC committee regarding the agenda of the committee itself.

The 18th report of the committee, which reconstitutes the House of Commons committees, was presented in the House on September 30. It has not yet been concurred in. Committee travel has also stopped. Hundreds of hours of committee time has been lost.

Would the chair tell the House if the committee will meet to consider any further action it can take to get the committees back to work?

• (1500)

**Mr. Joe Preston (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as we know, the committee continues to work on ways to improve committee work in the House. Daily, I try to stand here to move concurrence on the report. It has had a great aerobic effect, but not much else.

Apparently, the official opposition wants to deny members the voice of their constituents at committees. We hope we get back to work soon.

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### SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

**Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan (Scarborough—Rouge River, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, this week UNICEF reported that child poverty in Canada is at 21%. That is one in five Canadian children growing up with the stress and deprivation of poverty, struggling to learn without adequate nutrition, and facing the likelihood of poorer health.

When is the current government going to stop leaving so many children behind and get serious about eradicating child poverty?

**Mr. Scott Armstrong (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment and Social Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, here is what that report actually said. It said, "that's really impressive. It's better than the majority of other countries did during the recession."

UNICEF also commented that our national child care benefit "kept money in circulation". It said, "money goes to poorer families, and that tends to be spent on children and then it kept money circulating in the economy as well.... That kind of investment in children is so important."

That is what UNICEF said. We are on the right track.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### CHILD CARE

**Ms. Joyce Bateman (Winnipeg South Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, today Statistics Canada released a report on child care in Canada.

Canadians know that our government's policies give parents the choice for child care because, as everyone knows, there is no single solution. That is what this recent report shows.

[English]

Could the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment and Social Development please update the House?

**Mr. Scott Armstrong (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment and Social Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre. She is a highly effective member and again she is on the right track.

Statistics Canada says that of the 46% that do use some form of child care, approximately a third uses daycare centres, another third uses home daycares, and the remaining third uses private arrangements. We are on the right track. It is a flexible system. We support the universal child care benefit.

If the opposition gets the chance, it is going to take that benefit away from moms and dads across this country. It should get on board and support our plan for child care.

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### REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Mr. Claude Gravelle (Nickel Belt, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the new CEO of Cliffs Natural Resources sees zero hope of developing the Ring of Fire in the next 50 years. He cites no plan, no infrastructure, no leadership. This means no jobs, no investments for northern Ontario, and no benefits to Ontario's broader mining, finance, and technology sectors. Almost all of the government's Ring of Fire announcements failed to materialize.

When will the government show the leadership it promised over a year ago and work with Ontario to make the Ring of Fire happen?

**Hon. Greg Rickford (Minister of Natural Resources and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario, CPC):** First, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for his generally positive tone and the effective interaction he has had on Ring of Fire, up until that question was put. The president's remarks are indeed regrettable.

While Cliffs has taken a business decision regarding its operations in the Ring of Fire, industry proponents communities, including first nations communities, the Government of Ontario, and our government are quite optimistic about the prospects for the Ring of Fire. We will continue to work collaboratively to ensure that we maximize the enormous economic potential of the Ring of Fire and the infrastructure that is required to support those projects.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### FORESTRY INDUSTRY

**Mr. Claude Patry (Jonquière—Alma, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, while scientists and the forestry industry are rightly concerned about the spread of the spruce budworm epidemic in Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean, the federal government is doing virtually nothing to address a problem that could become very serious.

Instead of waiting for the industry to be seriously affected, why does the government not invest more, as it did for the pine beetle epidemic in British Columbia?

• (1505)

**Hon. Greg Rickford (Minister of Natural Resources and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for asking a question on a topic that is so important to rural communities.

I am proud that economic action plan 2014 builds on our government's success by focusing on innovation and protecting our forests from pests. For example, by focusing on diversifying markets for our forestry products, we have increased our softwood lumber exports to China tenfold.

\* \* \*

[English]

### POINTS OF ORDER

#### ORAL QUESTIONS

**Mr. Royal Galipeau (Ottawa—Orléans, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, during question period you were very generous in allowing the member for Ottawa South to ask two questions. When he asked his question in English, he was rather judicious in his choice of words.

[Translation]

However, when he started speaking French, he used unparliamentary language.

[English]

**The Speaker:** I appreciate the hon. member for Ottawa—Orléans raising the point. I will have to take a look and see what was said exactly.

I will warn hon. members, though, about using terms such as “deliberately misleading”. I heard some phrasing of that in kind of a rhetorical nature. I do not think it is helpful. It gets far too close to the line. I would ask members, instead of trying to get as close to the line as they can, to stand a few paces back. I think members will appreciate that.

### Business of the House

**Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Transport, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order as well.

In my last answer for the hon. member for Ottawa South, I said the year 2004. Of course I mean the year 2014.

**The Speaker:** I appreciate that.

I believe now the hon. opposition House leader would like to ask the traditional Thursday question.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

**Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, in caucus, the NDP MPs had the opportunity to thank the security guards, including Alain Gervais, who showed such courage during the events of last week, with which we are all familiar.

This week we are back to work. As the Leader of the Opposition just said, we continue to offer to work with the government on various files in the wake of last week's events. We will examine those files.

We continue to offer to work with the government, and we are still waiting for a reply.

[English]

For next week, I would like to know what the government is scheduling for its agenda. I particularly would like to know in terms of opposition days what the government perceives for the two opposition days that remain in this cycle.

**Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this afternoon we will continue to debate Bill C-43, the economic action plan 2014 act, no. 2, at second reading. That is a bill that focuses on job creation, economic development, growth, and prosperity for all Canadians, and is certainly something that is welcomed in this time of continuing global economic uncertainty and something that focuses on the priorities of Canadians. That debate will continue tomorrow and then will conclude on Monday.

[Translation]

Of course, also on Monday, the President of France, François Hollande, will address both houses of our Parliament that morning.

On Tuesday and Wednesday, we will consider Bill C-44, the protection of Canada from terrorists act, at second reading.

Ideally, we will conclude this debate on Wednesday so that a committee can get on with the important work of studying the details of this legislation. This will be an opportunity for all parties to study the bill and its important measures in detail.

[English]

Next, I am hoping that on Thursday we could wrap up the second reading debate on each of Bill S-5, the Nâáts'ihch'oh National Park Reserve act, and Bill C-21, the red tape reduction act.

*Government Orders*

Finally, next Friday, November 7, will be dedicated to finishing the third reading debate on Bill C-22, the energy safety and security act.

There was a specific question with regard to the remaining two allotted days. As members know, I believe we have four weeks available to us after the opportunity in the ridings to observe Remembrance Day with our constituents. I anticipate that those two allotted days will be designated for dates in that last four-week period.

\* \* \*

• (1510)

**WAYS AND MEANS**

NOTICE OF MOTION

**Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Minister of State (Finance), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 83(1), I wish to table a notice of a ways and means motion to amend the Income Tax Act.

Pursuant to Standing Order 83(2), I ask that an order of the day be designated for consideration of the motion.

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**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[*English*]

**ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN 2014 ACT, NO. 2**

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-43, A Second Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 11, 2014 and other measures, be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the amendment.

**Mr. Ryan Leef (Yukon, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise today to speak to economic action plan 2014 act number 2. Before I commence, I would like to indicate that I will be sharing my time with the member for Elgin—Middlesex—London.

Economic action plan 2014 act number 2 and, more specifically, division 3, which contains the proposed Canadian high Arctic research station act, is something on which I would like to focus. As the member of Parliament for the Yukon, I am very proud of the unprecedented support that our Conservative government has given to Canada's north.

In 2007, our government made the bold move to launch a comprehensive northern strategy that would allow Canada's north to realize its true potential as a healthy, prosperous, and secure region within a strong and sovereign Canada. This strategy was built on four pillars: strengthening Canada's sovereignty, advancing economic and social development, promoting environmental sustainability, and improving and devolving northern governance.

To achieve these desired outcomes, we believe that Canada needs to be a world leader in Arctic science and technology. This would allow us to make sound policy decisions based on strong and science-based knowledge. This is why the Prime Minister announced the creation of a new, world-class science and technology research facility in the 2007 Speech from the Throne. The Canadian high Arctic research station, or CHARS, was endorsed by the Prime

Minister as a station that would be built by Canadians in Canada's Arctic and would be there to serve the world.

More specifically, CHARS will lead and support Arctic science and technology to develop and diversify the economy in Canada's Arctic; support the effective stewardship of Canada's Arctic lands, waters and resources; create a hub for scientific activity in Canada's vast and diverse Arctic; promote self-sufficient, vibrant, and healthy northern communities; inspire and build capacity through training, education, and outreach; and enhance Canada's visible presence in the Arctic and strengthen Canada's leadership on Arctic issues. As a fulfilment of that promise, we are here today debating legislation that would bring Canada one step closer to the establishment of the long anticipated world-class research facility by Canada's 150th anniversary.

This legislation would establish the governing structure for the research station, which would see the Canadian Polar Commission join with the Canadian high Arctic research station to create one larger, stronger research hub for scientific research in Canada's north. CHARS would build on the Canadian Polar Commission's existing mandate and its efforts to bring together industry, academia, aboriginal and northern governments, and international stakeholders and leverage their expertise, experience, and resources.

Like the Canadian Polar Commission, the Canadian high Arctic research station act also proposes to establish CHARS as a departmental corporation. This means that joining these organizations would not change the current operating framework of the commission, and it would serve to enforce its scientific independence and credibility. As a separate employer, CHARS would also have greater flexibility to attract top notch researchers and scientists from home and around the globe in a competitive research industry by offering competitive compensation and benefits packages.

Finally, it would build on the Canadian Polar Commission's existing capacity and scope through a significantly larger investment in infrastructure programming and funding. In August 2012, our government announced an investment of \$142.4 million for the construction, equipment, and fit-up of the Canadian high Arctic research station in Cambridge Bay, Nunavut. An additional \$26.5 million annually will be set aside as of 2018-19 for the ongoing science and technology program and operation of that station.

I was privileged this fall to be in Cambridge Bay with the Prime Minister on his ninth annual northern tour to witness the groundbreaking ceremony that launched the construction phase of this facility, which is expected to take three years. The station will include research labs, centres for technology development, a knowledge sharing centre, and facilities for teaching, training, and community engagement.

*Government Orders*

• (1515)

The steel structure for one of the first buildings in the CHARS campus has already been erected. Work will continue in Cambridge Bay throughout the winter.

Scientific work is also already under way at the station location right in Cambridge Bay. An interim office has been set up and resident chief scientist Dr. Martin Raillard has been appointed to facilitate operational management and to interface with the community.

I know the community of Cambridge Bay is excited to host this world-class research facility and is embracing this opportunity. CHARS will be stronger, more effective, and more sustainable thanks to the input from elders and community leaders. Nunavut government agencies and other stakeholders have also participated.

CHARS will not only promote Canadian sovereignty and stewardship of Canada's Arctic lands, waters, and resources, but it will also support the local economy by generating employment and service contracts in the region. Through its research, capacity building, and outreach activities, CHARS will provide northerners with the skills and job experience they need to better participate in the labour force. In a show of support, following the Prime Minister's August 2014 northern tour, ITK stated:

ITK is pleased to see investments in Arctic research and we are hopeful about the opportunities that research partnerships...at CHARS can provide to Inuit.

Northerners believe deeply in this project because they are increasingly experiencing the benefits of investments in scientific research and technological development. Already there are centres for northern science in every territory, pursuing research that benefits northerners. CHARS will complement and anchor the existing network of smaller regional facilities across the north by establishing a year-round hub for a strong scientific research centre in the Arctic. It will be a destination for international scientists who are eager to participate in Canada's commitment to research excellence in the Arctic.

In my own riding, the Yukon Research Centre at Yukon College undertakes valuable research with respect to climate change, environmental science, technology, innovation, and cold climate innovation. Our government is proud to support the work at Yukon College through the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, NSERC. During his August 2013 visit to Whitehorse, the Prime Minister announced the substantial investment in the Yukon College Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining to help the centre expand quickly to meet the growing need for labour. Through the \$85 million Arctic research infrastructure fund, announced in economic action plan 2012, the college was granted \$2.5 million to renovate and enhance its research infrastructure, including areas that will contain research to advance cold climate innovations. Additional work at the Yukon Research Centre and other venues is exploring clean water, land use, the impact of permafrost on infrastructure, and indoor air quality, just to name a few.

Targeted science and technology investments like this speak directly to the practical needs of northerners, northern businesses, and northern families. Communities need the infrastructure, technologies, and skills to build prosperity. True prosperity, of

course, means ensuring sustainable, low-impact development of the north, while increasing the quality of life for northerners. For example, research into heat recovery ventilators, a current collaboration between CHARS and the Yukon Research Centre, makes homes more comfortable and heating costs more affordable. Research into agriculture and access to healthy foods is also advancing.

CHARS will build on the scientific and technological progress already taking place in the north. It will add to our knowledge about the north and will allow us to prosper from the opportunities that develop. World-leading science and technology research will help provide Canadians with the knowledge and tools they need to transform current challenges into opportunities. The creation of CHARS is an important step in fulfilling this vision.

I encourage all members of the House to join us in supporting the economic action plan 2014 act number 2 and to realize in particular the benefits of the Canadian High Arctic Research Station in the act that is contained within the budget implementation act to ensure that this important venue goes forward not just for northerners but for all Canadians.

• (1520)

**Mr. Robert Chisholm (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciated hearing from my colleague, the member for Yukon. He is a member who I think is engaged on a fairly regular basis in different ways with his constituents, talks to them about what is going on here, listens to what they have to say, and takes those issues quite seriously.

Does the member not think it is a bit odd—maybe not to his constituents but to a lot of other constituents who are represented by members of this House who will not have an opportunity to talk about the budget implementation act, which is associated with a budget of over \$200 billion, is over 460 pages, and deals with dozens of different pieces of legislation—that we are being asked to not speak to it for four days but for a maximum of 12 hours. Does he not think that is undemocratic and unfair to my constituents, let alone his?

**Mr. Ryan Leef:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for those comments and, ultimately, a question on process. Of course, I prefer to focus on the content of the budget and did that in my speech.

In regard to his question, I can only speak for what happens on this side of the House. When I have an opportunity to speak about legislation, bills, or policies that come before this place, I speak to my colleagues in my government about the opportunity and the need to express my concerns and those of my constituents. I am always given a fair opportunity to speak in the House. That has never been any different, and I am not quite certain it would be any different on that side. If members on his side of the House would like to speak to the bill, then it is something he needs to deal with procedurally by asking the people who make those decisions on his side.

*Government Orders*

It is a big country. We have a lot to get accomplished. We are doing a lot, and 460 pages in a budget bill, in my opinion, is rather a thick document when we are talking about all the programs and services and all the financial obligations and commitments that we on this side of the House make to Canadians. It is a lot of great work in a very small document, in fact.

**Mr. Ted Hsu (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question about a specific detail in the bill. The previous act, the Canadian Polar Commission Act, allowed the commission to initiate activities. The proposed Canadian high Arctic research act does not say anything about initiating activities. Therefore, it seems to me that, with this new act, the government would be taking away some of the autonomy that used to be present.

It seems the government is trying to have more control over what researchers do, take away control and centralize it in the Prime Minister's Office and the minister's office. To me, it is just another example of how controlling the government is. I am wondering why the government is afraid of just keeping the same language as before and allowing researchers in the north to have some autonomy.

**Mr. Ryan Leef:** Mr. Speaker, with changing times, necessarily, comes changing language around the deployment of the services we are hoping to provide.

I thank my hon. colleague for raising that question because it gives me another opportunity to talk about exactly how this system would unfold. The Canadian Polar Commission would join with the Canadian High Arctic Research Station. Essentially, it would create a larger and stronger research hub. Building on the existing mandate of the Canadian Polar Commission, CHARS would be able to bring together academic, first nations, northern governance, and international stakeholders to combine and congeal their expertise. The language in the legislation is only set forward to facilitate a stronger and better organization of Canadian northern high Arctic research.

This is great news for Canadians. I hope my hon. colleague will look at exactly what CHARS would be able to do with this mandate and what it would be able to do with its partners, including community partners in the north. I hope he is willing to find a way to support it.

• (1525)

**Mr. Joe Preston (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to stand today to talk about economic action plan 2014.

I will cover a few things today. As a small-business owner, I am going to talk about small business support and what this budget offers. I will talk about community and families. I will talk about jobs and growth being our priority as a government and in this budget, and I will certainly talk, and perhaps brag a little, about returning to balance and going forward.

First, I will talk a little about Elgin—Middlesex—London, how this bill pertains, and why I think economic action plan 2014 is the right way to go.

Elgin—Middlesex—London is a very diverse riding in southern Ontario. As the member for London West, the Minister of State for Science and Technology, would say, it is the 10th-largest city in Canada, and it has an urban centre that comes with it. However, the

rest of the riding is very diverse from an agricultural point of view, and it includes about 80 miles of the Lake Erie shoreline, where we even find commercial fishing. It is very diverse, with heavy manufacturing in one part of the riding, a pretty good urban base, a wide-open economic part for agriculture, and some great recreation.

I lead off with that so that I can talk about why small business growth is so important to me. I am a small-business person still. We have to move forward by expanding our small-business base in this country.

Small businesses create so much employment in our country. So much of what happens, certainly in small rural communities, happens because of small business, and I do not just mean the jobs those small business people create, because that is a given. Business people want to be successful and hire people.

We should stop to think of the goods and services purchased by small businesses in each of our small communities and the really unique things that happen in small communities, such as the small-business owner not only being the sponsor of the local hockey team but probably the coach too, or the small business being the place where we go to get our local news. When we can make a decision in a budget that makes small businesses stronger and gives them the ability to hire more employees, it is something that can really have an impact.

The small business job credit that is part of economic action plan 2014 would allow small businesses to not contribute some of the EI portion for their staff.

If there is anyone else in the House who is a small-business person, I can certainly share with them my own business habits and those of other small-business people I know. If money is saved by a small-business person, not very often is it profit or money that goes back into our pockets. It is spent on expansion, on hiring, or on other things. The small business job credit truly would do exactly that. As small businesses find that they are saving, they will certainly turn that into hiring new employees or buying new products or whatever else it might be.

The other piece in economic action plan 2014 that will affect small businesses in a great way is the continued reduction by this government of red tape for small businesses.

I love to go to work. I know that many small-business people love to go to work, but not one of them has said that they like to go to work and sit in the back room and fill out government paperwork. That is one thing I have never heard at a Chamber of Commerce meeting or a Canadian Federation of Independent Business meeting. It is just not what people look forward to.

I think we can certainly suggest that those couple of things in this budget, from a small business and community point of view, are very important.

*Government Orders*

•(1530)

I said I would also talk about communities and families. I crossed over to that when I was talking about small businesses, because in many communities, small businesses are a great part of the community and the families that go with it. If small businesses cannot succeed in rural communities, we start to lose our families. The families in rural communities are, of course, what makes them work.

Also included in economic action plan 2014 is a children's fitness tax credit, which helps keep our communities more active. Members can laugh, but one of the exciting things we do in small communities is head down to the local arena or the local ball diamond to watch our kids being physically active. Something like the children's fitness tax credit being expanded in economic action plan 2014 adds to the fabric of rural communities in a way that maybe would not be noticed in a large urban centre.

The recreational facilities and the community piece is a sidebar. They are something that happens because we are doing something right with the child fitness tax credit.

There are a couple of other pieces in economic action plan 2014 that affect communities, and certainly rural communities, in a great way. One has to do with competition in the telecommunications sector and ensuring that people in rural Canada have what our urban counterparts have. It is certainly to have an increase in the ability to have broadband for our kids' use, from an educational point of view.

I already mentioned that vibrant small businesses help rural communities be vibrant. Access to good broadband Internet service for those small businesses is a huge thing and needs to happen in our rural communities.

We also talk in economic action plan 2014 about an end to pay-to-pay billing for consumers. Whether it is in rural or urban communities, not having to pay for having a bill delivered to our house is important for communities and families.

I said I would also talk about how jobs and growth continue to be what we must think of as priority one, job one. In our heavy manufacturing centre in southern Ontario, we saw a great loss with the closure of some very large car plants and the like during the recession. We trade almost everything we make in Elgin—Middlesex—London with the United States. It is a huge proportion of trade where we live, because north-south trade has always been the easiest thing to do.

With the great recession in the United States, we had to find other customers, and now as the United States is recovering, we are finding that not only can we keep our other customers, with some of the great deals this government has been able to put together around the world, but we can also go back to our trading partners in the United States and start selling them goods. Do not tell them, because it will work a lot better if they do not know that they are buying from Canada. Jobs and prosperity are very important.

I want to finish with what I think is truly the best thing that has happened under this government and in economic action plan 2014, and that is finishing the balancing of the budget to take us back to a balanced situation. A number of things will happen because of that.

Certainly there will be the ability for us to lower the tax burden for Canadian families and Canadian businesses, because we will be back into balance.

There is also the psychological piece that happens in every household. There may be times when we have to put a little bit on the credit card. There may be times when we have to take out a little loan to renovate, but there is always that bit of celebration when we pay off the balance. When the mortgage is paid off, it is incredible. To compare the country of Canada with the rural family in Elgin—Middlesex—London, it is a joyous time when we can celebrate returning to balance and being able to make good financial decisions, including allowing Canadians to keep a little bit more money in their pockets.

•(1535)

**Mr. Matthew Kellway (Beaches—East York, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, what the member's speech betrayed to me was a complete lack of understanding of cities in this country, as though his rural community is the only community that has ballparks and hockey rinks and all the rest of it. It was as if those of us who live in cities do not spend time in our local arenas. I spend about two hours every weekend, when events allow, at my local arena watching my son play hockey and, from time to time, the team I sponsor. We have two baseball leagues in my riding.

What the member misses in talking about this sports tax credit is that there is also, in our cities, an enormous portion of people who cannot afford to put their kids in organized sports.

It is not just about the 400,000 manufacturing jobs we have lost. It is about 50% of the jobs in our cities, in the cities of Toronto and Hamilton, being precarious work. It is about huge, growing informal economies, where people are making less than minimum wage just to survive. They call them survival jobs in my riding.

What does this budget do for cities? Nothing.

**Mr. Joe Preston:** Mr. Speaker, I apologize to the member if he thought I was downplaying cities. I represent part of the 10th-largest one in Canada. I was trying to draw a comparison between some of the rural lifestyle and the urban lifestyle. I may not have gotten it absolutely right.

We certainly travel to rinks in the city of London and watch our teams beat those teams. We are happy to do it.

The child fitness tax credit does exactly what the member asked: What about the kids who cannot afford it? That is what this is for. That is who it helps.

I recognize that there are great community groups that we all have to be part of that also help with that and make our communities stronger.

I tried to talk about how the country is diverse. We have a great big country with a lot of different things in it: some great big cities and some very small rural ones. They are all happy to move forward when the kids are doing well, when families are doing well, and when small businesses are doing well. Economic action plan 2014 would make that happen.

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the member about employment insurance.

The Liberal Party came up with a bold, creative idea that would see EI premium exemptions for every new hire for small businesses. It was something that would have created literally tens of thousands of jobs all across Canada.

We can contrast that to what the Conservatives are proposing, which is miniscule in terms of job creation. Some have even suggested that it would be a job disincentive.

Does the government not have an obligation to contrast ideas, and where there is a better idea, maybe adopt it, even if it comes from the opposition benches?

**Mr. Joe Preston:** Mr. Speaker, in my speech I tried to talk about my role as a small-business person for most of my life and what it takes to make money in a small business and what we do with it when we make money.

I am sorry, but I have to challenge the member a little on his math. First, a Liberal Party that emptied the EI fund of every cent in it then asks if we would be taking too much out of it to help small businesses grow and prosper is a bit on the rich side.

Second, I have been in the House long enough to hear recommendations from each of the parties opposite on a 45-day work year for EI, which would do nothing but absolutely drain the EI fund.

• (1540)

**Mr. Adam Vaughan (Trinity—Spadina, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel.

I come from a background of being on city council. I referenced that earlier today in my remarks. When councillors are confronted with bills or motions that do multiple things, they are usually ruled out of order. One has to introduce items that are specific to a line of thought and amendments and motions have to line up in a logical order. One cannot solve a problem in the fire department, while talking about transit, with a focus on a bill named after a daycare program. It confuses the public, but it also puts legislators in a position where, with a single vote, they have to contradict positions, or policies or promises made to constituents and residents. Members find themselves in exactly that situation today.

There is a procedural process on many city councils and in legislatures across the country where a motion can be split so one can accurately record one's position item by item. It is a shame the government has chosen to proceed the way it has and stack 100-plus different intents all together under one umbrella, pretending it is a budget bill when in fact it is sort of a cross-section of promises and announcements that have been made across the country. Sometimes in Parliament, they land on our desks and we have to make a decision yes or no on all of them all at once, and I do not think that is a fair process. It does not allow us to accurately register or represent our positions, and that is a concern.

I will try to address some of the issues that are specific and important to the folks who I represent.

First is the child fitness tax credit. We all understand that the goal is to get kids physically active, but a lot of kids cannot be physically active due to disabilities and, as a result, this is not a tax break that would be applied equally to all children. As well, many other children choose to exercise their minds and many families put their kids into cultural programs. There is no corresponding tax cut for that. This seems to be an oversight and is something that should be addressed. It is a concern because in cities it is not as singular an approach to child rearing. Parents do not stick their kids on a hockey rink if the kids want to do something else, such as dance, which is also a physical activity, but does not get covered under this program because it is an art and not a sport. It is a big problem.

There has been reference by some New Democrats that there is no initiative around housing. There are actually two initiatives around housing. The government is doing something spectacular in the middle of a national housing crisis, which is to look for ways to increase the cost of housing. If a condominium is renovated and the renovation is significant, people end up paying more for housing. How is making housing more expensive a strategy that anybody in our country has embraced? In fact, making housing more expensive, particularly in the condominium market, is the housing bubble about the government is so concerned. It once again shows, and this was the comment at the end of my member's statement earlier today, that the government does not seem to understand that the "C" in front of CMHC stands for Canada.

Canada has always had a national housing program in one way or another. The difference is that in the last 10 years the Conservative government is walking away from that responsibility. In this set of motions, beyond clearing up a past legislative error, the only real initiative under way by the government is to actually make housing more expensive, particularly in urban areas. That is so short-sighted, so ill-conceived and such a wrong move, I do not know how to describe it. What it really shows is that when given half a chance, Tories do raise taxes; they just do it on the vulnerable.

The other issues of concern are items that have been slipped in. The one that concerns me the most, coming from a city with a very small port that somehow keeps having privileges granted to it, is the changes under the federal ports act and the Canada Marine Act with regard to how federal ports can acquire new property.



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For municipalities, the federal port system and the Canada Marine Act grant powers to land use zoning patterns that are not regulated by local city halls. Therefore, when the power is given to a port to acquire new land, it actually acquires land in very important, very sensitive parts of cities, sometimes environmentally, sometimes economically, and the government has stripped the local authority away from that land and has given it to federal agencies that are appointed largely through order in council. This is not good local planning, this is not good economic development, and this is not reasonable insofar as there has not been consultation with a single city, let alone a province, on this fundamental power that the government would extend to federal ports. That is a problem.

● (1545)

Finally, there is the issue of trying to pretend that a private member's bill is now something that was announced in the budget. This refers to the move to suspend the requirement that all provinces support refugees with social assistance.

Not a single province beyond Ontario was consulted. When we talked to Ontario, it was not consulted and it wrote the Conservatives to say not to do it. Therefore, the only province who speaks to the government on this issue is saying not to do it.

I do not know how to describe it. An anti-democratic move is one way to look at it, because there is nobody asking for this. Nobody is asking for this change, yet the change shows up mysteriously in a bill that is sold to Canadians as a budget bill. It is actually simply a mask or diversion tactic to slip in a private member's bill that the Conservatives are too embarrassed to have voted on individually because they know how bad the legislation is.

This is not good government. It is not good process. It is really a basket of flawed policies. When we total up the flaws, the correction of 10 mistakes that the Conservatives made in drafting legislation too swiftly before, and some initiatives which are worthwhile but they do not stand up in contrast to the damages, problems and inadequacies of the other legislation, parties like ours are left with no choice but to cast one vote, because that is the only opportunity we have been given, and the only vote we could cast in good conscience is a "no".

If we have to pass this legislation based on its weakest piece of legislation, we have to vote no. It does not mean that we would pass it because we like a couple initiatives and let the other bad stuff slide by. That is not responsible government. It is not responsible legislative law drafting.

We have in front of us a collection of initiatives, some of which are not serious in terms of having to worry our time debating. They are housekeeping bills that simply clarify legislation. However, the bulk of them is an attempt to slip in poor legislation and trumpet the stuff that the government likes. That is not a fair way to present legislation. It is not an appropriate way for this body to deal with the complex issues in front of it. I would urge all members on this side of the House to certainly vote against it.

The backbenchers on the opposite side ought to think about what they are being told to do, and what they are being led into. If this process becomes common practice in this place, it will have them

voting against their core principles one day and they will be just as upset as we are.

**Mrs. Carol Hughes (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskaing, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the New Democrats have been consistently opposed to the Conservative omnibus budget bills, just like we were opposed to the Paul Martin Liberal omnibus budget bill in the 1990s.

The bill is about 450 pages. It touches 400 clauses and amends dozens of laws. Most of the changes in this huge budget bill have no connection whatsoever to the government's 2014-15 budget from last spring.

There have been a lot of demands out there. We know there is a surplus now, but on whose back? It is on the backs of first nations, on the backs of the most vulnerable, on the backs of seniors, on the backs of municipalities and on the backs of businesses as well.

I met with the CFIB this week. It is certainly in favour of the NDP's proposal to ensure that we deal with the high credit card fees. It is also in favour of a national child care program.

Could my colleague speak to the fact of how desperately we need a national child care program and maybe why his government never actually implemented it with the many promises it made?

● (1550)

**Mr. Adam Vaughan:** Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege of being a journalist here when some of those budgets were passed in the 1990s and 2000s. I recall the NDP voting several times with the Liberals to promote some good budget measures. The one that did not get passed was a national daycare program negotiated with the provinces, an issue the member will soon be confronting if her motion around daycare ever comes to fruition or if the NDP ever forms government. We all know we cannot negotiate with the provinces quickly.

The issue is this. When we have opportunities to agree, we should agree and we should work together to get stuff done on some issues. The last Liberal budget in 2005 had \$2.4 billion for housing. If that budget had gone through, it would have taken with it the Kelowna accord, which would have had an extraordinary impact on aboriginal first nations communities. We would also have had a national child care policy from coast to coast to coast. Unfortunately, that budget did not survive. Co-operation on that one, which was not an omnibus bill, would have been really good for cities, municipalities, provinces and communities, but, most important, Canadians right across the country.

We need to start thinking about these issues in a more concise way. I share the NDP concern that the other side has done one thing and one thing only in this budget, and that is to make housing more expensive, while ignoring all of the other demands for housing.

*Government Orders*

On the issue of refugees looking for social assistance, the government has listened to nobody because nobody has asked for action. The Conservatives have slipped in a private member's bill in a way that can only be described as trying to hide their true motives. On that one, I share the NDP's distaste for the way in which the government has moved on this legislation

**Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to pick up on the hon. member's theme about all of the things that are hidden in this little gem of a budget.

I presented to the House Bill C-474, a transparency bill for the extractive sector. Lo and behold, the government in its wisdom defeated the bill, and now it has slipped that bill back into this omnibus legislation. I suppose I should be flattered. I could count that as maybe a half win. Nevertheless, the irony is quite resplendent. That bill demanded of the extractive sector accountability and transparency and was put in an omnibus bill of 586 pages, which has no accountability and no transparency.

Would the member care to comment on all of these little "gems" that are hidden in this legislation, which make it difficult for members to vote reasonably?

**Mr. Adam Vaughan:** Mr. Speaker, we might see consensus emerging on some of these items if they were presented one at a time in front of us as members of Parliament. The trouble is that quite clearly a game is being played. We can almost see the campaign being written by members across the way. We voted against X, Y and Z. What they do not tell the public is that we have to vote A, B and C to get there. That is the problem. It sets up a deceitful way of making members of the House express and represent their constituents views, and that is just fundamentally wrong. It also leads to the bad lawmaking that requires 10 corrections.

There is great consensus in the House on things like an urban agenda, and yet we see nothing.

The one thing the Tories have done is raise taxes on condominiums and made housing more expensive. That does not help anybody in the country except for the folks who draft bills like this.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Massimo Pacetti (Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are here to debate Bill C-43 to implement certain provisions of the 2014 budget. I am pleased to be able to speak on this subject.

First, I believe that it is logical to oppose bills like this one that are too big. This bill addresses too many subjects that have nothing to do with the budget. As a result, we do not have enough time to analyze and thoroughly debate the bill. By way of evidence, this bill corrects a number of previous bills that contained disparate elements.

We have come to expect omnibus bills from this government, and that is something that I find unacceptable in a country like Canada. Today, we are not only debating the implementation of the budget, but also amendments to the Criminal Code, patents, aeronautics and telecommunications, employment insurance and social assistance, which the government wants to take away from part of the population. I am not the only one to point out the Conservatives' lack of respect for democracy.

To come back to the bill before us today, I believe that it contains initiatives and measures that are not in line with the pressing needs of the middle class. The bill offers tax credits here and there, but we can already predict that they will be useless, outdated and impractical.

I find it disappointing that the government ignores what the public wants when drafting a document as important as a budget. We need a much more ambitious plan in order to offer middle-class families better opportunities, while doing everything we can to foster sustainable economic growth.

One of the measures in the bill that I would like to speak about today is the increase in the child fitness tax credit from \$76 to \$150. This increase is one of the new income tax measures. As the sport critic, I am pleased to speak about this initiative.

During the 2011 election, the Conservatives' platform indicated that this measure would cost approximately \$130 million a year. The government now expects it to cost only \$35 million a year, even though this tax credit will be refundable every year. The fact that the government lowered the estimated cost of this initiative shows that it already knows that this increased tax credit will not increase our children's physical activity.

Of course, no one is against costs that are lower than planned, and no one is against additional tax credits. However, I strongly believe that if the measure already in place did not achieve the goal of making young people more active, then the proposal to increase the tax credit will not really encourage more people to use it to improve their children's health.

The participation rate in organized sports is going down, not up. The only year when there was an increase in the past 10 or 15 years was in 2003. We know what happened: in 2002, during the Winter Olympics, the men's and women's hockey teams won gold medals. We expect to see increased participation in organized sports this year because Canada won medals in hockey and curling. There will be just a slight increase in participation. We do not expect this increase in the tax credit to increase the number of children registered for sports such as hockey in the long term.

This shows that the government is not listening. This initiative is not the help that Canadian families need to motivate young people to be physically active. I know the benefits of physical activity, and I think we need to assess certain policies and improve them or even replace them when they are not working.

● (1555)

It has been proven that being active plays a very important part in reducing the long-term risk of heart disease, hypertension, diabetes and cancer.

According to a document produced by the Conference Board of Canada, inactivity is a serious problem for everyone. The document says that "sitting is being called the 'new smoking'".

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This is a problem that affects both adults and children, who are becoming increasingly focused on and influenced by technology. This is a social crisis that affects us all. Computers and televisions are creating a generation of young people who remain seated and who do not move enough.

Unfortunately, I see the child fitness tax credit as a relatively ineffective and impractical tax measure.

A real initiative to encourage young Canadians to get into shape would involve resources on many different levels. Various Canadian sports organizations wanted the federal government to invest a significant amount of money in infrastructure for various sports.

I have to wonder how much the government has set aside to refurbish or build sports infrastructure over the next few years. Has the government set aside any money, and could this government commit to doing more and doing a better job at getting our young people moving? I think it is the government's responsibility to look at the programs it develops and eliminate them when they do not achieve their objectives.

I enjoy sports and this topic is important to me, so I am aware of the urgent needs in the sports world. The most common concern is the lack of infrastructure and resources. We are lacking resources to better train our coaches and enable elite athletes to continue to train in the future.

Massive, direct investments in sports infrastructure could play a big part in getting Canadians back in shape. I urge the government to act now for the well-being of all young Canadians.

Another important aspect of the bill that I would like to debate is the amendment to the Employment Insurance Act. This new employment credit is for small businesses that pay less than \$15,000 in EI premiums annually. According to government estimates, this credit will cost \$550 million over the next two years. Again according to government estimates, this initiative could create approximately 800 jobs over the next two years.

However, this is another useless and ill-conceived measure by this government. According to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, each one of the jobs created will cost about \$700,000. Some experts even believe that this credit will eliminate jobs, which goes against its main objective. This is not really the help that the Canadian middle class is looking for.

The Liberal Party proposed a two-year premium exemption for every new job created by small businesses. We believe that companies that create new jobs should be compensated and that we should not run the risk of losing jobs or driving down salaries because of a bad tax credit.

The Liberal Party believes that we must focus on job creation for the middle class and on economic growth. We can only build a strong and growing economy by addressing Canadians' concerns and listening to what they want. The government is completely out of touch with Canadians and is not offering any major, practical solutions to spur economic growth.

In closing, I believe that Bill C-43 does not meet Canadians' expectations. The government must do better when it comes to investing in infrastructure, investing in education by working with

the provinces to promote accessibility, and developing real initiatives to create jobs in Canada. Furthermore, I believe that the government should sit down with the provinces and consider the different problems they are facing.

• (1600)

**Mrs. Carol Hughes (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague talked about how the Conservative government does not listen to experts, as we have said.

The Conservatives have paid more attention to lobbyists by proposing a plan that will siphon \$500 million out of the employment insurance fund to create a mere 800 jobs.

In my riding, the community of White River needs about 60 employees and is having a hard time hiring people to train them. This kind of thing is happening across the province.

Does my colleague think that the \$500 million would be better invested in a training program so that people can be hired in places like White River?

• (1605)

**Mr. Massimo Pacetti:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question.

If the government will not listen to the NDP and the Liberal Party, maybe it will listen to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, who came up with the estimates.

I might have gone a little too fast, so I can redo the math, but it is just like my colleague said. The government's new employment insurance reform will cost \$500 million and will create just 800 jobs. If you divide \$550 million by 800 jobs, that means each job will cost \$700,000. That makes no sense.

That \$500 million could be invested in ridings like the one represented by my colleague from Sudbury, or the Island of Montreal, where unemployment rates are a little too high. That way, we could train our young people so that they can find sustainable jobs for the future.

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I believe the member for Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel has it right. I truly appreciate the comments he has put on the record in regard to the government's budget.

I have a simple question for the member. When he talks about the needs of the community and makes reference to Montreal and others, but specifically in regard to Montreal, could the member provide his thoughts on how important it is for the government to invest in infrastructure today as an important economic tool into the future?

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Massimo Pacetti:** Mr. Speaker, my colleague's very good question does not only relate to Montreal. Urban centres all face the challenge, but we saw in the last budget implementation bill that the government committed to having tolls put on the Champlain Bridge. Just south of Montreal we have three other bridges. If we put tolls on just the Champlain Bridge, we are going to have backlogs in traffic all the way to the east end and the Champlain Bridge is located on the west end. I met with some east end business groups and they said we will not solve the problem by setting tolls. The problem will be solved by investing more in infrastructure.

There is a chronic problem in this country in getting goods from east to west and west to east through the provinces, but we have a huge problem on the island of Montreal getting goods from the east end to the west end because of tonnes of problems with infrastructure. Putting tolls on the Champlain Bridge will be one of the many problems that we will have if the government does not get its act together and put more money into infrastructure.

**Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon (Mississauga East—Cooksville, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to have an opportunity to participate with my parliamentary colleagues in the debate on Bill C-43. I will be splitting my time with the member for Newmarket—Aurora.

Throughout the past number of months, especially during the summer break, I spent a lot of time going door to door in the neighbourhoods of the riding I represent. Often residents were surprised to see me at the door during a non-election period but appreciated the opportunity to be served by their member. I appreciated the opportunity to listen to the concerns and questions of my constituents and to see if there was something my office could assist them with.

There were some common themes that I heard from my constituents. People are concerned about their families, friends, and neighbours. They want to ensure that they all have a job to go to each day. They want to know if they will be able to afford to feed their families and provide them with a safe home. They want to ensure that the portion of their hard-earned income that goes to taxes is being used efficiently and wisely.

Our government continues to work hard to create jobs, keep taxes low, and help make our streets and communities safer.

With respect to jobs, I would like to mention that we have the best record in the G7, as has been mentioned often but deserves repeating. We have recovered every job we lost during the recession. Better yet, 1.1 million new jobs have been created in Canada since the depths of the recession, over 80% of which are full time. That is progress because every single one of those jobs means something important to someone, fathers or mothers, young people who are starting their career, or new Canadians who are committed to doing their part in their new country of Canada.

We are working hard to help students and apprentices. I recently had an opportunity to visit the Electrical College of Canada in my riding of Mississauga East—Cooksville. The college prepares its students with the hands-on, practical application of electrical theory and safety knowledge to get students started toward achieving an electrician licence. During this meeting I heard from the instructors and leaders about the demand for skilled trades, as well as the need for opportunities for young people to apply their practical hands-on

skills. There were a number of young men and woman who were learning a trade, which they were excited about, and they were excited about where it would take them. Economic action plan 2014 would help our skilled trades. Apprentices registered in eligible trades would be eligible for loans that would be interest free until their training ends.

We recently recognized our small-business owners and employees during Small Business Week, those who work hard and take risks in order to create jobs and move our economy. I want to thank the hard-working people in our community who run small businesses. Despite the economic challenges, these business owners are committed to providing jobs and spur our economy. With that in mind, our government recently announced the small business job credit to lower payroll taxes on small business by 15%. The hard-working people of the riding I represent, Mississauga East—Cooksville, can be assured that we will continue to work on the mission of creating the conditions for new and better jobs across all sectors of our economy.

Earlier I mentioned the comments I heard from my constituents who are concerned about their taxes being used wisely, and the costs of living and raising a family.

● (1610)

The cost of raising a family adds up quickly. Our Conservative government understands these challenges. That is why we have worked to lower taxes, cutting the GST to 5% and cutting personal income taxes, and thousands and thousands of Canadians are taking advantage of the tax-free savings account that our government brought forward. Let us not forget the universal child care benefit, the children's art tax credit, and the children's fitness tax credit.

There is an old expression that goes something like this: active children are healthy children. Canada's Minister of State for Sport recently visited my riding for a tour of the Mississauga Valley Community Centre. He had a very good discussion with some of the sports and recreation representatives in the community about the importance of activity to young people. I certainly believe that to be true, and so does our government. Regular exercise is essential to children's development and to get them started on a lifetime of healthy and active living.

With that in mind, our Conservative government introduced the children's fitness tax credit, which provides nearly 1.5 million Canadian families with tax relief, an incentive to keep their children active. Further to this, I am very proud of our government's recent announcement of the doubling of the children's fitness tax credit amount to \$1,000.

With all these tax cuts, credits, and supports by our Conservative government, the average family of four now saves nearly \$3,400 a year.

*Government Orders*

Families also want to know that they are safe in our communities. Of course, we must first thank our police and peace officers for all they do. Our government is doing its part to make sure the system puts the interests of law-abiding Canadians and the victims of crime first. We are toughening laws and supporting programs in this regard.

I want to recognize the Minister of Status of Women, who visited my riding in September and joined with Ms. Ashley Lyons, executive director of Safe City Mississauga, for a special announcement.

The minister announced more than \$166,000 in funding support to help prevent and eliminate cyberviolence against women and girls in Mississauga and the Region of Peel. This is one example among many of our government continuing to take concrete actions to protect Canadians from all forms of violence.

Locally in Mississauga, we are seeing job growth and infrastructure investment in our community, thanks to our government's focus on reducing red tape while increasing investment in skills training.

The City of Mississauga has received nearly \$126 million of federal funding through the gas tax fund since 2006. I will add to this that the Region of Peel gas tax fund is at nearly \$213 million since 2006. This is a long-term, predictable, and environmentally stable source of funding that has helped with major projects, including Mississauga's accessible transit fleet and the transit campus.

I want to quickly share an email that I received recently from the City of Mississauga for the opening of the Mississauga Transitway:

As an important partner in the Transitway Project, I would like to personally invite you to...the official opening ceremony. It's our way of saying thank you for your commitment to the Mississauga Transitway Project.

I am looking forward to joining with my Mississauga and Region of Peel colleagues for this special event. Indeed, this is a government that is investing in our communities, our people, and our future.

Canadians can be pleased that this budget contains no new taxes on families and businesses, while also continuing to ensure government spending is efficient and as effective as possible.

• (1615)

We will always put consumers first, expanding choice and reducing costs and keeping taxes low. We are helping and supporting families. We will always put Canada first, celebrating and defending our country and working to keep Canadians safe in their communities.

These are the priorities of the hard-working people whose doorsteps I visited throughout the summer and fall, and these are also the proud commitments of our government. I would ask all members of this House to vote in support of Bill C-43.

**Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, like the member opposite, I have been knocking on the doors of many of my constituents in Parkdale—High Park, and like the member's opposite, many of our constituents are certainly concerned about how the dollars they send to Ottawa are being spent and how the money that goes into the employment insurance fund, for example, is spent.

One of the highlights of the Parliamentary Budget Officer's report is looking into the Conservatives' small-business hiring credit. We in the NDP are big promoters of small business, and we certainly want to do whatever we can to encourage them to hire. We have put forward a number of proposals to assist small businesses, including reducing credit card transaction fees. However, what the Parliamentary Budget Officer said was that the credit that the federal government is proposing would cost \$0.5 billion and only create 800 jobs. That means it would cost \$550,000 for each job created.

My question for the member opposite is this. Does he think that is good value for Canadian tax dollars?

• (1620)

**Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon:** Mr. Speaker, as I stated in my speech, there is always a concern of my constituents and those of other members, people across Canada, about how efficiently the tax dollars that they contribute are spent. Of course, as I mentioned in my speech, we are working very hard so that the tax dollars are spent wisely, and also that we give our businesses opportunities to grow, that we do not burden them with different taxes and rising taxes, and that we give them a competitive edge on every front.

Of course there is room for improvement, and that is why we will be working every day on improving the way businesses can work and compete on the world market.

**Mr. Ted Hsu (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to follow on the last question, because it seems to me that the current Conservative government has rejected what would be a very good improvement, and that is to replace its plan for EI tax credits with a plan that would actually give an incentive to businesses to create jobs.

It is one thing to give businesses money, which they may or may not invest. It is another thing to say that, if they create a new job, they will get a credit. They would get this incentive.

Economic choices are made at the margins. This is basic economics. I really would like the member to answer the question that was previously posed, and also to tell the Canadian people why we do not give businesses an incentive to create new jobs instead of just a simple transfer of cash.

**Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon:** Mr. Speaker, I am not quite sure what he is talking about regarding the government giving cash to businesses instead of incentives. Maybe he forgot, but one of the great incentives is the hiring tax credit. That is given to businesses to hire new people. That is an incentive. This is an incentive for the businesses to grow. Therefore, we do not have a policy to throw money at businesses. Yes, our policy is to give all kinds of incentives for businesses, to help them grow, not to burden them with higher taxes.

*Government Orders*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton):** Before we resume debate, it is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Malpeque, the Canadian Wheat Board; the hon. member for Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskwasing, Aboriginal Affairs.

Resuming debate, the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development.

**Ms. Lois Brown (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am proud today to speak on behalf of my constituents in Newmarket—Aurora on the second implementation bill of economic action plan 2014.

This is a tremendous piece of legislation that would benefit residents in Newmarket—Aurora and indeed all Canadians. It responds to the priorities of my constituents by putting tax dollars back into their pockets, increasing transparency in government, supporting Canadian families, and helping to create jobs and opportunity.

Newmarket—Aurora is home to thousands of families, residents who work hard to raise their children and contribute to their community. Every day in my riding, thousands of children and youth participate in a myriad of sports and fitness sessions that include soccer, hockey, dance, baseball, gymnastics, swimming, and martial arts, just to name a few.

The benefits of fitness activity in children are well known. In addition to the physical health benefits, participation in sports can help build self-esteem and confidence, motivate children to excel academically, and build valuable social skills. That is why, in order to help parents afford the cost of enrolling their children in organized sports activities, economic action plan 2014 proposes to double the children's fitness tax credit from \$500 to \$1,000. This credit would also become refundable, increasing its benefit to low-income families claiming the credit.

I remind Canadians that since 2006, our Conservative government has reduced federal taxes to the average Canadian family of four by over \$3,400 each and every year. Indeed, the overall federal tax burden is now at its lowest level in 50 years.

How did we do this? We reduced the GST by nearly 30%, a measure that benefits all Canadians whether or not they pay taxes. We also increased the basic personal amount, the amount that all Canadians can earn without paying federal income tax. We reduced the lowest personal income tax rate and we introduced the tax-free savings account. Doubling the children's fitness tax credit and making it refundable is just one more way that our government is putting more money back into the pockets of families.

Canada is ranked as one of the world's most attractive countries for business. Bloomberg rankings recently saw Canada leap into second place, behind only Hong Kong. This did not happen by itself; it is a direct result of our government's strong, continued focus on jobs and economic growth.

Economic action plan 2014 continues this focus through the introduction of the new small business job credit. The small business job credit will cut EI payroll taxes by 15%, saving small businesses more than \$550 million over the next two years, money that can be

reinvested into hiring or into upgrading equipment and increasing productivity.

This is yet another action by our government to grow the economy and help create jobs. Indeed, through this government's focus on jobs and economic growth, over 1.1 million net new jobs have been created, 82% of them full-time jobs, with 78% in the private sector and 67% in high-wage industries. Almost 90% of businesses in Canada, about 780,000 in total, will directly benefit from the credit.

We know that small businesses like those in my riding of Newmarket—Aurora are the backbone of the economy and the economic engines of our communities. In Canada, they employ approximately 70% of the total labour force in the private sector.

This credit builds upon our government's strong support of small business since 2006, which has included measures to cut red tape, freeze EI premiums, and reduce the small business tax rate.

● (1625)

Economic action plan 2014 and, more specifically, this second budget implementation bill continue to empower Canadian consumers. For example, it would improve competition in the telecommunications market and end pay-to-pay billing practices by telecommunications service providers whereby subscribers are charged to receive bills in paper form.

Bill C-43 also proposes to reduce the administrative burden on charities by allowing them to use modern electronic tools to raise funds and for other purposes. This is great news for the many charities in Newmarket and Aurora. Currently, registered charities must file annual information returns with the Canada Revenue Agency. Unlike other groups, however, charities do not have the option of filing their information returns electronically. This poses a significant administrative burden for volunteers and staff of some 86,000 registered charities across Canada. To address this concern and to reduce the administrative burden on charities, funding will be provided to the Canada Revenue Agency to modernize its information technology, thereby enabling charities to apply for registration and file their annual information returns electronically for the first time.

To encourage Canadians to donate to registered charities, the Government of Canada provides individuals and businesses with tax incentives that have been described as among the most generous in the world. In fact, federal tax assistance for the charitable sector amounts to approximately \$3 billion annually. This new measure would further assist charities to focus more on raising funds to support the great work that they do and less on administration.

*Government Orders*

My constituents are also pleased that Bill C-43 would end pay-to-pay billing practices by telecommunications service providers whereby subscribers are charged to receive bills in paper form. The practice of broadcasting companies charging subscribers for providing them with a paper bill is an irritating and costly one. I have had numerous complaints from my constituents regarding this practice.

We do not believe that Canadians should pay more to receive a paper copy of their telephone or wireless bill. That is why, as we set out in the 2013 Speech from the Throne, we are committed to ending this unfair practice once and for all. Bill C-43 sets out the legislation to do so.

I can assure my constituents and all Canadians that our government will continue to promote policies that support Canadian consumers and put more money back in the pockets of hard-working Canadian families.

I have spoken in the House and in committee in the past about our government's concrete action to address the tragic issue of missing and murdered aboriginal women. Economic action plan 2014 contains significant actions to further address this issue. Some \$25 million would be allocated over five years to continue our efforts in directly addressing the issue, and over \$8 million would be used to support a national DNA-based missing persons index. These two initiatives, together with other federal support for shelters, family violence prevention, and increased economic and leadership opportunities for aboriginal women, will result in a total investment by the Government of Canada of nearly \$200 million over five years.

This investment builds on previous actions that include the passing of historic legislation that gave aboriginal women living on first nations reserves the same matrimonial rights as all Canadians, including access to emergency protection orders in violent situations. We have also passed over 30 justice and public safety measures, including tougher sentencing for murder, sexual assault, and kidnapping.

I will go back to some of the things that the economic action plan would do. It would make key investments to ensure that today's youth have the skills that they need to get the jobs of tomorrow. We want to see all young people have the opportunity.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the House to support the bill's speedy passage so that we can begin to see the results and the benefits.

• (1630)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Raymond Côté (Beauport—Limoilou, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for the speech she gave.

Clearly, the speech was filled with the same bravado we are used to hearing from the Conservative benches. It is rather disappointing. I find it unfortunate that my colleague brought up the question of support for small businesses, yet she ignored the fact that the Conservatives' plans have so far been quite ineffective for small business.

In reality, when we look at the past 20 years, big business has benefited from major tax cuts—their taxes have been practically cut

in half—while small businesses have had their tax rates cut by only one percentage point, from 12% to 11%.

The NDP believes in restoring the corporate fiscal balance by lowering small business tax rates to 9% and cancelling certain cuts that were granted to big business.

I would like to ask my colleague why she did not encourage her government to move in that direction, which would have been far more productive than tax credits that will create almost no jobs in the long run.

• (1635)

[*English*]

**Ms. Lois Brown:** Mr. Speaker, as a small business owner and as someone who has worked in that space for quite a number of years, I have, except for four years, created my own paycheque all my adult life. I know that any time we give a tax break to a small business, it will look at reinvesting it into the business, create more services, and create more job opportunities. Any time a small business gets any sort of tax break, that money goes back into the economy. It generates more opportunities in the community.

I attended, over the Thanksgiving break week, the business awards dinner that was held by our Chamber of Commerce. Person after person from small businesses came up to me to compliment us on the proposals for EI and to tell me that they are going to create more jobs in Newmarket, meaning great opportunities for young people in my community.

**Mr. Ted Hsu (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question about the first item that my hon. colleague addressed, which is the children's fitness tax credit.

The question is about whether the changes to the tax credit measure are really about children's fitness. The way to decide that is to ask the government, I believe, if it has any intention of measuring what the change in children's fitness or fitness activity is as a result of the tax credit.

**Ms. Lois Brown:** Mr. Speaker, I have worked in the area of wellness promotion. I have been involved for many years. In fact, when I was running for the nomination in 2004, I put on record that I would introduce a private member's bill to create a tax credit for people who had gym memberships.

I am absolutely delighted that the Conservative government is going to put in place a tax credit for children's fitness. Not only would it help families that are trying to give their young ones the opportunity to learn sports and to benefit from the social recreation and leadership skills that sports develops, but it would also create a new generation of healthy young people who would have less need to call upon our health care system.

I see the tax credit as an incredible asset to young families. Doubling it would mean more money in their pockets.

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**Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague just started to explain the benefits of the increased tax credit for children, but I would like her to briefly highlight the aspect of not only doubling it but making it refundable. That is a key point for low-income Canadians.

I wonder if she would expand on that aspect for 30 seconds.

**Ms. Lois Brown:** Mr. Speaker, indeed this measure would be of real benefit to low-income families, families that may not have been able to access any of the benefits of the tax credit. This would directly put money back into their pockets and give low-income families the opportunity to see their children participate in some of those recreational programs that perhaps they have not had the opportunity to participate in.

What is most important is that we would be creating a new generation of healthy young people, young people who are going to focus for the long term on their own activity and their own fitness levels and be encouraged to participate for the long run in what wellness can provide to them and in a healthy lifestyle.

● (1640)

**Mr. Robert Chisholm (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have an opportunity to stand for a few moments to talk about Bill C-43.

I indicate that I will be splitting my time with my colleague, the member for Beauport—Limoilou.

I have to say that I speak to the bill with a feeling of frustration and disappointment in this process. We have a bill that implements a budget to fund an organization that spends over \$200 billion a year. It is a budget implementation act that consists of 460 pages. It affects dozens of pieces of legislation, things such as, for example, a scheme that the government has come up with to use workers' and employers' money, though mainly workers' money, to fund a supposed job creation plan that the Parliamentary Budget Officer said is going to cost over \$500,000 per job. It has those kinds of provisions in it, yet members are being provided four days to debate the bill.

Four days sounds like a paltry amount, but let us take a look at how many hours that is. One of those days is Friday, when we will have two hours in which to debate Bill C-43. Because of the fact there will be a joint session to hear from the President of France, Monday will be considered a Wednesday, so we will have another two hours. If we stretch it out, we might get a total of 12 hours to discuss the bill.

Some of the Conservatives often say I am wasting my time. It is my time and I will use it the best way I know how. I am talking about the concerns of my constituents. Not only is the process a sham, but how could anyone possibly analyze a document of this size and this complexity in 12 hours?

Let us look for a second at what the government actually does with its budget. I talked about the fact that the budget of this country is over \$200 billion. We found out just yesterday that more than \$18 billion in spending that had been budgeted for programs, infrastructure and capital spending lapsed. In other words, it was not spent on what it was intended for. For example, close to \$1

billion that had been budgeted for the Department of National Defence was not spent.

What does that mean? That means that the men and women who protect our country, who go on training and operations here and around the world, do not have the equipment they need in order to conduct their activities. It means that bases such as Shearwater in Nova Scotia have to shut down their arenas, pools and chapels because they do not have the money to repair the infrastructure. That is what it means when we say money lapsed that had been budgeted to be spent in areas and operations that were deemed required by someone in order to make sure those particular services were appropriate. Bridges and roads have gone without the funds necessary to properly operate.

● (1645)

Here we are talking about legislation to implement a budget that is frankly fanciful to begin with to a large extent. The government does not have a clue what it is doing. It does not have a clue. Member after member on the government side stands and says that they are a small business person so they know how to run things and manage money.

If small business owners managed their businesses in this fashion, they would not be doing it very long because they would not have a roof over their business, they would not have stock because they would not be able to transport stock, and they would not have employees because they would not be able to ensure employees in the workplace were safe. What I am talking about is the responsible management of the resources of the people of this country.

The Prime Minister is out this afternoon making announcements. How can we believe those? It is like the plan that was announced in 2007 to build between six and eight Arctic offshore patrol vessels. In fact, they were going to cut steel and the first one was going to be started in 2013. That was last year. That is what the government promised. Conservatives went through at least two elections with the big promotions behind that, but it has become increasingly clear that the money is not going to be there. They are not going to be able to build six to eight Arctic offshore patrol vessels. They will be able to build maybe four and if they keep delaying things they way they have been, it is going to be three.

Why is that important? It is important because we went through a process that we supported and one of the places that was awarded to build those ships was in Nova Scotia. There are hundreds and thousands of men and women around that region who are depending on those jobs. They are now travelling out west to find work. They are counting on that investment that was promised to them by the government, by the Prime Minister, and as every single day goes by it becomes increasingly apparent it is not going to come to fruition.

We will not know about it probably until after the next election, because somewhere, somehow, the Conservatives will get a welder and a blow torch and cut some steel somewhere and say, "this is what you are going to get if you elect us", when in fact they know that the money is not there. The Minister of Public Works knows. It is just like the F-35s. It is just like the replacement helicopters for the Sea Kings. Conservatives just cannot seem to get it right. They cannot get the equipment into the hands of the men and women who serve this country and that is shameful.



That is what we are here to talk about. We should be talking under Bill C-43 about whether or not we can believe anything that is in this document of 460 pages that talks about implementing the budget, a budget that frankly proves time after time to be fanciful. That is the concern that my constituents have, that the government is not able to produce the goods.

• (1650)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton):** The hon. member for Ottawa—Orléans is rising on a point of order?

**Mr. Royal Galipeau:** Mr. Speaker, yes, I am. I would like to advise my friend that I am trying to be attentive to what he says and he says that he is talking about something, but really he is yelling about it. I wonder if you could advise him that his microphone is working and he does not have to scream.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton):** I do not think that is a point of order, but we will allow the hon. member for Dartmouth—Cole Harbour to continue. He has a little under a minute left in his remarks.

**Mr. Robert Chisholm:** Mr. Speaker, I am not going to apologize for being passionate about what the Conservative government is doing to constituents in Dartmouth—Cole Harbour. I will never be quiet when the Conservatives are making decisions that are having such an impact on people in my constituency and people across this country. If that offends the sensibilities of the member opposite, then he can go somewhere else, because this is my time.

My time has been chewed up by an irrelevant question but nonetheless I want to take this opportunity to say that this process is shameful. It does not serve the interests of Canadians and it certainly does not serve the interests of the people of Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, and that is how I plan to vote on Bill C-43.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to pick up on the issue of housing, which my colleague from Toronto made reference to and which members have talked about to a certain degree in this budget debate. There is a desperate need for stronger leadership from Ottawa to deal with the housing issue in virtually every region of the country. There is a genuine need for low-cost housing, low-income housing in particular, but also within the middle class, people are finding it challenging to own a home nowadays.

The government has not included anything in this budget that would make it easier for people to own homes or to even look at retrofit programs that would be better for the environment. The whole housing file seems to be completely missing from the budget.

I wonder if the member could comment on the importance of having a more proactive approach in dealing with housing, non-profit housing in particular.

**Mr. Robert Chisholm:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from the member for Winnipeg North because what has been happening with the cost of housing, particularly the cost of affordable housing in this country, is serious. That began to happen back in the late nineties when the Liberal government pulled out in a big way from supporting affordable housing strategies across this country. It was a shameful process to watch and it has continued under the Conservative government to the point now where it is

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estimated that there are 250,000 homeless families in this country. We simply have to do better.

The federal government has a responsibility to partner with the provinces to make sure that we not only fix the stock from the seventies and eighties that is falling apart but that we find other ways to provide new stock in our communities to make sure that affordable housing is available to Canadians.

**Mr. Bernard Trottier (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I find it ironic that for more than a day we have heard the NDP talking about the size of the omnibus budget bill, that it is an overly large bill, but rather than talk about what is in the budget bill that member has been talking about things that are not in it. He talked about the national shipping strategy and Arctic offshore patrol ships. Apparently there is not enough content in the budget bill for those members to criticize so they have to go fishing for other topics to talk about.

It is because of our strong fiscal position that we are able to invest in our armed forces and in military equipment, and invest in the Coast Guard.

If the member wants to talk about that topic, even though it is not specifically addressed in this budget bill, why do we not talk about our fiscal capacity and the fact that it is because of the strong fiscal measures that we have taken that we have the room to invest in our military and get it back on track?

• (1655)

**Mr. Robert Chisholm:** Mr. Speaker, a few veterans and a few members of the Canadian Forces live in Dartmouth who would love to have a little chat with my friend opposite about what his government is doing to support the women and men who serve this country through the Canadian Forces. It is despicable in far too many cases.

I talked to a constituent the other day whose brother committed suicide after having served within the armed forces for 23 years. He suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder. The government did not heed his cry for help and he ended up taking his life. That is what happens when, for example, \$1 billion is left unspent in the Department of National Defence. Members opposite have to understand what this is about. This is real. This is not funny. These are not games. Real people, real families are being affected, and that is who I am talking about here today in my remarks.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Raymond Côté (Beauport—Limoilou, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking the hon. member for Dartmouth—Cole Harbour for sharing his precious speaking time with me. Given that this is a mammoth, monstrous bill, 10 minutes is nowhere near enough time to comment on certain aspects. I want to sincerely thank him for sharing his time so that I can speak to certain aspects of the budget that are of particular interest to the people of Beauport—Limoilou.

*Government Orders*

Before I begin, I cannot help but pick up on the parliamentary secretary's comments. I would like to ask him where the replacement fighter jets are. Where are the ships that are supposed to maintain the operational capabilities of our armed forces and the coast guard? While we are at it, I could even ask where, at the bottom of the river, the paintbrush for repainting the Quebec Bridge has wound up. I could do as my Conservative colleagues have done and list all of this government's failures, but it would take too long and I would not be able to address the sensitive issues that are of particular concern to the people of Beauport—Limoilou.

We have amply highlighted the omnibus nature of this bill, which is more than 450 pages long and contains more than 400 clauses. It is terrible and completely disrespectful of Canadians. That is not to mention the time allocation motion, which severely limits our debates, in addition to the farce we can expect in the committee hearings. This budget implementation bill is meant to go to the Standing Committee on Finance. However, the Conservatives will continue to show contempt toward all Canadians in studying the bill by making it impossible to amend various parts, including, no doubt, at the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology, of which I am very proud to be a member.

Let us move on from the Conservatives' shameful behaviour and focus instead on the part in division 16 of the bill on the amendments to the Canada Marine Act. Hon. members are aware of the issue affecting the people of my riding, Beauport—Limoilou, namely the high level of contamination by a mix of dust, including nickel dust, from the Port of Québec, due to the operations of the Quebec Stevedoring company.

Obviously, like everyone else, I took up reading this immense bill under unspeakable conditions. After looking at the summary, I decided to focus on this division. There are a number of changes that open the door quite wide. It makes us wonder about the government's intentions and deeper motives. When it changes aspects and sections of our statutes, it does not just make minor changes, without intending to have these sections apply more broadly. Once the door is open it is impossible to close it again without a very strong will. I will raise a number of questions related to that.

I will start with clause 228:

228. Section 46 of the *Canada Marine Act* is amended by adding the following after subsection (2.1):

(2.11) A port authority may acquire federal real property or federal immovables, if supplementary letters patent have been issued.

That property will become “real property or immovables other than federal real property or federal immovables”.

That will already have serious consequences. Hon. members likely know that a Canadian port authority cannot transfer, dispose of, or borrow against federal real property or federal immovables.

Clearly, once the door is open we can imagine what will happen. Furthermore, the government is taking a piecemeal approach because, depending on the port authority, it will issue letters patent tailored to certain circumstances on a case-by-case basis. It is our understanding that these amendments were intended to resolve a particular case in one part of Canada, or that they represented a concession in that particular case. Nevertheless, this could have

many negative, even dangerous, repercussions for the people living near a port or a major Canadian port authority.

● (1700)

I would like to mention that all major Canadian cities have a port authority. Thus, very large populations could be affected by these changes. Potentially, these changes could ultimately result in complete or piece-by-piece privatization. We have absolutely no idea where this will stop, so why not?

I will now talk about clause 231 of the same bill. This clause adds quite a number of elements to section 64 of the Canada Marine Act. How this is done is quite surprising. This affects undertakings situated in a port, and the Governor in Council will have the authority to:

...make regulations respecting any undertaking...that is situated or proposed to be situated in a port, including regulations respecting the development, use and environmental protection of the port as it relates to the undertaking or class of undertakings.

When we look at all the details, we realize that once again, the government, in an underhanded and secretive way, can, through regulation, introduce individual rules tailored to the needs or even the whims of businesses working in our major Canadian ports.

Since the contaminated dust issue blew up two years ago—the government is still valiantly trying to keep that out of the spotlight—Quebec Stevedoring has always tried to shirk its responsibility and take advantage of a system that lets the company get away with it. Unfortunately, if I understand the logic of these new provisions, that system might be obligingly provided by a government that received nearly \$20,000 in donations from the company's senior executives, including the founding president of Quebec Stevedoring.

It is scary to see the door wide open like that and the red carpet rolled out for a select group of friends, so of course we have legitimate questions. Unfortunately, we are looking at this as part of a huge omnibus bill. We will have no choice but to exercise our right to vote on the bill as a whole. Obviously, we are going to vote against the bill because it contains too many unacceptable measures.

Then government representatives will be able to drone on, squawk and get all offended about how we voted for this or that measure, and they will generally behave in a way not befitting adults. I will not call it childish, because that would be disrespectful to children. As it turns out, children behave better than many adults.

I will end there, because I could go on for another 10 minutes, but I cannot fault my colleague from Dartmouth—Cole Harbour for wanting 10 minutes to stand up for his constituents.

If it ever passes, section 64.93, which is part of clause 231, indicates that:

No civil proceeding may be brought, no order may be made and no fine or monetary penalty may be imposed against Her Majesty in right of Canada or a port authority, in relation to an undertaking that is situated in a port, under regulations made under subsection 64.1(1), based on any right or interest held by Her Majesty or the port authority in that port.

We will have to see what the scope will be, but this clause raises a lot of questions and does not answer the concerns we might have.

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In conclusion, what is really disappointing and what we need to strongly condemn is the fact that the government will try send this division to the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities for review.

• (1705)

Unfortunately, though, we will not be able to examine it in depth or propose any amendments. Nothing will be done right, and the Conservatives will likely take the opportunity to do some nice things for their friends.

**Mr. Denis Blanchette (Louis-Hébert, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Beauport—Limoilou.

I do not know if the House noticed that my colleague did not mention the budget. He did not. Was he out of order? Not at all. That is what is so ridiculous about these mammoth bills. He kept his comments perfectly relevant to the bill, and he did not even mention the budget.

How is that possible? Everything he talked about deserved to be in a separate bill. Moreover, there are dozens more examples like that.

One thing that worried me in my colleague's speech was the regulatory process that seems to be emerging. The government appears to be creating a framework, but no one knows how it will work. All we know is that it will be through a regulatory process. One day we will find out; we do not know when. Maybe we will find out when there is some kind of abuse.

Could my colleague speak to that?

**Mr. Raymond Côté:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Louis-Hébert for his question and his comments, which are particularly pertinent. This brings me to something else that I did not have time to address in my speech.

When we talk about the regulatory process, this unfortunately leads to behaviour that can have serious consequences. I would draw my colleague's attention to the fact that under clause 231, subsection 64.4 will be added to the Canada Marine Act. It reads as follows:

64.4 Regulations made under subsection 64.1(1) prevail over any by-laws, practices and procedures or other similar instruments, and land-use plans, made by a port authority....

Mechanisms already exist that could allow a community to take into account or assess the actions of a port authority. However, the government could go about things in an entirely underhanded way, completely in secret, and present the public with a done deal. Canadians would then be hostage to decisions made in backrooms in Ottawa, and it would be very hard to keep an eye on things and, more importantly, gauge the consequences once those decisions take effect.

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member did not really talk about the budget but rather about the content of the budget implementation bill.

There is another way of looking at it. There are many things that could have or should have been incorporated into the budget implementation bill. I will take the specific example of what I believe is one of the most important everyday issues Canadians are

genuinely concerned about, which is, of course, our health care system.

In 2014, the health care accord expired. It is something the provinces and the federal government signed off on at the time to guarantee funding for 10 consecutive years. That has expired, yet within the budget document we have before us today, there is not a word about the importance of that ongoing financial support through another health care accord.

The member might want to comment on how important it is to work with provinces to achieve a future health care accord.

• (1710)

[Translation]

**Mr. Raymond Côté:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague from Winnipeg North for the question.

This allows me to point out that while the opposition is doing most of the debating here, we see our Conservative colleagues just sitting there, even though we have a monster bill with over 400 clauses that need to be examined and studied. It is absolutely unbelievable.

Clearly, as my colleague pointed out, the Conservative government imposed a transfer framework on the provinces in a positively shameful way. In fact, it was appalling that the federal government would impose its will on the provincial governments. It is unconscionable.

I would like to remind the member that the initial framework for the health transfers, which dates back some 50 years, stipulated that the federal government was to pay half the costs. Unfortunately, successive Liberal governments, under Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin, successfully negotiated a much more inequitable cost-sharing scheme, and this put additional pressure on the provinces. It is really appalling.

[English]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton):** Before we carry on with resuming debate, just a notice to hon. members that we have crossed that point in the debate where we are five hours past the first round of speeches on the question. Therefore, from this point onward all of the interventions are limited to a 10-minute speech and 5 minutes for questions and comments.

Resuming debate, the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works.

**Mr. Bernard Trottier (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is a real pleasure for me to rise to speak to Bill C-43, the budget implementation act, no. 2. This is a budget that we introduced in February. We have been talking about this budget for almost nine months and it is time to get it passed. It is a good idea to get budgets passed in the year they are introduced and then we can think about the next budget in 2015. I know sometimes the opposition would like to extend the debate on this for several more months, but it is time for us to get acting on this, with some very important measures for the fiscal health of the country.

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First I want to talk about the benefits of balanced budgets. This is the framework we are working within when we talk about this budget. There are obviously tax measures here, but also spending measures. Combined with the good measures we have taken over the last few years, they brought us us to a point where we are looking at balanced budgets again in 2015. That is very important.

I also want to talk about small businesses because they are so important. Many jobs are created in our country because of small business. Some small businesses become very successful and become larger businesses, but they are engines of growth and for employment. There are some very important measures in the BIA, the budget implementation act, to support small business.

I also want to talk about support for students, and getting young people their first jobs. Youth employment is always a challenge in every country in the world, and Canada has done a better job than most countries when it comes to youth employment, so I want to talk about that.

The last item that has given a real framework within the BIA, no. 2, is the DNA missing persons index. I want to talk about that. We have not spent enough time talking about it in the debate. I noted that some of my colleagues opposite wanted to deviate from the actual content of Bill C-43 and wanted to talk about things that were outside the budget, but I want to focus my comments on the budget.

When it comes to the benefits of balanced budgets, on this side of the House we understand how important it is. We are the only G7 country that has a rock solid AAA credit rating. That is important because it keeps our interest rates low. When we have lower interest rates, it means we pay less in interest costs. It means we have more fiscal capacity to do other things. It frees up taxpayer dollars that are otherwise spent on interest payments. We can spend money on programs instead. The major credit rating agencies, Moody's, Standard & Poor's, and Fitch, all gave us that AAA rating. It is something a lot of other countries, including G7 countries, do not have. We are very proud of that, and it is because we have made sound fiscal decisions in the last few years to give us that AAA credit rating.

The other benefit of that strong credit rating is it gives us an environment where business has confidence to invest and create jobs. It also gives consumers confidence when it comes to buying homes, to buying other real property and making investments that stimulate activity in the economy.

It also strengthens our ability to respond to emergencies. Because we have some fiscal capacity, we can adapt to global shocks.

We can also prepare for an aging population. The reality is we are going to have some challenges in the coming years and because of the wise decisions we have been making since 2006, and especially since we have had a majority government since 2011, we have really wrestled with the issue of balancing the books.

It is also a fairness inequity when it comes to generations. It is a responsibility for us, as parliamentarians and legislators, to not leave our children's generation and our grandchildren with a debt that we accumulate. It is very important that those people who are not old enough to vote today should not be burdened with a debt that our generation creates.

I will just mention a couple of relevant statistics.

In 2014, Canada's net debt to GDP ratio was less than 40%, which is the lowest among G7 countries, by quite far in fact. Germany is the second lowest at only 52.2% and the G7 average is about 87%. That is a measure of our fiscal strength, the fact that our debt compared to the economy's ability to sustain is really an important metric.

Overall since 2010, we have taken many actions on the spending side of things. We have reduced spending since 2010 by over \$19 billion a year. Those kinds of things do not happen by accident. Budgets do not balance themselves. This is because of the very strong measures we have taken to control spending in the federal government, and that is what has given us this room and has also given us this balanced budget.

This is unlike the previous Liberal government. The Liberals had a majority government for 13 years and they had all kinds of ability to do things with their budgets, but they chose to drastically reduce transfers to the provinces: the Canada health transfer, the Canada social transfer, all kinds of transfers to the provinces. They also they reduced transfers to individuals.

• (1715)

We are not doing that in our budget. We have not done it in any of our budgets. In fact, we have increased transfers to the provinces to almost \$65 billion in 2014-15, which is a 50% increase since 2006.

We are balancing the budget, but unlike the Liberals, we are not doing it on the backs of the provinces. That is a very important thing to state.

The previous debater from the NDP talked about the reductions in the Canada health transfer. That is completely untrue. I will give the example of Ontario, where the Canada health transfer has been increasing by 6% per year, but Ontario has only been increasing its health spending by 2% a year. In other words, it has been using the annual increases in the Canada health transfer, pocketing the 4% difference and using it for other programs.

We have made an adjustment to the funding formula based on input from the Canadian Institute for Health Information, which showed that there would be declines in health care spending in all provinces because of better health management within the provinces and because of technology. There are significant administrative costs going down because of technology, but also because the cost of diagnostic equipment is going down. This is resulting in a different way to transfer money to the provinces for health care.

I am going to talk about small business. I know I do not have that much time, but it is a very important topic.

We reduced the small business tax rate some time ago, from 12% to 11%, so all small businesses have benefited from that.

*Government Orders*

However, the thing that small businesses talk about more than anything is payroll costs. They talk a lot about utility costs in Ontario, but payroll costs are a big challenge for them. We froze EI premiums, and small businesses were very thankful for that. We then took a step further for smaller businesses that pay less than \$15,000 a year. We reduced that by a further 15%, and they are very thankful for that. When this was announced, the CFIB said:

This announcement is fantastic news for Canada's entrepreneurs and their employees, and as such, can only be a positive for the Canadian economy.

It is interesting. When they get that extra cash, what do small businesses want to do? They want to grow their business. Sometimes that means adding hours. Sometimes it means hiring new people. Sometimes it means investing in new technology to increase productivity. It could also mean training employees. Ultimately, it is up to each small business to decide what it wants to do with those benefits.

This is on top of all of the other things we have done to help small business. The lifetime capital gains exemption is a big deal, and we raised that significantly in the last few years. In this budget, we would increase that to \$800,000 for a lifetime. This is very important for small businesses who want to transfer their businesses, typically within their own family, but to other individuals as well. This is the exemption they can have, the reward they have for growing their business.

The other things that we are doing, which are detailed in the budget, include cutting red tape for small business. This is one of the things that is really a drag on small business. The number that has been given, and has been verified, is over 800,000 payroll remittances by 50,000 small and medium-sized businesses will be eliminated. It is a real step up for small business when we can remove that red tape.

Overall, we are significantly reducing their taxes.

I would like to talk about support for students, because there are significant measures.

We have launched the Canada job grant, but the important category of students is the apprentices. There are significant measures there. When we look at the apprenticeship incentive grant, the apprenticeship completion grant and the tradesperson tools deduction, there are all kinds of things that really get people into the trades where they can get those jobs.

If we look at other measures that have been extended in this budget, the youth employment strategy would go up from \$300 million to \$330 million a year. That is very significant.

In the time I have remaining, I would like to talk about the DNA-based missing persons index, because it is such an important measure. This budget implementation act gives the framework for that, with \$8.1 million to create a DNA-based missing persons index. This would be a very valuable tool for investigators, for coroners and for law enforcement agencies to find missing people and to investigate crimes. We have created these indices now, through this BIA, which would give the structure for the DNA profiles, ensuring it is used effectively and has the budget behind it, and the rules for how to use that index. It is a very important measure, and I am proud of our government.

It is a terrific budget, it is the right budget for Canada and I hope all members will support it.

• (1720)

**Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to give my colleague credit for a very thoughtful speech. He gave some very specific examples as to why he thought the budget implementation bill was a good one, from his perspective.

There are things that trouble us, and it is not just the process. He will be glad that I will not talk about the omnibus aspect of the bill. It has been well stated and people will understand why we are against it. However, there are a couple of things that trouble us on the revenue side. It came up in question period today. The government has been unable to invest its own appropriations. People should note this because it is very important.

The government goes to Parliament every year to ask for money to appropriate. It has not been able to invest the money that has been appropriated to it. From where I come from, the son of a public servant, that means it has failed to fulfill its mandate. Therefore, I am questioning the validity of the budget, based on the government's performance to invest the moneys that have been appropriated to government. Does he have a comment about that? Does he actually understand and is he concerned about the money?

My colleague from Nova Scotia said it well. We have so many people in desperate need, particularly veterans. By the way, the word "veterans" does not appear in the document, on my read of it anyway. Is he not concerned about that? Where is he in terms of what government's role is to invest the money that is being appropriated? After all, that is what a budget is about. It is about what government wants and needs to do its work.

**Mr. Bernard Trotter:** Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to talk about the business of supply, because that really was what the question was about. We get appropriations. This goes back centuries. That is the way our system works. The crown has to ask Parliament to spend money. The crown then gets that appropriation. Certain things happen. For example, money does not get spent when there is a delay in the approval of a construction project. That means the appropriations get carried over to the next year. However, the crown has to ask once again through the estimates process to appropriate the funds.

That happens across department to department where for various reasons the money does not get spent. It does not mean the government is not doing its job. There are just certain realities when it comes to project based spending in particular, where a gate is not achieved so the money does not get spent. It does not mean there is no intention to spend it. It just has to do with the timing of that spending.

• (1725)

**Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I too thought the member made a thoughtful speech.

*Government Orders*

Usually, when a government is looking at a surplus, there is an allocation among debt, tax reductions and program spending. It is usually set out as some sort of percentage for each. We certainly heard lately how the government intended to reduce taxes through its income splitting concept. However, we have not heard anything about whether the government intends to pay any of the \$160 billion to \$170 billion that it has borrowed over the last six to eight years toward debt reduction.

We certainly have not heard about any program spending. To pick up on the hon. member's comments about lapsing, the military has effectively had its budget cut by \$3 billion or \$4 billion, much of which has been lapsing year over year over year. It has taken lapsing almost to an art form.

Would the hon. member comment on whether the government is prepared to commit to percentages between debt reduction, tax cuts and program spending?

**Mr. Bernard Trottier:** Mr. Speaker, I am not sure if the member is talking about this year's budget or next year's budget, but if he is talking about spending the surplus that would be next year.

We are going through a consultation process. I know the Minister of Finance is consulting with stakeholders across the country. The finance committee is doing those consultations also. I am actually doing some of those consultations with stakeholders in my community and getting their thoughts.

Predicting what next year's budget would look like in terms of a percentage allocation is a bit of a mug's game. However, there will certainly be some mix of debt reduction, debt relief and some new programs.

In this year's budget there is such a long host of new spending programs in all different areas. When we went through the recession of 2008-09, we had to really trim some spending, so the last few budgets have really introduced some new spending in some very important areas. One I will just mention specifically is the infrastructure program. It is very important for Toronto, for Scarborough—Guildwood as well as for Etobicoke—Lakeshore. We are working with communities to make significant investments in infrastructure now.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Pierre Dionne Labelle (Rivière-du-Nord, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, before us today is Bill C-43, a second act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on February 11, 2014.

This is yet another mammoth bill. It is 450 pages long and contains 400 clauses that affect more than a dozen laws. Clearly, the opposition is not deluded about the future of this bill. As with the bills before it, the debate on this bill is already subject to a time allocation motion. This is the 80th time the government has used this tactic, and in the end this bill will pass very quickly, just as the others did.

When Bill C-38 was introduced, we moved 500 amendments because the 600-page bill contained dozens of laws. I remember quite well that the government did not accept any of those amendments. We know what is going to happen with the bill before us.

To set the stage, I would like to quote from a *National Post* editorial about a previous omnibus bill.

Not only does this make a mockery of the confidence convention, shielding bills that would otherwise be defeatable [in the House]...We've no idea whether MPs supported or opposed any particular bill in the bunch, only that they voted for the legislation that contained them. There is no common thread that runs between them, no overarching principle; they represent...a sort of compulsory buffet.

The government was trying to get us to pass its legislative agenda in one fell swoop, and that is the case again today.

Among the measures included in this bill is the proposal to deny social assistance to refugee claimants, an idea that was brought forward by a backbencher on the other side of the House. The bill also includes hiring credits for small businesses.

I could list all of the laws affected by this bill, but I will stop at those two. We cannot look at this bill without looking at the overall context of the Conservative administration.

Is the economy doing better since the Conservatives came to power? Every week, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance throws some figures at us: 1 million jobs here; 400,000 jobs there; 300,000 unemployed workers here; 200,000 unemployed workers there. People no longer know which figures are true and which have been manipulated.

I looked into whether the economy was doing better in my riding and whether families were better off and people were less poor. On October 17, I participated in the *Nuit des sans-abri*. I do not know whether my colleagues opposite participate in this event. It involves spending one night with the homeless and talking to them about their lives for 24 hours. I have been doing this for 10 years. I spent the night with them again this year, and I did not notice that there were fewer homeless people. On the contrary, there were more.

However, I did notice that the organizations that work with the homeless suffered budget cuts this year, including an organization that focuses on getting homeless youth into the job market and back to school. This organization lost \$400,000 in funding from the skills link program, a federal program that is supposed to support social integration.

● (1730)

Just today, the CBC mentioned a report by the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness stating that the \$2 billion currently being invested in social and affordable housing in Canada is not enough to meet the needs of the 35,000 people who sleep on the streets every day or the 235,000 who sleep on the streets every year.

*Government Orders*

According to the think tank, the government needs to invest \$1.7 billion more in affordable housing per year to eliminate homelessness in Canada. It would cost each Canadian \$0.88 a week to ensure that people are not sleeping in the streets and to make ours a society where a degree of social justice reigns. At the same time, for every \$10 invested in social and affordable housing, we save \$21 in health care costs because people who end up in the streets eventually end up in hospital with serious health needs. That is a huge cost for society.

When I took part in homelessness awareness night, I did not see fewer homeless people. I saw people who were having a hard time and needed organizations. I also saw organizations that had just had their funding cut. To me, that is just as important an economic indicator as the GDP.

I also want to talk about the number of people who use food banks. In my riding, many people do. Again, is the economy doing well? There are more and more people using food banks. If the economy were doing so well and the mammoth budget implementation bills that keep getting introduced provided something practical for ordinary Canadians, that number would go down.

On the contrary, the number increased by 25% between 2008 and 2013. That means that there are 25% more people in my riding using food banks. Often these people work part time for minimum wage. They are forced to use food banks to feed their children. That is what the economy looks like under the Conservatives, and I would dare say under the Liberals as well.

Currently, every month, 80,000 new people use food banks in Canada. In the measures proposed today and for some time now, I have not seen anything that would improve this economic indicator. Indeed, that is what it is.

I also want to talk about unemployment. Good jobs are rare, and not just since 2009. Since the crisis, we have lost a number of industry jobs, which have been replaced with part-time jobs.

I read the Parliamentary Budget Officer's response regarding employment insurance funding and the recent related measures. I am not sure whether my colleagues across the way read it, but I doubt it, because this document takes a hard look at the employment insurance situation and how the EI-funded hiring credit will cost us jobs. The EI premium freeze cost us jobs, and every job created will cost us \$500,000.

I would like to congratulate the Parliamentary Budget Officer. I know that the Conservatives were not very fond of Mr. Page because he pointed out that purchasing the F-35s was foolish. Nor did they like the subsequent report on the sustainability of old age security, which actually is sustainable. They will surely not like this report.

The Prime Minister probably thought it was a good idea to replace the Parliamentary Budget Officer. I believe that he made a good decision when he appointed Mr. Fr chet, who is doing a great job. I encourage all parliamentarians to read this report. It is a fantastic document that shows that the Conservatives are poor public administrators and that they will have to be replaced sooner or later.

● (1735)

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am going to pick up on the point about terrible management. I think it is highlighted by the small business job credit program. This is something the Conservative government has come up with and has flagged it as a strong, healthy policy for small businesses in Canada.

The government was presented with an alternative that would be more effective. It would generate literally tens of thousands of additional jobs and would be far more cost efficient. It is not just the Liberal Party that is saying this. Other stakeholders are saying this. What I am referring to is the EI premium exemption, whereby employers from all across Canada that hired a new employee would be entitled to a tax break on their EI.

Would the member not agree that the government should be more open to other parties' ideas, and where those ideas make sense, should actually act on them?

[Translation]

**Mr. Pierre Dionne Labelle:** Mr. Speaker, I listened to the Liberal member giving the Liberal vision for the use of the employment insurance fund.

Unfortunately for him and fortunately for the NDP, we believe that this money belongs to the unemployed. I invite him to read the Parliamentary Budget Officer's response. He even suggested other ways to use the EI surplus, but only to help the unemployed.

With the \$3 billion surplus, we could have expanded the program to 130,000 additional workers, which would have increased the percentage of workers with access to employment insurance from 39.5% to 51%. At present, only 39% of workers have access to employment insurance.

We could also have reduced the number of hours required to be eligible for benefits. That would have been a good move. We could have increased workers' benefits. Instead of paying them 55% of their salary, we would have had the means to pay them 68% of their salary. However, the government prefers to pay other bills with this money.

Unemployed workers' money belongs to them.

● (1740)

**Mr. Jean Rousseau (Compton—Stanstead, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my hon. colleague. He raised some important points about wealth indicators in Canada.

For example, in my riding, Sherbrooke is one of the big cities with the highest quality of life in Canada. Even so, there are food banks that can no longer meet the demand. There are homeless people and single-parent families looking for affordable housing.

That means we also have to consider the social fabric of a big country like ours. We have to come up with economic measures that will enable everyone to participate in Canada's economic growth. However, in this budget, the Conservative government seems to have forgotten about a large segment of the Canadian population.

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Pierre Dionne Labelle:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to go back to the surplus in the employment insurance fund. Premiums were frozen at \$1.88 per \$100 even though they should be \$1.65 per \$100. That has a negative impact and will eliminate 2,000 jobs.

The Conservatives froze premiums and are bringing in a credit that will create 200 jobs at a cost of \$500,000 each.

Do they realize how little sense that approach makes? Can they see that the people pushing for these measures have no clue and no managerial competence?

[*English*]

**Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, when I rose earlier this year to speak to the budget, I began by thanking our friend Jim Flaherty for his work, on behalf of the people of Kitchener—Conestoga whom I remain privileged to represent. He managed one of the toughest portfolios in government through some of the worst challenging times in recent history. Looking back, I am very glad that I took that opportunity to pay tribute to Jim. Canadians are, indeed, indebted to him for his prudent fiscal leadership.

Looking forward, Bill C-43, the second budget implementation bill, would continue to move Canada forward along the road to balance, creating jobs and opportunities for Canadians. I am grateful to our new Minister of Finance, the member for Eglinton—Lawrence, for his commitment to Canada's ongoing prosperity.

Contrary to a belief held by the third party in the House, budgets do not simply balance themselves. The previous Liberal government had to slash transfer payments to the provinces—much-needed funds for health care, post-secondary education, and social assistance—in order to balance the books. The current Liberal leader seems to feel the previous Liberal government cut support for health care just for fun, if he really believes that budgets will balance themselves. This government would bring the budget back into balance without taking such draconian measures. I think most Canadians would agree it is a commendable objective.

However, we are accomplishing so much more than just a balanced budget. We are building the foundation for Canada's long-term prosperity. My home of Waterloo region has seen world-class post-secondary facilities like Sir Wilfrid Laurier University, the University of Waterloo, and Conestoga College all greatly increase their capacity for both teaching and research, all thanks to our federal government.

Our government has fostered entrepreneurship by supporting programs like the University of Waterloo's velocity program, which provides an entrepreneurial education. We invested in the Communitech Hub, a hotbed of high-tech entrepreneurial activity. We made it easier for business to access the expertise of Conestoga College to improve internal processes and designs. Both parties opposite refused to support any of these worthwhile activities.

Our drinking water is safer, our air is cleaner, our communities are more livable, our greenhouse gas emissions have dropped, and our competitive position in the global economy is now improved thanks to federal investments proposed in budgets that were opposed by the Liberals and the NDP. However, I am not here to review our past successes as a country, community, or government. I am here to

highlight some of the measures in this bill of which I am particularly proud.

I was born on a farm just outside of Kitchener, Ontario. I have owned a farm most my adult life. Most importantly, though, agriculture remains one of the most important economic engines for Waterloo region. This bill would extend the lifetime capital gains exemption of farm property. That is a very technical amendment. Let me state it plainly. The family farmers of Waterloo region and elsewhere in Canada would find it easier to pass their farms on to the next generation, thanks to this government. On this side of the House, we stand in support of those families who provide the best quality food in the world. I invite the opposition to join us.

When our government created the agricultural flexibility fund to improve our agricultural sector's competitiveness, the Liberals and NDP refused to support our farmers. When we offered support to hog farmers to restructure their debt, the Liberals and NDP refused to support our farmers. When we allowed grain farmers to enjoy market freedom, the Liberals and NDP refused to support our farmers. With this bill, the opposition finally has the opportunity to turn the page, to look Canada's family farmers in the eye and say, "We support you; we want you to be able to keep your farms in your families." Canada's family farmers would welcome their support, for once, just once.

This bill would also protect consumers. On this side of the House, we think it is wrong for big banks and credit card companies to charge pensioners and single parents for the so-called privilege of receiving a bill, and we are taking action to prevent it. Once again, I invite members opposite to take this opportunity to join us in standing with consumers just this once. Please support our measures to ban pay to pay policies on credit card statements.

● (1745)

Too often I have heard the NDP members accuse us of favouring the big banks. They like to present banks as the enemy of everyday Canadians. This is their opportunity to match their voice to their rhetoric or to demonstrate that their rhetoric is nothing more than empty words without commitment. I believe many of my colleagues in the NDP are very honourable people. I hope they will not let partisanship prevent them from voting on their principles.

Moving on, I am particularly pleased that the bill would enable charitable fundraising to enter the computer age. While we want as few Canadians as possible to depend on charities, we also want charities to thrive. I cannot believe we actually need to do this, but the bill would make it legal for charities to use computers to track their sales in certain fundraising activities. Right now it all needs to be done manually, which just makes no sense.



*Government Orders*

On this side of the House, we want as much as possible of every dollar donated to charity to be used for its intended goal and as little as possible lost to administrivia. I do not see any reason why members opposite could possibly be against this. Once again, I invite them to join us in support of Canada's charitable sector. This is only the latest action our government has taken to support charities in Canada.

We have already provided an exemption from capital gains when publicly listed securities or ecologically sensitive lands are donated to charities. Again, the Liberals and NDP opposed this. We reduced the administrative burden on charities allowing them to focus on charitable activities. It makes sense to the people I speak to across Waterloo region. The Liberals and NDP, again, are opposed to this as well.

We have encouraged Canadians to begin donating to charities by creating the first-time donor super credit on donations to charity. I must credit my friend, the hon. member for Kitchener—Waterloo, for bringing this common-sense idea to the table, another common-sense idea that the NDP and Liberals opposed.

The bill would also double the amount that parents can claim for the children's fitness tax credit. More importantly, it would make this tax credit refundable, making it a much stronger benefit for low-income Canadian families. As a parent of three children and grandparent to nine beautiful grandchildren, I understand how important it is for children to establish healthy lifestyles. Sedentary children grow up to become sedentary adults. Encouraging a healthy lifestyle in today's children will pay dividends in reduced health costs for years to come. I am especially pleased to see that this credit would now be refundable. We are making life more affordable for low-income Canadians. I hope the opposition will find it in their hearts to stand with us in supporting low-income Canadians.

Our Conservative government remains focused on what matters most to Canadians: jobs, growth, and long-term prosperity. We weathered the global recession better than our peers, and even through the recovery, we continued to chart one of the world's best economic performances. In fact, since we took office, we focused on five priorities to ensure Canada's continuing prosperity: a tax advantage, reducing taxes for all Canadians and establishing the lowest tax rate on new business investment in the G7; the fiscal advantage, eliminating our net government debt within a generation; an entrepreneurial advantage, reducing unnecessary regulation and red tape, and increasing competition in the Canadian marketplace; a knowledge advantage, creating the best-educated and most skilled and flexible workforce in the world; and an infrastructure advantage, building the modern infrastructure we need to compete abroad and enjoy liveable communities at home.

Economic action plan 2014 continues this focus on positive initiatives to support job creation and economic growth. It continues to connect Canadians with available jobs. It continues to improve support for families and communities, and it continues our difficult road to balancing our budget. It provides good news to the families of Waterloo region as well as farmers and small businesses.

I ask the members opposite to put aside their partisan interests and look at the bill for what it truly represents, modest steps forward on

the priorities of Canadians. I invite them to join me in supporting this important legislation.

• (1750)

**Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Kitchener—Conestoga for his speech on the budget implementation bill. There are many aspects of his speech that I could engage him with and debate him on, but there was one specific comment he made that caught my ears.

The New Democrats, especially our members for Sudbury and Davenport, have been campaigning for some time to end the practice of charging people for getting a paper bill. That extra charge, which is often a couple of dollars, really penalizes people who have lower incomes, do not have a computer, or who are seniors. It is a practice we have called pay to pay, meaning they have to pay money to pay their bill. We have campaigned long and hard on that. In this budget there was a promise of ending the pay to pay fees, but only for telecom companies. My friend across the way said that it also includes banks. I do not believe that is correct. I would like him to clarify his comments.

**Mr. Harold Albrecht:** Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that it does include banks. However, I would have to double-check that.

However, I would like to highlight what I said during the moments I had for my speech.

We have to focus on the real issues that are part of this bill, especially for my riding of Kitchener—Conestoga, which is a rural-urban riding, and the farmers there. Allowing farmers to increase the tax exemption on capital gains is important to us as we try to help farmers maintain their farms within the family context. We know that, if farms are in the family context, some of these farmers produce the best quality food in the world. I am certainly committed to continuing that process.

• (1755)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am confident that the PMO would be very pleased with the member's speech. There are many aspects of it that I could address, but there are three that really stood out in my mind.

The first was that the government is dealing with the deficit. It is important to recognize that the government is the one that created the deficit, and even created it prior to the recession, so what it is fixing is something it put in place.

The member made reference to the pork industry. If he were to take a tour of the Brandon facility, he would find there are needs that the government is not meeting, which is limiting the amount of production coming out of the Brandon pork assembly line.

The member mentioned wheat. The government is the one that killed the Canadian Wheat Board without even going to the farmers. Even though the law required a plebiscite, it did not allow for that because it knew it would have lost.

*Private Members' Business*

Therefore, my question for the member is this. When he reflects on those three points, how does he justify making those types of comments when in reality the Conservatives are part of the problem that was created? They created the deficit, they caused more problems for the pork industry, and they killed the Wheat Board, even though a majority of the farmers said that they wanted to keep —

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** The hon. member for Kitchener—Conestoga.

**Mr. Harold Albrecht:** Mr. Speaker, there are a couple of key points.

As relates to the agriculture sector, in my almost nine years of being an MP, I have never had a period of time when the farmers in my riding have been happier about the policies of this government. In my riding of Kitchener—Conestoga we have Conestoga Meat Packers, which is a hog farmer co-operative. It has never been doing better. As it relates to grain farmers, our grain farmers are happy.

However, when it comes to talking about the deficit and balancing the budget, I do not know how this member can stand and with a straight face talk about balancing the budget when his previous Liberal government balanced it on the backs of the provinces, with \$25 billion taken out of health care and education and \$52 billion out of the EI fund. Also, I wonder if my colleague can answer where the \$40 million is.

**Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I understand that I have just a couple of minutes before we end debate on the bill this afternoon and that it will be resuming tomorrow morning.

I am happy to begin my remarks this afternoon on the budget implementation act, Bill C-43, on behalf of my constituents in my riding of Parkdale—High Park, an urban riding that borders Lake Ontario in Canada's largest city, Toronto.

When I go door to door and speak with members of my community, I hear people concerned about the lack of decent jobs. We have far too many people who are falling through the cracks and are either underemployed or unemployed. People are falling into the cycle of temporary work or part-time precarious work.

Young families are paying sometimes \$2,000 a month for child care and are strapped with massively high housing prices, whether in rent that rises constantly or with mortgages that are unbelievably high because of the dramatic increase in housing prices in our city. I also hear from seniors who are very concerned about rising costs and fixed incomes.

I speak to small businesses, where the owners are working long and hard. They are doing their best to provide goods and services in our community, but they are just getting by, in many cases.

Nevertheless, it is a wonderful community. What we hear from people in Parkdale—High Park is that they need to have government on their side. Sadly, the budget implementation bill fails the needs of the vast majority of my community members in Parkdale—High Park.

• (1800)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** I regret to interrupt the member for Parkdale—High Park. She will have eight minutes remaining when this matter returns before the House.

It being 6 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper.

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

### CSEC ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY ACT

**Ms. Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.)** moved that Bill C-622, An Act to amend the National Defence Act (transparency and accountability), to enact the Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

She said: Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure to rise today to speak to my private member's bill, Bill C-622, the CSEC accountability and transparency act.

This legislation takes an important step forward in updating the framework for accountability and transparency for Canada's signals intelligence agency, and it tasks the public's representatives—that is, Canadian parliamentarians—with the responsibility to review and report on the intelligence and security activities of our government.

In the wake of the recent deadly attacks on our soldiers and on Parliament itself, all party leaders confirmed their commitment to protect the rights, freedoms, and civil liberties of Canadians, even as security measures are analyzed and strengthened. Indeed, Canadians expect these fundamental aspects of the very democracy being guarded to be respected, and that is the underlying intention of the bill.

I invite members of all parties to support sending it to committee for further examination and signal the authenticity of their commitment to these democratic freedoms.

Canada does have important guardians of privacy rights, both in law and in our provincial and federal privacy and information officers, and we have strong privacy protections in Canada, in general, although these must continue to contend with the fast pace of technological change.

Where they can be weak, though, is in the scrutiny of the activities of intelligence and security agencies like Communications Security Establishment, or CSE, and my bill aims to ensure sufficient privacy protections for CSE operations on the multiple fronts of its mandate, both abroad and at home.

As the federal and provincial privacy commissioners stated in a recent communique:

Canadians both expect and are entitled to equal protection for their privacy and access rights and for their security. We must uphold these fundamental rights that lie at the heart of Canada's democracy.

*Private Members' Business*

I agree. In fact, the effective protection of individual privacy and the effective delivery of national security measures are not a dichotomy or a trade-off. They are complementary, and both are necessary.

The United States Department of Homeland Security is a good example. This department considers safeguarding civil rights and civil liberties to be critical to its work to protect the nation from the many threats it faces. This third-largest department of the U.S. government now explicitly embeds and enforces privacy protections and transparency in all the department's systems, programs, and activities.

Deputy Secretary Mayorkas confirmed in a recent speech that not only is this an integral part of DHS's mission and crucial to maintaining the public's trust, but it has resulted in homeland security becoming a stronger and more effective department. Bill C-622 reflects that very philosophy.

Now here is some information about Communications Security Establishment Canada. CSE is our national cryptology and signals intelligence agency. It functions within a global alliance of partners' signals intelligence agencies in the U.S., the U.K., Australia, and New Zealand, known as the Five Eyes. CSE intercepts and decodes foreign communications signals. It is the lead agency for cybersecurity for the federal government, and it uses its technological capacities and expertise to assist domestic law enforcement and intelligence agencies.

As its three-part mandate suggests, CSE is an important and powerful contributor to Canada's national security, and we want it to become a stronger and more effective department. Much of CSE's work today focuses on Internet and mobile phone communications between foreigners who might pose a threat to Canada.

CSE does not have the mandate to spy on Canadians, except when it is assisting other federal security and law enforcement agencies that have the appropriate permission, such as a warrant. However, its powers were extended in 2001 to allow it to inadvertently collect Canadian communications when it is targeting a foreign entity or conducting cybersecurity operations.

• (1805)

Here is the challenge: The capability of information and communications technologies has skyrocketed over the past 13 years. However, the laws governing CSE have not changed once in that time. That means that whether they are being used or not, CSE now has much greater powers to intrude into the privacy of people's personal lives and communications, unimpeded by the law.

It is time to update the law in this new environment of cloud computing and the Internet of everything.

[*Translation*]

This bill leaves in place all the important tools that our security agencies have available to them to protect Canadians. CSE has intrusive powers, but they are most often absolutely necessary.

However, Canadians want assurances that their privacy and the confidentiality of their communications will not be violated. Such violations would not even have been technologically possible just a few years ago.

[*English*]

One key concern of Canadians is government's access to their metadata, that is, their communication activities. It includes, for example, records of communications between one's electronic devices and the devices of others. On the surface, intercepting metadata may not seem terribly intrusive, but metadata is effectively the how, when, where, and with whom people communicate electronically.

As Ontario's Information and Privacy Commissioner, Dr. Ann Cavoukian, notes:

It has been said that the collection of meta-data is far more intrusive than reading someone's diary because not everything gets written down in a diary.

Last January, Canadians learned that CSE collected, tracked, and analyzed the metadata of unsuspecting passengers who logged into the WiFi at a Canadian airport. Because the law is so outdated, this was probably legal, but it was certainly not respectful of privacy rights.

Both CSIS and the RCMP are required to get court approval to enlist CSE's help in wiretapping a phone, but no such approval is needed to collect metadata.

In June of this year, the Supreme Court ruling, *R. v. Spencer*, was a strong endorsement of Internet privacy, including the privacy of metadata.

A second concern is the defence minister's quasi-judicial power to issue blanket approvals for CSE operations that would likely capture the private communications of Canadians without needing to explain his or her reasoning to anyone. These ill-defined and overly broad ministerial authorizations have been criticized by CSE commissioners for almost a decade.

A further concern is the absence of accountability or reporting regarding information sharing between CSE and other security and intelligence agencies. In a 2014 ruling, Federal Court Justice Richard Mosley found that CSIS and CSE kept the court in the dark about how they were enlisting foreign intelligence agencies to help spy on Canadians. He noted that the information CSE had shared, without legal authorization, put two Canadians at risk while they were travelling abroad. Justice Mosley's findings underscore the need to reinforce CSE's accountability not only to the courts but also to the minister, to Parliament, and to Canadians.

Finally, the grab bag of various kinds of oversight of various Canadian security and intelligence agencies, including CSE, and the absence of parliamentary oversight or review, puts us definitely offside with Canada's main intelligence partners.

How do we support CSE and our other security functions by embedding better democratic accountability, clarity, reporting, and review, an update that would bring us in line with our Five Eyes allies?

*Private Members' Business*

First, Bill C-622 would strengthen judicial oversight by replacing ministerial authorization for the interception of Canadians' protected information with authorization by an independent judge of the Federal Court. This is consistent with the process used by the National Security Agency, CSE's American counterpart. In addition, in this bill, metadata would be included in the new definition of protected information.

Second, the bill would strengthen ministerial oversight. It would require the Chief of CSE to inform the minister of sensitive matters likely to have a significant impact on public or international affairs and any national security or policy issues. The chief would also have to inform the minister and the CSE Commissioner of any operational incidents that may have an impact on the privacy of Canadians.

●(1810)

Each fiscal year a detailed report would be provided to the minister and the national security adviser to the Prime Minister on the activities carried out by the agency during the fiscal year, including any requests to share information with other Canadian security agencies.

[Translation]

Third, the office of the CSE Commissioner will be strengthened. The Prime Minister will be required to consult the opposition leaders before choosing a commissioner. The appointment process will therefore be more independent.

The commissioner will have to verify that CSE's activities are within the law and that they are also reasonable and necessary. He will have to submit public reports that are detailed enough that Parliament and Canadians are properly informed about matters of public interest. The only information that may be excluded is confidential information pertaining to international affairs, defence or security.

[English]

Fourth, the bill provides for oversight that is accountable to the public for all Canada's security and intelligence agencies. This integrated overview of the functioning of these sometimes siloed agencies would bring new solutions to strengthen security measures and privacy protections alike. The specific mechanism would be a multi-party committee of security-cleared parliamentarians, the intelligence and security committee of Parliament.

The mandate of this committee would be to review the framework for intelligence and national security in Canada, to review the activities of federal departments and agencies in relation to intelligence and national security, and to issue an annual unclassified report that the Prime Minister would submit to Parliament.

Former CSE chief John Adams supports such a review committee, noting that Canadians are more likely to trust an MP saying that Canada's spy agencies are not violating their privacy than they are to trust the heads of the very spy agencies saying the same thing.

I want to thank my Liberal colleague from Malpeque, retired Conservative senator Hugh Segal, and Senator Romeo Dallaire for their hard work in writing legislation to customize a very successful British parliamentary oversight model for our unique Canadian needs.

[Translation]

The scope and magnitude of CSE's surveillance power have increased. Its accountability to the public has therefore increased accordingly. The current system is outdated and flawed. Parliament cannot perform its oversight duties, and the Minister of National Defence has too much latitude when it comes to authorizing CSE to monitor Canadians' communications.

By passing my bill, Parliament will increase CSE's accountability and give Canadians privacy protections that are closer to those that the Americans and the British take for granted.

[English]

In essence, Bill C-622 seeks to modernize outdated laws and embed individual privacy rights within the framework of security and intelligence. Its accountability and transparency measures would restore Canadians' freedom to communicate with each other and with the world without the fear of unlawful or unethical access to their private communications.

The bill seeks to ensure that Canadians can have confidence in the work of CSE and can trust that the government's intelligence and security activities are held to account by the Parliament of Canada, whose duty it is to ensure that Canadian democratic rights and interests are properly protected.

Public trust, the trust that our civil liberties are respected and that our rights and freedoms are embedded, are key ingredients in the strength and effectiveness of the critical work that security and intelligence agencies do to protect the safety and security of Canadians.

I would like to express my gratitude for the help and support of some of Canada's top experts in privacy, security, and intelligence, notably Professor Wesley Wark of the University of Ottawa and Stephen McCammon of the Ontario privacy commissioner's office, and the many others who helped me develop this essential step forward in protecting fundamental Canadian securities and freedoms.

●(1815)

**Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for bringing forth this legislation to allow the debate that we are having here today. I want to let her know that we do support this bill at second reading and want to see it studied in committee, but I have some questions.

*Private Members' Business*

First, the member knows that I have a motion, Motion No. 61, to set up an all-party committee of this House to examine the entire issue and come before the House with the best model. If her own bill is not accepted by the House, would she support that approach of having an all-party committee of this House look into the whole issue and come up with a model that can be recommended to the House?

Second, if the member wants it to be a democratic committee and have the confidence of the public, as she said, so that MPs can say that their security is protected, why do we not have simply a committee of this House for oversight? Why would we want to include unelected senators?

Third, I recognize the importance of metadata, and her definition of it is actually quite good. However, I do note that part of the mandate of CSEC is that its third mandate provides for CSEC to assist—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** Order, please.

The hon. member for Vancouver Quadra.

**Ms. Joyce Murray:** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the NDP national defence critic for those questions.

I am optimistic that I will have support from all sides of this House for this very non-partisan effort to strengthen both our democracy and our security. I am going to move forward with this bill.

The parliamentary committee is a concept that was widely studied by Parliament in 2004-2005 and was embedded in a bill being put forward by the then minister, Anne McLellan, with unanimous support from all parties in the committee that studied it widely, travelling around to our intelligence partners to secure the best ideas for how to move forward. I am optimistic that the members on all sides of the House will support this bill to take it forward to committee and then examine it and bring forward their ideas.

**Mr. Arnold Chan (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first I want to congratulate my friend from Vancouver Quadra for bringing forth this very important private member's bill. It reflects an important thesis that is coming from the opposition benches, which is the importance of parliamentary oversight, notwithstanding the fact that we have often seen from the government side, particularly from the current Prime Minister and his executive council, a reluctance to treat parliamentarians as grown-ups capable of engaging in this type of oversight.

I would like my friend's comments with respect to why she thinks this piece of legislation would help reinforce the rule of law.

**Ms. Joyce Murray:** Mr. Speaker, before I answer, I want to say that I very much appreciate the expression of support for the bill from the NDP spokesperson earlier.

The rule of law has a fundamental underpinning, and that is transparency, accountability, and respect for rights, freedoms, and civil liberties. That is essentially what this bill is about. The lag between the law that governs CSEC and the capabilities of that agency mean that there is a "trust me" approach by that agency because there simply is not a framework that is adequate for its capabilities today. This bill aims to change that.

● (1820)

**Ms. Roxanne James (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House to discuss Bill C-622, introduced by the Liberal member for Vancouver Quadra.

This is a well-intentioned private members' bill, and the member's interest in this area is certainly understandable, given the recent threats to our national security posed by radical terrorist groups, such as ISIL. Unfortunately, rather than bringing forward ideas for new tools to keep Canadians safe, such as those brought forward by the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness in the protection of Canada from terrorists act, the member has brought forward measures that are needless and duplicative in nature. That is why the government will be opposing the bill.

Our Conservative government's opposition is based on very practical considerations. I would like to spend some time on the notion to create a parliamentary committee to further scrutinize Canada's national security intelligence activities. I emphasize the words "further scrutinize" quite intentionally.

We have debated this issue in the House several times, and our government has been clear and consistent. A robust review of our security agencies already exists. In the case of CSEC, for example, it is already one of the most highly scrutinized federal government departments. Indeed, in 1996, the Commissioner of CSEC was established for two reasons: to review the organization's activities and to hear complaints against it. Further, CSEC is subject to review by the Privacy Commissioner, the Information Commissioner, the Auditor General and the Canadian Human Rights commissioner.

In the case of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, its activities are subject to review by the Security Intelligence Review Committee, also referred to as SIRC, which has a similar mandate to that of the CSEC commissioner by focusing on the activities of CSIS.

Finally, in the case of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, I would like to remind all members that in 2013, it was our government that strengthened the mandate of the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission to review the national security activities of the Mounties.

These external review bodies, all of which operate at arm's-length from the government, provide a review function that works extremely well. Notably, they provide a window into the activities of these organizations, activities that often must be undertaken outside of the public eye.

That fact is critical to our discussion today, given the current focus on the threat of terrorism and how national security agencies take action to keep communities safe. Importantly, these review bodies produce annual reports. I know the member talked about her bill and that it would create reports, but there are already annual reports that are submitted to Parliament, summarizing their findings and recommendations, providing assurance of the legality and propriety of operational activities undertaken by these organizations.

*Private Members' Business*

I would also note that in the 2013-14 annual report of the CSEC commissioner, Commissioner Plouffe confirmed that all of CSEC activities reviewed complied with the law. He asserted the effectiveness of the review of the intelligence agencies in Canada and that in the interest of transparency, he made public as much as possible about his investigations.

What is more is the fact that SIRC, the Communications Security Establishment Commissioner and the Civilian Review and Complaints Commissioner are well-equipped to carry out their important work. For example, each review body benefits not only from the skilled staff in their employ, but from unfettered access to the information held by the respective agency in review. Further, the Federal Court is another important element of the overall review system.

Now that I have outlined the robust system of review that already exists and works well, I would briefly touch on how Bill C-622 would depart from the current system and why we cannot support this private members' bill.

First and foremost, the proposed committee's reviews of national security-related activities would overlap with and be duplicate in nature to the system of review already in place. Additionally, this bill would not establish whether or how the committee would interact with the existing review bodies. In practical terms, the lack of such a mechanism over the committee's reviews could have serious implications, including gaps in accountability and inconsistent or different conclusions. This is clearly not in the best interests of national security, especially now, and it is certainly not in the best interests of Canadians.

Finally, I would note that this would also increase the cost to taxpayers. The government already spends approximately \$14.8 million per year to review the activities of and hear complaints against CSEC, CSIS, and the RCMP.

• (1825)

Let me be clear. We believe this is money that is extremely well spent in support of the robust system of review that we have in place. However, the creation of the committee proposed in the bill, another committee, would require new expenditures, and as I have noted, would not provide added benefit to Canadians above what already exists. In fact, it could very well hinder the work of the existing review bodies.

One fact I would also wish to emphasize today is that the existing parliamentary committees are free to study issues related to national security and the related agencies as needed. In fact, as members in the House and those on the public safety committee recall, just a few weeks ago, the Minister of Public Safety, accompanied by the head of CSIS and the Commissioner of the RCMP, appeared in that committee and spoke candidly about the terrorist threat to Canada.

I realize that my colleagues opposite may say that in light of the recent SIRC report, we must take strong action to enhance the oversight of intelligence agencies. To that, I would say that SIRC plays an important role in ensuring that our national security agencies are held fully and publicly accountable. I would also like to thank it for doing its job and preparing that report.

CSIS is reviewing the recommendations and will implement those that will best keep Canadians safe, while protecting the rights and privacy of Canadians.

In closing, and in light of the recent terrorist attack that happened just steps from this House, I would be remiss if I did not reiterate that the first responsibility of any government is the safety and security of its citizens. We will not overreact. We have said it time and time again. We will not overreact, but at the same time, as legislators we must not under react to the threats that are upon us. We will never turn our backs on the fundamental Canadian values of respect for individual rights and the rule of law. This is imperative.

I can assure the House that at all times our Conservative government will bring forward legislation that ensures Canadians are protected from terrorists who would seek to do us harm, while also ensuring the rights and freedoms of Canadians are protected.

For all of these reasons, our government will not be supporting Bill C-622. We continue to be confident that the review system we have in place serves our government and indeed all Canadians extremely well.

**Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have an opportunity to speak to Bill C-622. I have to say I am not surprised by the remarks I just heard from the government, but let me first talk about the bill itself.

I want to thank, once again, the member for Vancouver Quadra for bringing forth Bill C-622. It seeks to do two things, as has been pointed out by her. It seeks to change the nature of the intelligence agency CSEC and Parliament's ability to oversee its activities, which are two separate things, divided in two parts.

The Minister of National Defence has a lot of control over the activities of CSEC, and in fact can make things legal that would otherwise be illegal in such a way that we actually do not know what the rules are. That also deals with the issue of metadata. However, part two seeks to establish an intelligence security committee of Parliament, not of any particular House of Parliament but of Parliament itself and not a parliamentary committee, with members of Parliament and senators together to provide oversight. Those are the two separate parts.

We know that there have been plenty of warnings that CSEC needs greater oversight and that as we move forward with changes to greater security measures and powers, we also need greater oversight. It is pretty clear that the Conservatives have been refusing to act, and we heard the same thing today.

Under the Conservative government, the spying activities of CSEC and its budget have ballooned to four times what it was in 1998, yet Canada remains the only member of the Five Eyes intelligence alliance that does not have parliamentary oversight of its intelligence activities. By "parliamentary oversight", clearly we are talking about members of Parliament to whom the government is accountable, having oversight over the intelligence activities of the executive.

New Democrats support the spirit of Bill C-622 to establish this parliamentary oversight, but we do not think the bill is robust enough. We also think that it should not include senators because that destroys the democratic legitimacy of the kind of oversight that we are talking about. Our proposal, which I mentioned in my question for my colleague from Vancouver Quadra, was a plan to have comprehensive parliamentary oversight by a committee of Parliament of all intelligence activities, not just of CSEC, crafted to take into account the modern realities.

We know something was done 10 years ago and things have changed since then, but we want the whole thing evaluated and looked at afresh to craft the best possible committee, taking into account the changes and modern technology and hearing from experts about what is the best way to deal with the technology that we have.

Given the indication from the other side that the government will not be supporting the bill, it is not likely to even get to committee, so we will not have the opportunity, unfortunately, to deal with the questions of the bill itself. However, I want to indicate that New Democrats support the measures included in it that would make a change, particularly in the role that the minister has in terms of authorities under the existing National Defence Act to allow the collection of metadata and other kinds of information without the oversight or even the knowledge of the Canadian public of what the authorities are.

It is easy enough for the commissioner for CSEC to say that in all of the matters that he reviewed the law was complied with. We do not even know what the rules were, but we do know that he did not review all of the things that CSEC did.

Although I know the member for Vancouver Quadra did not have time to deal with all the questions that I had, one area of significant concern is the relationship between CSEC and other agencies of government, whether they be law enforcement agencies such as the RCMP, the Canada Border Services Agency or provincial and municipal police forces.

• (1830)

Part of the role of Communications Security Establishment Canada, CSEC, is to provide technical and operational assistance to federal law enforcement and security agencies in the performance of their lawful duties. Although we constantly hear that CSEC is not allowed to spy on Canadians or look at the activity of Canadians, clearly under that provision, that is almost all it does, look at the activity of Canadians. Unfortunately, the bill does not go far enough to deal with that relationship.

We had an earlier report this year that the government agencies requested the involvement of CSEC on many occasions. This is something we need to have proper oversight of as well.

We do not get the right answers for this either, but we also found out that CSEC had a relationship with telecommunication companies, which is problematic. In fact, it was also reported that government agencies in general, including CSEC, requested user data from telecommunication companies 1.2 million times in 2011 alone.

### *Private Members' Business*

When CSEC officials who came before the parliamentary committee, because this is one of the alternatives that was suggested by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, were asked questions about the relationship with telecommunication companies and if they got information from telecommunication agencies, we were not given an answer. They refused to answer those questions. Therefore, we do not have oversight from parliamentary committees. There is not oversight by Parliament as a whole.

The Conservatives, who despite their claims of accountability and transparency, and in fact bringing in legislation when they became government, have refused to co-operate with parliamentary committees and the requests such as we are bringing forth now to have a more robust system of parliamentary oversight.

I do not think I will go into too many of the details, but I know that the model of the bill is based on former Senator Segal's work, who did a good job slightly adapting the U.K. legislation model, which has members of the House of Lords and members of the U.K. parliament not sitting as members of that parliament, but sitting as so-called parliamentarians outside of that parliament, and incorporating the terms "House of Commons" and the "Senate".

However, that is not the model we like. It would not report to Parliament, but to the Prime Minister who would have the right to veto anything in the report before it would be tabled in the House of Commons or in the Senate on the grounds of his opinion.

In the opinion of the Prime Minister, it would be injurious to what? It is the three things that this activity is all about: injurious to defence, international affairs and security. If the Prime Minister had the ability to prevent a report from getting to Parliament on that basis, members can be sure that the report would be significantly truncated and not contain the kind of information that we would want. There needs to be some discussion about that.

The parliamentary committee that we are talking about would need to have significant security clearances, and perhaps members of the Privy Council. All this is a matter of discussion that would take place in the kind of robust all-party committee that would have the authority to compare and get advice from all parts, particularly our five eyes, the countries that we deal with on these matters.

However, we need more robust oversight of activity, because the job of our security agencies is to keep Canada safe and also protect our rights in the process. That requires good laws for the authorities and powers of the intelligence agencies. It also requires robust and comprehensive parliamentary oversight.

• (1835)

**Mr. Sean Casey (Charlottetown, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak to Bill C-622, proposed by my honourable colleague from Vancouver-Quadra. The bill, on a technical level, seeks to amend the National Defence Act to improve the transparency and accountability and provide for an independent review in respect of the operations of the Communications Security Establishment, and to enact an act to establish the intelligence and security committee of Parliament. It seeks to strike an important balance between national security, the privacy of Canadians, and parliamentary scrutiny.

*Private Members' Business*

There was justifiable concern earlier this year when Canadians learned that CSEC was monitoring Wi-Fi services at Canadian airports. In fact, there seems to be a bit of a preoccupation with privacy rights under this government.

If we go back to the Vic Toews bill, we all remember the e-snooping legislation, which fortunately did not see the light of day, but many of the provisions were then imported into a new piece of legislation and bundled with the rights of victims of cyberbullying in Bill C-13. The most recent example is the digital privacy bill, Bill S-4, which seeks to open the door a little wider, allowing the entities that can receive private information to walk through the door that had been opened by Bill C-13. The compromising of privacy rights in Canada has been a recurring theme under this government.

Mr. Speaker, before I get too far ahead of myself, please allow me to outline the role of CSEC for those following the debate and also for members of this place who may not be as familiar as necessary to adequately engage in the debate this evening.

CSEC, or Communications Security Establishment Canada, has a three-part mandate. First, it is responsible for the collection of foreign intelligence from the global information web. Second, it is the lead agency for cybersecurity for the federal government. Third, it can use its technological capacities and expertise to assist domestic law enforcement and intelligence agencies.

There is no argument that CSEC is a vital piece of Canada's national security puzzle. Additionally, CSEC functions within a global alliance known as the Five Eyes, an alliance of partner signals intelligence agencies within the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand.

Following the 9/11 attacks in the United States, the mandate of CSEC was expanded. That was 13 years ago, and we are in a rapidly evolving world in terms of national security. It seems more than reasonable to assess the mandate, effectiveness, and accountability of CSEC and its activities.

My colleague, the hon. member for Malpeque, has been quite vocal about the need for parliamentary oversight. In his capacity as public safety critic, he has repeatedly pointed out the important fact that, although Canada functions within the Five Eyes alliance I just spoke about, it is the only country that does not have proactive parliamentary oversight.

In February of 2014, my hon. colleague from Malpeque asked a question that I think deserves an answer. I am not sure he has ever received a genuine or relevant answer, so I'll pose the question here again today. I am quoting from the member for Malpeque:

The key point here is that I really cannot understand the government's unwillingness to look at proper parliamentary oversight when two of its key cabinet ministers were in fact part of a report at one point in favour of such oversight.

We know that with this particular government, if an organization that depends on government funding comes out against the government, its funding will probably be cut.

The member went to great lengths explaining the Five Eyes and the other countries that are our allies in these issues. Where does the government get the idea that Canadians are less at risk of invasion of privacy and do not need proper parliamentary oversight, when all our allies do?

**Mr. Ryan Leef:** We're different.

**Mr. Sean Casey:** Mr. Speaker, from across the aisle, I am being told we are different. However, we can learn a lot from best practices.

As I understand it, the original Five Eyes alliance was formed in 1946. It is the result of strategic bilateral agreements that allow each country to conduct independent intelligence gathering within its own jurisdiction and ensure that it is shared with the other four members of the alliance by default.

● (1840)

This alliance between the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand is long-standing. I am curious as to why the Conservative government is reluctant to join the other four members of the Five Eyes alliance in their efforts to maintain sufficient oversight. I think the explanation that we just heard, that we are different, does not quite cut it. At this time, under the current government, Canadians would be well served by additional parliamentary oversight.

Yesterday in the House, the leader of the Liberal Party, the hon. member for Papineau, urged the Prime Minister to strike a proper balance between security and civil liberties. The member for Papineau also correctly indicated that Canada is not facing this issue alone. We are certainly not the only western democracy that struggles to simultaneously protect the security and the rights of its citizens.

There is no doubt in my mind that this debate will reference the tragic events that took place here last week—in fact, it already has—and also in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu. Those awful events should remain with us as legislators and we should seek to prevent more tragedies.

With that being said, the atrocities committed last week should not be the only guiding thought when we deal with issues of terrorism and national security. We need to remain committed to striking the balance I keep referring to and to be careful not to rush into knee-jerk reactions, to borrow a phrase from Justice John Major, when it comes to something so important.

I was impressed by the measured, respectful joint statement by the Privacy and Information Commissioners of Canada. I would like to read it into the record before continuing with my own thoughts on this matter. I quote:

The following days, weeks and months will be critical in determining the future course of action to ensure not only that Canada remains a safe country, but also that our fundamental rights and freedoms are upheld. Legislative changes being contemplated may alter the powers of intelligence and law enforcement agencies.

We acknowledge that security is essential to maintaining our democratic rights. At the same time, the response to such events must be measured and proportionate, and crafted so as to preserve our democratic values.

To that end, the Privacy and Information Commissioners of Canada call on the federal Government:

To adopt an evidence-based approach as to the need for any new legislative proposal granting additional powers for intelligence and law enforcement agencies;



*Private Members' Business*

To engage Canadians in an open and transparent dialogue on whether new measures are required, and if so, on their nature, scope, and impact on rights and freedoms;

To ensure that effective oversight be included in any legislation establishing additional powers for intelligence and law enforcement agencies.

Canadians both expect and are entitled to equal protection for their privacy and access rights and for their security. We must uphold these fundamental rights that lie at the heart of Canada's democracy.

I am sure members can understand why I felt it was so important to read that statement into the record. The third recommendation from the Privacy and Information Commissioners of Canada is most important to the subject of the bill. The commissioners are requesting effective oversight. Effective oversight consists of a parliamentary committee. We are all here in the House to, I hope, uphold the fundamental rights that lie at the heart of Canada's democracy. We do that on behalf of our constituents and on behalf of our country.

Let me say in closing that we cannot simply accept short-term political considerations based on a reaction to fear to be our guiding principle in matters of national security and intelligence gathering. Likewise, fear should not and cannot trump our fundamental rights as Canadians. Our rights do not flow from security laws; they flow from our fundamental values and freedoms and our ability to exercise those rights even when our sense of security is under attack.

We should not, we must not, subjugate our rights to the ebb and flow of circumstances or tragedy. I hope that some of my colleagues on the other side of the House will take note of the support from the National Firearms Association and break away from their traditional "just vote no" mentality to this opposition private members' bill and that they demonstrate understand the true merit of a bill of this nature.

•(1845)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** Resuming debate.

Order. Does the hon. member for Vancouver Quadra wish to take her five-minute right of reply?

The hon. member for Malpeque is rising on a point of order.

**Hon. Wayne Easter:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Are other speakers allowed from the third party?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** The Chair has called resuming debate, and no one has stood. If a member who has not yet spoken to the motion wishes to stand, he or she may do so.

**Hon. Wayne Easter:** Mr. Speaker, I will let the member close the debate.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** The hon. member for Vancouver Quadra, with her five-minute right of reply.

**Ms. Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am thankful for this additional opportunity to speak to this very important matter, which is how we can embed civil liberties and rights and freedoms within the framework of our security and intelligence agencies and thus make them stronger and more effective.

I would like to respond to a few of the comments that the parliamentary secretary for the government made in her remarks. I

acknowledge and appreciate the respectful tone of her remarks. It would be great if this debate were to continue.

I would again invite the members of the Conservative Party to take a look at the bill for themselves and consider voting to support it and bring it to committee.

The parliamentary secretary talked about the various oversight capacities of organizations and agencies such as CSIS, CSEC, and the RCMP. Each of them is very different, and the overall set of security and intelligence activities of the Canadian government also includes the Canada Border Services Agency, the Department of Citizenship and Immigration, and the RCMP.

The parliamentary secretary proved my point that there is a grab bag of different oversight, none of it having parliamentarians, who are responsible to the public, playing a primary role. Given that grab bag of varying oversight, it is clearly a challenge to have an integrated look at the security and privacy of Canadians.

A citizen is one citizen, and whether it is one agency or another out of the six or seven agencies, it is that citizen's right to privacy and security that we are talking about. Without any integration of the oversight, there can only be gaps and duplications. That is one of the very strong arguments is for a committee of parliamentarians.

Our Five Eyes partners have adopted that model because a committee of parliamentarians can look at that entire landscape of security and intelligence activities. That is not happening now. Each of those organizations has some oversight by commissioners or committees, but to look at it in its entirety and identify where there are gaps and duplications is exactly how this parliamentary committee can add value to the ministers responsible.

This morning we heard from a former minister of national defence who had been a member of the SIRC committee for seven years. He said that the key value of a parliamentary committee looking at all of these agencies is that it can identify pitfalls and barriers and can alert the ministers to them so that the ministers can be stronger and more effective in doing their job of ensuring the security and privacy of Canadians. That is a very strong argument.

In addition, the fact that the committee members would be parliamentarians who have a responsibility to the public is a far more powerful approach than we currently have with SIRC or with CSE, in which a commissioner has little requirement to bring any detail forward to the public. I believe the current commissioner is doing a good job, but much of what he is doing is voluntary. That is why the strengthening of the CSEC commissioner is an important element.

One last point I want to make is that the prior commissioners of CSEC and prior chiefs of CSEC or CSE have called for this very committee themselves. Therefore, I am wondering why the Conservatives disagree with those who should know best what the most effective oversight model would be for our security and intelligence agencies in Canada.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

• (1850)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** 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 Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** In my opinion the nays have it.

*And five or more members having risen:*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** Pursuant to Standing Order 93, the recorded division stands deferred until Wednesday, November 5, immediately before the time provided for private members' business.

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## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

[*English*]

### CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD

**Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I raised a question on September 26 about the Canadian Wheat Board because of the growing concern in the farm community that not only did the Conservative government destroy one of the best marketing institutions in terms of enhancing farmers' marketing opportunities and maximizing the returns for primary producers but because it virtually stole farmers' assets, as well.

Even though the new board is a government creation, its annual report tells us virtually nothing.

At the time I asked my question, I said:

the Canadian Wheat Board has never been as closed, secretive, and non-transparent as it is today.

The Canadian Wheat Board now is the Canadian Wheat Board in name only. It used to be a board where the farmers elected a board of directors that represented their industry, with an annual report full of information. I will speak about that in a moment.

With today's so-called Canadian Wheat Board, as I said:

There is no data in the annual report, no financial statements, and no examination by the Auditor General. This agency, concocted and directed by the government, is playing with hundreds of millions of dollars of taxpayer money and, worse still, hundreds of millions of dollars in assets originally taken from western Canadian farmers.

If we think back in time to the previous board, Conservative members were attacking the Wheat Board because they claimed that it did not provide information. Yes, it did. It listed in an annual report all the pools for every variety and grade of grain. It stated the export price farmers received. It showed where the deductions were in terms of elevation, transportation, and demurrage for boats waiting in the harbour. One could calculate from that the cost of marketing a bushel of grain. One could calculate from that how big a share of the export dollar farmers were getting. They were getting at that time about 87¢ of the export dollar. Today they are getting less than 50¢ of the export dollar. The government has virtually destroyed that marketing institution.

Farmers built these assets over decades of marketing grain through the Canadian Wheat Board. Why is the government not selling those assets, if that is what it intends to do, in an accountable and transparent process? Nobody, especially the farmers who put in the assets, has a clue what is happening with their assets that the Conservative government has taken away from them.

• (1855)

**Mr. Pierre Lemieux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the commercialization of the Canadian Wheat Board represents a new era of opportunity for western Canadian grain farmers. Our government has delivered on our commitment to give western Canadian grain farmers the marketing freedom they want and deserve. We promised marketing freedom to farmers, and we followed through on that commitment. As part of that commitment, our government continues the Canadian Wheat Board as a marketing choice for western Canadian farmers who choose to take advantage of the CWB's risk management pricing tools.

As the CWB now competes in the open market, it has a right to protect commercially sensitive information. As required by the Canadian Wheat Board (Interim Operations) Act, the CWB submitted its financial statement for the 2012-13 crop year to the minister. That crop year was significant, as it was the first year for the Canadian Wheat Board as a commercial entity in an open western Canadian grain market.

[*Translation*]

Before tabling these financial statements in Parliament, the minister carefully assessed the sensitivity of the commercial information in the report, because the Canadian Wheat Board's competitors do not have to publish this kind of information, and therefore they do not.

In accordance with the Canadian Wheat Board Interim Operations Act, the minister excluded from the report any information whose publication could be detrimental to the commercial interests of the Canadian Wheat Board.

[*English*]

Contrary to what the members opposite think, this is not a political process. The CWB will assess all serious bidders and then submit a plan for commercialization in accordance with the legislation passed in December 2011. As such, the CWB is increasing its capacity to remain a vibrant marketing option for farmers, and we are encouraged to see the CWB continue with this plan.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

Unlike the Liberals and the New Democrats, our government has jobs and the economy as our top priority. Farmers want the numerous benefits that are available in fair, competitive, and open markets.

Our government promised to deliver on this. We have, and the Canadian Wheat Board can now be an effective competitor.

● (1900)

**Hon. Wayne Easter:** Mr. Speaker, the government promised to deliver, but farmers actually believed they would have a vote. The government never gave them that opportunity. The Conservatives just destroyed the old Canadian Wheat Board with the stroke of a pen, by legislation.

The member talks about a marketing opportunity. It is only a selling opportunity, and the new system is allowing the grain companies to gouge farmers very considerably. As I said, it used to be that 87¢ of the export dollar was returned to farmers; today it is less than 50¢ of the dollar.

I conclude with this. Anders Bruun, a Winnipeg lawyer, when talking about the assets that farmers have, said, “These monies were withheld to cover severance pay, pension expenses and numerous other expenses. Those [monies] were not paid out to producers as they should have been.”

Why is the government keeping farmers' assets and their money?

**Mr. Pierre Lemieux:** Mr. Speaker, the member implies that the CWB is playing with government and farmers' money. This could not be further from the truth.

Let me read a quote from *The Western Producer* of September 23, 2009. It states, “So there is a deal, we would have to revisit if there is a role for government since there would no longer be that financial stake.”

Who said that? Why, it was the member for Malpeque. He was referring to the way the CWB would operate in an open market. He argued that government should maintain an arm's-length relationship with a privatized CWB, and that is exactly what we are doing. We are allowing the CWB to privatize and keeping an arm's-length relationship.

The courts have been clear. Farmers and the government do not own CWB assets. It is time for this member to take his own advice and let the CWB move forward and privatize in the manner it sees fit.

## ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

**Mrs. Carol Hughes (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusksing, NDP):** Mr. Speaker it is difficult to accept that in the 10 years since Amnesty International Canada released a major report documenting the violence against this country's indigenous women, there still has not been a strong federal response on the issue.

There has been ample opportunity for both Liberal and Conservative governments, but a full decade later we are so mired in the problem that the only reasonable response is a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women.

The current government refuses to budge despite overwhelming and ever-growing support for an inquiry. Instead of recognizing the

benefit the process would have, it has managed to plug its ears and claim these are all just crimes that are being dealt with by the police. All the while, the stats keep mounting, and the direct line that runs from the brutal murder of Helen Betty Osborne to the discovery of Tina Fontaine's body in the Red River this past summer is being dismissed as nothing more than a number of unconnected crimes.

However, the real crime is inaction and indifference as well as viewing these women and girls in the worst light far too often. Disappearances are too quickly dismissed as runaways or substance abusers, which is supposed to excuse a lacklustre effort to find these women. Also, when these instances are seen as nothing more than simple crimes to be dealt with by police, we forget that these women are almost seven times more likely to be the victims of violence than any other societal group in Canada.

Too often we have heard members of the government wonder what good an inquiry would do. My colleague from Timmins—James Bay did a great job of explaining that. He said that among many other things, an inquiry will allow us to see what makes these women so vulnerable and how they can be taken without police investigations.

It will let us talk about how children and young women can be taken from their homes because the federal government will not allow therapy and in-house support for their families. We will hear how they get put into foster care, and so often end up on the street. Most importantly, an inquiry will send a message that these women were people who were loved and should be respected, and that our Canadian society is ashamed that so many people could be allowed to disappear or die.

An inquiry is about a commitment to make societal change, such as the change that came to the OPP because of the Ipperwash inquiry. That showed us an inquiry process can and does work. With all this in mind, will this government reconsider and call an inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women?

● (1905)

**Mrs. Susan Truppe (Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, let me be clear that the Government of Canada has been very clear that these abhorrent acts of violence against aboriginal women and girls will not be tolerated in our society.

Canada is a country where those who break the law are punished, where penalties match the severity of crimes committed, and where the rights of victims are recognized. That is why we committed, in the economic action plan 2014, to invest an additional \$25 million over five years to continue in our efforts to reduce violence against aboriginal women.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

On September 15 of this year, the Minister of Labour and Minister of Status of Women launched the Government of Canada action plan to address family violence and violent crimes against aboriginal women and girls. The action plan is designed to set out concrete actions to prevent violence, support aboriginal victims, and protect aboriginal women and girls from violence.

It includes new funding of \$25 million over five years beginning in 2015-16, as well as renewed and ongoing support for shelters on reserve and family violence prevention activities.

The action plan's new funding of \$25 million over five years has been allocated as follows: \$8.6 million over five years for the development of more community safety plans across Canada, including in vulnerable communities with a high incidence of violent crimes perpetrated against women as identified by the RCMP's national operational overview; \$2.5 million over five years for projects to break intergenerational cycles of violence and abuse by raising awareness and building healthy relationships; \$5 million over five years for projects to engage men and boys, and empower women and girls in efforts to denounce and prevent violence; \$7.5 million over five years to support aboriginal victims and families; and \$1.4 million over five years to share information and resources with communities and organizations, and to report regularly on progress made and results achieved under the action plan.

It also reflects the 2014 economic action plan's commitment of \$8.1 million over five years, starting in 2016-17 with \$1.3 million per year ongoing to create a DNA-based missing persons index.

I should add that the Government of Canada's efforts complement the important work done by the provinces and territories, police, the justice system, and aboriginal families, communities and organizations to address violence against aboriginal women and girls.

**Mrs. Carol Hughes:** Mr. Speaker, we are looking at the same plan and no concrete results for prevention. Repeating announcements of old money is not getting the job done.

Year after year, it is indigenous women who face more violence than other groups in Canadian society. They actually make up 4.3%

of the general population in Canada, but account for 11.3% of missing females and 16% of murders.

The debate here is not about solving crimes, it is about showing respect, changing a cultural view of what is acceptable, and doing what is right. Part of the showing of respect is to allow the families of the victims to be heard, which is what an inquiry would do.

Again, what we learned from Ipperwash, is that it is possible to make big changes when we have big societal conversations.

Will the government listen to the growing chorus of calls from groups like the Canadian Public Health Association for a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women?

**Mrs. Susan Truppe:** Mr. Speaker, in addition to the action plan's new funding, there is further funding of \$158.7 million over five years beginning in 2015 for shelters and family violence prevention activities through Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada.

There will also be an internal dedication of funds, \$5 million over five years, beginning in 2015, to improve economic security of aboriginal women and promote their participation in leadership and decision making roles through Status of Women Canada.

Taken all together, these measures outlined by the minister in the action plan represent a total investment of \$196.8 million over five years, with some of these investments starting in 2015-16 and others in 2016-17.

As members can see, we on this side of the House are listening to Canadians and we are taking action on this very important issue.

● (1910)

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7:10 p.m.)





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