



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Wednesday, February 18, 2015**

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**Speaker: The Honourable Andrew Scheer**

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, February 18, 2015

The House met at 2 p.m.

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*Prayers*

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• (1405)

[English]

**The Speaker:** It being Wednesday, we will now have the singing of the national anthem led by the hon. member for St. Paul's.

[Members sang the national anthem]

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

### HERITAGE TOURNAMENT

**Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, just recently the 40th annual Heritage tournament took place in my home riding of Oshawa. Over the course of three days, 82 youth hockey teams played in over 100 games and competed for 11 championship banners. I am very proud to say that both the Oshawa Falcons and Oshawa Hawks claimed several championship banners.

The tournament was first held on Heritage Day, or what was then known as Flag Day, in 1975, and was organized by the Oshawa Church Hockey League. For 40 years, the tournament has provided the youth of Oshawa and Ontario with an exciting display of hockey talent, while reinforcing the ideals of sportsmanship and fair play.

I would like to thank Dave and Brenda Glazier for coordinating this year's event. Dave, like his late father Bill who pioneered the Oshawa Church League in 1975, has been involved in every Heritage tournament since its inception.

I also want to congratulate all the teams and players who competed and thank all the volunteers who made this tournament possible.

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### THE MAPLE LEAF FOREVER

**Mr. Craig Scott (Toronto—Danforth, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, in 1867, school principal Alexander Muir, living in what is now Toronto-Danforth's Leslieville, is said to have been inspired to write the poem *The Maple Leaf Forever* after a leaf fell onto his shoulder from a maple tree.

The great tree that legend says inspired that poem, later to become a song, was felled by lightning in 2013. However, it lives on through dozens of woodworking projects coordinated by the city of Toronto, including the new flag pole beside the Speaker's chair.

This song celebrating British war victories accelerated the spread of the maple leaf symbol to English-speaking Canada from its origins as a patriotic emblem in early 1800s Quebec, helping pave the way for the adoption of the single maple leaf as our flag's symbol of Canadian unity.

The song's lyrics have evolved as Canada has evolved. The most recent version was the winner of a CBC contest in 1997 to rewrite the song into something more inclusive, unifying and inspiring for a 21st century Canada.

Allow me to end by reading some lines from Vladimir Radian's 1997 lyrics:

Protect the weak, defend your rights,  
And build this land together,  
Above which shine the Northern Lights,  
And the Maple Leaf forever!

\* \* \*

### SQUAMISH

**Mr. John Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the *New York Times* recently proclaimed Squamish as one of the 52 best places in the world to visit, calling it an "...unusual combination of West Coast wilderness and accessibility." Last week, Squamish was once again in the news. *Maclean's* magazine listed Quest University in first place for student engagement among 73 Canadian universities and colleges. Quest has topped the list in four of the past five years.

I visited Quest last week, where I met with its highly regarded president, Dr. David Helfand, teaching fellow Denise Gabriel, and a variety of students, the best and the brightest from Canada and around the world.

Along with Capilano University, Quest has put Squamish on the map as a global academic centre.

Squamish is also an entrepreneurial community. It is blazing trails, not only in academics but also in sustainable economic opportunities, thanks in part to the initiatives of its chamber of commerce, one of Canada's most active.

*Statements by Members*

I congratulate Squamish and Quest on their leadership, proving that “big things really do come in small packages”.

\* \* \*

**VENEZUELA**

**Hon. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, one year ago today, Venezuelan opposition leader Leopoldo López was arrested as part of a crackdown on peaceful protests that left 43 dead, 3,000 detained, and scores of political prisoners.

His trial has been a sham in which the judge has allowed over 100 prosecution witnesses while denying defence testimony. His imprisonment has been cruel and inhumane. Last week, a dozen armed men wearing ski masks destroyed the contents of his cell and moved him to a small isolation unit with no toilet or running water.

After his wife, Lilian Tintori, appeared before our foreign affairs subcommittee on international human rights, the subcommittee passed a unanimous motion condemning:

—the arbitrary and illegal detention and imprisonment of Mr. López and the violations of his fundamental freedoms and rights to a fair trial as guaranteed under international law and the Venezuelan constitution;

I ask all members to join this call for the release of Leopoldo López and all political prisoners in Venezuela, and to urge the Government of Venezuela to respect democracy human rights, and the rule of law for all its people.

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**INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Mr. John Carmichael (Don Valley West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to highlight the investments our government has made, and continues to make, toward transit infrastructure in Toronto.

One of the most consistent priorities I hear from my constituents in Don Valley West is the need to get Toronto moving and remove gridlock. Our government has made historical investments in public transit.

Since 2006, we have invested or committed over \$3.2 billion in critical transit projects. Some of these investments include: \$92.3 million toward the Toronto Rocket subway trains; \$250 million invested in improving GO Transit rail and bus services; and close to \$171 million towards the new generation of streetcars.

Through our government's extension and doubling of the gas tax fund, we have invested more than \$2.2 billion to support municipal infrastructure right across the GTA.

Transit is an important part of our healthy, growing economy. I am proud to represent Toronto and Don Valley West.

It is quite clear that our government believes in Toronto. On behalf of the people of Toronto, I would like to express my thanks for believing in our great city.

● (1410)

[*Translation*]

**CBC/RADIO-CANADA**

**Mr. Jonathan Tremblay (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, earlier this week, we found out that the Prime Minister is not Charlie. It comes as no surprise to anyone that as far as this government is concerned, freedom of expression applies only to Conservative positions.

Until recently, we knew that the Conservatives were suspicious of researchers, intellectuals, journalists and political columnists. However, during an appearance on a Quebec City talk radio show last weekend, the Prime Minister let us in on the fact that he has Radio-Canada employees—who, according to him, do not embrace Conservative ideology—in his crosshairs.

The Prime Minister revealed his true intention to get rid of this Canadian institution, which he considers an obstacle to his political party.

I believe that the Prime Minister's statements about Radio-Canada employees were out of place, unfounded and unworthy of his position.

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[*English*]

**VOLUNTEERISM**

**Hon. Ron Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it will be my great pleasure this week to present to Kelowna—Lake Country resident Phyllis MacPherson a Canadian flag in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the National Flag of Canada.

This tradition recognizes exceptional individuals who make outstanding contributions to our communities and to our country, and Phyllis certainly fits this bill.

A dynamic and compassionate individual, Phyllis MacPherson has been the volunteer manager of the Lake Country Food Assistance Society for over 30 years, helping many individuals and families when they are most in need and giving tirelessly of her time and talents to raise funds for the society to find a permanent home.

In dedicating her life to the others in this way, Phyllis reminds us all that the misfortune of others could be one's own and that in order to call ourselves members of a community, we must look out for each other.

I congratulate Phyllis on this well-deserved honour. May we all strive as Phyllis has to remember to see our neighbours through the eyes of understanding and live with hearts of compassion.

There but for the grace of God go I. I thank Phyllis.

*Statements by Members***RUBEN DEOGRACIAS, BLESSIE CAPULE ORBIGO AND NAPOLEON ORBIGO**

**Mr. Blaine Calkins (Wetaskiwin, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in December of last year, the town of Rocky Mountain House was rocked by the sudden and tragic loss of Ruben Deogracias, Blessie Capule Orbigo and her new husband Napoleon Orbigo, all of them temporary foreign workers, who perished tragically in a car accident on a snow-covered highway just weeks before Christmas.

What followed was a truly inspiring reaction from the folks of Rocky Mountain House who rallied to support those left behind and their families back in the Philippines.

For example, student-aged co-workers wore their work hoodies to school or picked up extra shifts to support each other and honour their lost friends. Donations were accepted at many local businesses and the students of St. Dominic's High School set up a fundraising event.

The community of Rocky Mountain House came together and raised enough money to ensure that Blessie, Napoleon and Ruben could be returned home for burial, and the extra cash was sent to their grieving families back in the Philippines.

The good people of Rocky Mountain House through their kindness, compassion and generosity demonstrated to all of us what it means to be our best in the face of tragedy. They truly honoured the lives of Ruben, Blessie and Napoleon. May they rest in peace.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**MARK SALESSE**

**Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, on February 6, 2015, Sergeant Mark Salesse, a search and rescue technician based at 17 Wing Winnipeg, passed away during a training mission, as a result of an avalanche in Banff National Park in Alberta.

Sergeant Salesse was originally from Chamberlain Settlement, near Bathurst. He was accompanied by three other ice climbers, who managed to escape without injury.

Forty-four-year-old Sergeant Salesse was the son of Liz Quinn and Maurice Salesse. He loved his job in search and rescue, despite all the associated risks. He loved being able to help people in distress.

To his entire family, including his military family, I want to extend my deepest condolences on behalf of the NDP.

I hope his joie de vivre and the love of your family and friends will help ease your grief.

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[English]

**ISLAMIC STATE**

**Mr. Rick Norlock (Northumberland—Quinte West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to working with our international allies to fight against ISIL around the world in order to protect Canadians.

According to the Liberal member for Westmount—Ville-Marie, air strikes against the ISIL death cult are “overkill”.

My constituents do not believe that working to stop a gruesome terrorist organization that beheads people who do not agree with it, threatens to behead the elderly in their beds if they do not convert, and has committed countless crimes against women and children is “overkill”. In fact, our armed forces has confirmed that our air strikes have successfully degraded ISIL's capabilities.

ISIL is a threat to domestic and international security. It has declared war on Canada. It called for brutal attacks against Canadians. Although the Liberals want us to sit and do nothing, we will persist.

\* \* \*

●(1415)

**VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

**Mrs. Carol Hughes (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, every year in Canada violence drives 100,000 women and children out of their homes and into shelters, where those options exist.

In northern Canada, the problem is extreme and more women face abuse. Yet, despite greater rates of violence, 70% of northern and remote communities do not have safe houses or emergency shelters.

[Translation]

When it should be doing so much more, the government is doing less to help women in the north escape violence. With this so-called action plan, the government is doing nothing more than reannouncing money already promised.

[English]

The irony of the situation is that the government has actually promised less money for shelters than was given in recent years.

On this side of the House, we will not accept a frontier mentality that excuses abuse and violence as part of a rugged northern lifestyle.

We call upon the government to challenge our own patterns of violence perpetrated on women and create viable options for women facing domestic abuse in northern Canada.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION**

**Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Liberal leader opposed the government's principled position on the oath of citizenship being delivered without a niqab. It is a matter of deep principle.

Most Canadians would find it offensive for people to hide their identity at the very moment they want to join the Canadian family. Our government understands that. It is disappointing that the Liberal leader does not.

I am pleased that the government plans to appeal this decision.

*Statements by Members*

[English]

**FIGURE SKATING**

**Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute an outstanding young athlete from Hammonds Plains, Nova Scotia. Olivia Rybicka-Oliver is a provincial figure skating champion, but she is also becoming recognized for her commitment to others.

On January 19, this amazing 11-year-old broke the world record for fastest spinner on ice skates with a speed of 342 rpm. Olivia used this challenge to raise money for Coalition for Kids International. That means a hundred terminally ill children in Poland will have a wish come true.

She is also helping local youth in the leave out violence organization, or LOVE, in Halifax.

I know my colleagues will want to join me in congratulating Olivia for her remarkable achievements.

\* \* \*

**TAXATION**

**Ms. Joyce Bateman (Winnipeg South Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, mothers and fathers should be able to make the important decisions that affect their own children.

That is why our new family tax cut and enhanced universal child care benefit will give 100% of families with children an average of more than \$1,100 dollars per year to spend on their priorities, with the majority of benefits flowing to low and middle income families.

Our government trusts that parents know what is best for their children, but both the Liberals and the NDP are against putting money back into the pockets of hard-working families. In fact, the Liberals would reverse our tax cuts and want to impose more taxes on middle class Canadian families.

On this side of the House, we will not hike taxes like the Liberals propose. Rather, we are proud to ensure that mom and dad have the final say in where their money is going for their family.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**OFFICIAL LANGUAGES**

**Ms. Ève Pécelet (La Pointe-de-l'Île, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the member for Saint-Laurent—Cartier likes to lecture the Conservatives about using both official languages on Twitter.

In my opinion, he should have a look in his own backyard. As someone who claims to care about bilingualism, can he explain why his own party treats French as a second-rate language here in the House?

In 2014, barely 22% of the questions asked in the House by the Liberals were in French. Clearly the member for Saint-Laurent—Cartier is better at lecturing than getting results. He is all talk and no action, just like the Conservatives, who appointed a unilingual Minister of Foreign Affairs, a unilingual Auditor General, and unilingual judges in just about every court.

Only the NDP takes the official languages seriously. Even though we are in opposition, we have advanced bilingualism, for example with our bill on officers of Parliament.

Imagine everything we will be able to accomplish when we form the government in 2015.

\* \* \*

● (1420)

[English]

**TAXATION**

**Ms. Joan Crockatt (Calgary Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I was happy to hear the statement by the member for Winnipeg South Centre because 100% of families with children will benefit from our new family tax cut. Those are families in Calgary and across the country.

We expanded and increased the universal child care benefit so families will receive \$2,000 per child in every riding in the country. That is nearly \$12,000 by the time a child is six. However, the Liberals and the NDP would reverse those cuts. They want to put that money back in the hands of the government bureaucracy. We will not do that.

Already the Liberal leader has said that he would reverse those cuts. The Liberals even want to impose more taxes, like the job-killing carbon tax.

Canadians can only trust our government to be able to put money back in their pockets. That is something the people of Calgary Centre and the people across Canada appreciate from this government.

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**HOUSE OF COMMONS FLAGPOLE**

**The Speaker:** I would like to draw to the attention of all hon. members a new flagpole and stand fashioned from wood from the silver maple tree that inspired the song *The Maple Leaf Forever* here at the right hand of the Speaker's chair. The remains of the tree, which fell during a storm in 2013, are being turned into 150 art-craft projects for public display across Canada.

I wish to thank the hon. member for Toronto—Danforth who proposed that the House of Commons participate in this initiative.

[Translation]

I would also like to thank the teams of conservators and tradespeople in the House administration for their superb design and excellent craftsmanship in creating these historical objects.

Members may also have noted the maple leaf flag in the Hall of Honour. It was flown at the top of the Peace Tower 50 years ago on February 15, 1965.

[English]

It will be on display until March 1. I invite all hon. members to stop by and have a look at this remarkable artifact of our country's history.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, inciting a terrorist act is already a crime in Canada.

The Prime Minister wants to change the law so that promoting terrorism in general will now be a crime. The problem is that this definition does not add anything meaningful. The Minister of Public Safety claims that he does not want to get caught up in definitions.

Can the Prime Minister give Canadians an example of a situation that is not covered by the existing legislation?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, obviously promoting terrorism should be a crime in Canada. This clarification of the law is just common sense.

**Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, inciting a terrorist act is already illegal. Is the Prime Minister the only one who does not understand that?

Right now, CSIS already has the mandate to investigate any threat to Canada's security. Under the Prime Minister's bill, the definition of a threat to security would include anything that could interfere with economic stability. What does that mean?

Can the Prime Minister tell Canadians exactly what his bill means when it refers to interfering with economic stability?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, obviously, terrorism can affect Canada's economic stability. Take, for example, the impact of the events of September 11, 2001.

[English]

The bill is very clear. It lists a range of national security threats to Canada, but it also makes clear that any activity undermining security does not include lawful advocacy, protest, dissent or artistic infringements.

**Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, right now CSIS investigates security threats, but the Prime Minister's proposed bill would redefine security threats to include all activities that "interfere" with infrastructure and economic stability, to give only two examples.

CSIS is already charged with investigating things like terrorist threats against our economic infrastructure. It is already there

So what new kind of economic interference would CSIS now be charged with investigating? Can the Prime Minister give Canadians a single example?

• (1425)

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, under present authority, CSIS does not have the authorization to disrupt security threats that are in stage.

This bill gives CSIS those authorities to be exercised with judicial oversight and court authority.

**Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, terrorism is a real threat and everyone agrees that public safety is the primary responsibility of any government, but Canadians do not have to choose between security and their rights.

### Oral Questions

Interfering with infrastructure, interfering with economic stability, why is the Prime Minister lumping in legitimate dissent with terrorist activity?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the bill, as I just outlined, does absolutely no such thing, not even remotely. This is, in fact, the attempt of the NDP to always say that anything that is in defence of our security somehow undermines our freedoms. That is simply not true.

All we are seeing here is that as the NDP's positions on this issue become more and more irrelevant, more and more unconnected to Canadians' real concerns, their statements on the issue become more and more extreme.

**Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP):** Of course, Mr. Speaker, when the Prime Minister uses the word "extreme" to define the opposition, and then he denies that this is about political opportunism, everybody can see right through it.

[Translation]

CSIS already has a mandate to investigate security threats and potential attacks of any kind against Canada.

The Prime Minister's bill would expand its mandate, but to what? What activities? He is not able to give Canadians a single example.

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the bill is very specific. The Leader of the Opposition says that the bill changes nothing, but it is excellent. It only makes sense to ensure that all of our police forces and security agencies have the power to deal with security threats and terrorism and share information. That is common sense, and that is why the vast majority of Canadians support this bill.

\* \* \*

[English]

### FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**Mr. Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last night I spoke with Mohamed Fahmy, and today I have two questions.

First, will the Prime Minister pick up the phone and call President el-Sisi to personally ask for Mr. Fahmy to be returned to Canada?

Further, will the Government of Canada make a formal submission at trial requesting his immediate deportation?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, although Mr. Fahmy has been released on bail, the government remains very concerned about this case and about the process in question. We have expressed those concerns to the government of Egypt at all levels and we will continue to do so until we get a resolution of this that is satisfactory.

*Oral Questions***HEALTH**

**Mr. Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government has a responsibility to educate Canadians about matters of public health, but yesterday the health minister simply pointed fingers at parents for not vaccinating children.

Instead of blaming parents, will the Prime Minister cancel his wasteful partisan ads and start a national education campaign on the importance of vaccinating our kids?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there is a bit of a shuffle over there, because yesterday, the leader of the Liberal Party accused the government of having cut vaccination campaigns and vaccination funding. I checked on those numbers overnight and saw that there has been no reduction whatsoever. In fact, this government has not only continued doing what we have always done domestically, we are also involved in unprecedented programs internationally promoting vaccination.

The Minister of Health has made this very clear, and I would encourage all members of the House to indicate to Canadians that medical science is absolutely clear that vaccinations are good and children should be protected.

\* \* \*

● (1430)

**JUSTICE**

**Mr. Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Lib.):** There has been a 23% cut since 2006, Mr. Speaker.

[*Translation*]

The Supreme Court has given the government just one year to draft legislation on physician-assisted death. Parliamentarians must be able to hear from Canadians and experts and hold a respectful, responsible discussion on this important issue.

Will the Prime Minister start this process in the coming weeks, or will he force Canadians to wait until after the next election?

**Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this is obviously a sensitive topic for many Canadians, and there are strong opinions on both sides. We will examine this decision and hold broad consultations on all aspects of this difficult issue.

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**PUBLIC SAFETY**

**Ms. Rosane Doré Lefebvre (Alfred-Pellan, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, everyone here agrees that we have to do everything in our power to keep Canadians safe. However, we cannot do that at the expense of our identity, our values or our way of life. We should not have to choose between our safety and our rights and freedoms.

Why are the Conservatives acting as though we must choose between our freedom and our safety?

**Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is very clear that freedom cannot exist without safety. Unfortunately, the NDP does not seem to have gone to the trouble of reading past page 3 of the bill. The bill includes provisions to ensure that anyone who engages in crime or terrorism will be prosecuted.

I would like to remind my colleague that safety and freedom go hand in hand and that our police forces and our intelligence agencies exist to protect our freedom and our democracy.

**Ms. Rosane Doré Lefebvre (Alfred-Pellan, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, frankly, it is very clear that Bill C-51 is a direct attack on our freedom and that it will quite simply not work. This bill goes way too far, period.

The government is getting rid of measures that work and that are already reducing the threat of terrorism. What is it replacing them with? With a bill that undermines our rights and freedoms.

Why are the Conservatives refusing to use common sense and include logical, necessary measures, such as increased oversight of CSIS and an anti-radicalization strategy?

**Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the New Democrats are blowing things out of proportion, which comes as no surprise to anyone because they never support measures to protect Canadians from the terrorist threat. The bill before us contains concrete measures to prevent terrorism. For example, it enables intelligence services to talk to parents whose child could fall prey to radicalization and to shut down websites that engage in terrorist or jihadist propaganda. Clearly, there are some very good reasons.

Once again, I am looking forward to the speeches for more on this excellent measure.

[*English*]

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the issue of countering terrorism in Canada and doing what is necessary to protect Canadians while preserving our rights and freedoms is a profoundly serious debate. Canadians expect that all parliamentarians will do their jobs and stand up against any legislation that would erode our Canadian way of life. It is imperative that the government allow for an open and meaningful debate on Bill C-51. We cannot afford to allow this sweeping legislation to be rushed through the House.

Would the minister commit now to not railroading Bill C-51 through the House?

**Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I think there is a misunderstanding among the opposition. Those who are threatening our way of life, those who are threatening this very Parliament, and who have indeed done so, the terrorists, are why we need to table a sound, reasonable, well-balanced approach to tackle the terrorist threat. That is the first duty of our government. I am more than happy to open the debate right after question period so we can debate this issue and get the bill through so we can protect Canadians.

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I did not hear a commitment to full debate. All I heard was a reference to starting the debate. This is not the kind of approach that Canadians expect from their government on this serious issue.



*Oral Questions*

The Conservatives have put forward legislation that would simply go too far, a bill so vague that the minister cannot even explain its key provisions. Bill C-51 must be changed to remove the threat it would pose to our rights and freedoms.

Would the government commit to listening to Canadians and hearing from experts at committee, and then change its bill to strengthen oversight and to protect Canadian freedoms?

• (1435)

**Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, two years ago we introduced the Combating Terrorism Act. We wanted to protect Canadians against terrorists. What did the NDP do? They opposed it.

We wanted to remove citizenship from those convicted of terrorism. Once again, regarding dual citizenship, the NDP opposed it.

It is not surprising that they oppose this common-sense and reasonable bill, because they seem to be ideologically opposed to any measure that would protect Canadians.

We are open for debate but, more importantly, Canadians are expecting us to take measures to keep them safe.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**EMPLOYMENT**

**Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Beauharnois—Salaberry, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the retail sector is going through a major crisis, and this is symptomatic of the general state of the economy.

Like Target, Mexx, Jacob and Smart Set, now Bikini Village is going out of business, and another 400 jobs will be lost. In my riding, merchants in Salaberry-de-Valleyfield are worried. Downtown businesses are disappearing one by one. In Ormstown, many other merchants are afraid of being pushed out.

The Conservative government is helping the richest 15%, but where is the plan to help SMEs and create jobs for the middle class?

**Hon. James Moore (Minister of Industry, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, of course it is crucial to have a plan, a policy and budgets in place to protect and promote job creation across Canada. That is why, in last year's budget, we cut taxes to ensure we have an approach that will guarantee and create jobs.

Today we have the best employment numbers out of all G7 countries. We will certainly have new plans and policies in this year's budget to ensure Canada's future prosperity.

[English]

**Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the new so-called jobs minister had no answer for unemployed Canadians who cannot get EI benefits. Maybe he does not realize just how big the problem has grown under the current government's watch. We have lost more than 400,000 good manufacturing jobs under the Conservatives so far, and too many of them in my region.

The NDP has a plan to boost innovation in manufacturing and to create good jobs.

Why are the Conservatives turning their backs on southwestern Ontario?

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the only plan the NDP has is to raise job-killing taxes on workers and the businesses that employ them.

On the question of EI, the majority of eligible applicants receive their benefits within 28 days. However, the New Democrats are trying to distract from their irresponsible 45-day work-year plan, which would cost Canadian taxpayers \$4 billion in job-killing payroll taxes.

On this side of the House, we will reduce taxes to create more jobs.

**Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, unemployment is up by 200,000 since before the recession, and somehow the minister thinks he is doing a good job.

The fact is we have seen so many plant closures on the Conservatives' watch that the sector cannot even take advantage now that we have a lower dollar. In order to help manufacturers compete and create jobs, we need to support investments in equipment and innovation, which is exactly what the NDP plan would do.

Why do the Conservatives refuse to support good middle-class jobs for Canadians?

**Hon. James Moore (Minister of Industry, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Jason Myers, the president of the Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters, says the NDP plan is, to put it bluntly, a joke. He says that the NDP plan would result in higher taxes and would erode investment and put Canadian jobs at risk.

The New Democrats pretend to be in favour of lower taxes, but we actually lowered taxes and they voted against it. The Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters understand that, which is why they have supported our budget. They also recognize that the ideas of the NDP have failed everywhere they have been tried. The public understands that and knows that our government is the only government that is on the side of manufacturers.

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**TAXATION**

**Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are letting tax cheats off the hook and are doing nothing to help middle-class Canadians.

The media report that a single bank, the HSBC, has helped as many as 1,800 Canadians avoid paying their taxes. However, while the Swiss and American authorities are going after HSBC for money laundering and fraud, the current Conservative government does nothing but make excuses.

*Oral Questions*

Billions of dollars are being lost every year to tax-evasion schemes, while the current government guts the Canada Revenue Agency. When will the minister start really going after tax cheats?

• (1440)

**Hon. Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay (Minister of National Revenue, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this government has zero tolerance for tax evasion. Since 2006, the CRA has audited over 8,600 international tax cases, identified over \$5.6 billion in additional taxes being collected, and we have not reduced our audit forces.

Regarding HSBC, the CRA has conducted hundreds of audits, leading to over \$21 million in taxes and penalties being reassessed. Further, CRA has received over 250 voluntary disclosures relating to Canadians with an HSBC account. That represents another \$123 million.

[Translation]

**Mr. Pierre Dionne Labelle (Rivière-du-Nord, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the HSBC Bank in embroiled in a huge scandal involving tax fraud and money laundering linked to drug trafficking and the financing of terrorism.

Some 1,800 Canadian clients had accounts with that Swiss bank. Often it was unscrupulous institutions here that facilitated the transfer of funds, allowing people to hide money with HSBC.

Now that we know that Swiss authorities began conducting searches today, can the minister tell us what she is doing to catch white collar fraudsters and crack down on their accomplices?

**Hon. Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay (Minister of National Revenue, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, our government has a zero tolerance policy when it comes to tax evasion.

[English]

As I have stated with respect to the HSBC accounts, when non-compliance was expected, the CRA conducted hundreds of audits. This has led to over \$21 million in taxes and penalties being reassessed. Further, our voluntary disclosure program, which is more robust than ever when it comes to international tax evasion, has brought forward 250 voluntary disclosures representing another nearly \$123 million in previously undisclosed amounts.

\* \* \*

**ETHICS**

**Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Treasury Board contracting rules are in place to prevent corruption and political favouritism. Yet documents show that in March 2013, the office of the then minister of natural resources, now the Minister of Finance, ordered his department to approve a \$9,200 payment that, according to his own department, “contravenes...Treasury Board...Contracting Policies”.

This was an after-the-fact speech-writing contract for the minister. Who was the money for? It was for none other than Guy Giorno, the Prime Minister's former chief of staff.

Why were proper contracting rules violated?

**Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we expect all Treasury Board guidelines to be followed. Having said

that, we know that the Liberal Party still has some \$40 million of taxpayer funds outstanding. Now that there is a new member over there, I wonder if she might help them search for that \$40 million, maybe give them a bit of a leg up.

**Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, government documents make it clear that this procurement was “inappropriately actioned”. The amount charged was conveniently just under the \$10,000 public disclosure limit, but what is really distressing is that the department has no copy of the speech or any record of whether or where it was actually delivered.

Can the minister immediately produce a copy of this speech, and can he advise why taxpayers paid for it if the department has no record of its very existence?

**Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, again, of course we expect all Treasury Board guidelines to be followed.

When it comes to giving speeches and being paid for those speeches, I suggest that the member actually ask the leader who sits in front of him, who we know accepted huge contracts, while being a member of Parliament, to speak at places like school boards, unions, and churches.

We are going to focus on what matters to Canadians: safety and security and the economy. Our plan has created over 1.2 million jobs. We are getting people back to work. We are cutting taxes. We are investing in infrastructure. We are going to continue to do that for a very long time to come.

• (1445)

[Translation]

**Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Treasury Board rules were broken in order to give an after-the-fact contract to the Prime Minister's former chief of staff.

The office of the then minister of natural resources even insisted that the payment be made in the fiscal year-end panic. Even worse, the department cannot find a copy of the discussion and does not even know what it is about.

How can the minister find this to be acceptable?

[English]

**Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, let me just get this straight. It is 2:45. We are a number of months ahead of an election, and the best the Liberals have is they want to see a copy of a great speech, apparently, that the Minister of Natural Resources gave.

They do not want to talk about cutting taxes. They do not want to talk about the fact that we are giving parents, every single family in this country, more money in their pockets. They do not want to talk about the massive infrastructure program the Minister of Infrastructure, Communities and Intergovernmental Affairs has brought forward. They do not want to talk about the mission we are taking right now in Iraq.

*Oral Questions*

The best they have is “Can you please send us a copy of a speech that was given by the Minister of Natural Resources?” I will take a look, and I will see what other great speeches he has delivered.

\* \* \*

**ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS**

**Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, today we are mourning the loss—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Speaker:** Order. We have moved on. The hon. member for Churchill has the floor.

**Ms. Niki Ashton:** Mr. Speaker, today we are mourning the loss of two children from the Makwa Sahgaiehc First Nation in Saskatchewan who lost their lives in a devastating house fire.

Their bodies were carried out of their burning home by their father when the RCMP finally arrived. There was no fire response. No one responded to the emergency call in a community with no fire services.

My question to the minister is simple. How could this happen?

**Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I know I have to be careful with the words I am going to be using.

For that member and that party to try to score cheap political points over the death of children on a reserve is just unacceptable. Our thoughts and prayers are with that family that has been through this disaster. We will continue to work with these first nations to prevent such in the future.

**Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the minister may already know that people living on a first nation in Canada are 10 times more likely to die in a house fire than in any other community in our country. This has everything to do with the lack of federal funding to first nations when it comes to fire and emergency services.

The family deserves better. First nations across the country deserve better. When will the federal government stand up and show some leadership so that tragedies like the one that happened in Makwa Sahgaiehc do not happen again?

**Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the member may yell if that makes her feel good, but it does not change the situation. The fact of the matter is that we provide funding to first nations to support operations and maintenance, fire protection infrastructure, and fire protection training on reserve. First nations manage the fire protection services on reserve to meet the needs of their communities, and we also know that education and awareness play an integral role in fire safety, and that is what we are funding.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**HOUSING**

**Ms. Annick Papillon (Québec, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives' approach to homelessness does not meet the needs of the people involved.

By opting for a strategy based on housing, the minister is providing a very simplistic response to a complex problem. Organizations across Quebec believe that the best way to fight homelessness is to use varied approaches.

Why does the minister never consider prevention as a way to fight homelessness? Does she not believe that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure?

● (1450)

[*English*]

**Hon. Candice Bergen (Minister of State (Social Development), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are using an evidence-based approach to fight homelessness. It is called Housing First. We know that the NDP members are opposed to evidence-based solutions. Instead, they are committed to their ideology. In fact, in Quebec, decisions are made through a joint committee of federal and provincial officials who look at the local needs in that particular area. We will continue with our homelessness partnering strategy, focusing on Housing First across this country.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Annick Papillon (Québec, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives' pigheaded determination to impose a new strategy to fight homelessness is causing chaos for 26 Quebec organizations.

In Quebec City, organizations such as Maison de Lauberivière, Maison Dauphine, Armée du Salut, Point de repères and others are operating with the sword of Damocles over their heads. RAIQ member organizations believe that this is one of the biggest backward steps in years.

Why is the Conservative government not going with what works? Why impose a one-size-fits-all strategy on Quebec?

[*English*]

**Hon. Candice Bergen (Minister of State (Social Development), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, what is so good about our HPS strategy is two things. First of all, it focuses on Housing First, but it allows flexibility in each one of the regions and major cities across Canada. We are allowing each of the community entities to consult with their community advisory boards and to be able to look at which projects should be funded.

Yes, we are focusing on Housing First, and yes, we are allowing flexibility. I would be happy to brief the member on HPS.

*Oral Questions***NATIONAL DEFENCE**

**Mr. Earl Dreeshen (Red Deer, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, according to the Liberal MP for Westmount—Ville-Marie, air strikes against the ISIL death cult are “overkill”. For the benefit of the member for Westmount—Ville-Marie, can the Minister of National Defence update the House on the mission against ISIL and why it is so important?

**Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of National Defence and Minister for Multiculturalism, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, sadly, the comments of the Liberal critic echoed those of the so-called security expert of the Liberal leader, Mr. Leslie, who said that the biggest threat in the Middle East is those internally displaced persons, the refugees, the minorities, who have fled the death cult of Daesh. We could not disagree more profoundly. We do not think that it is overkill for Canadian troops and airmen to be striking this genocidal death cult that is seeking to kill tens of thousands of innocent people and that just decapitated 21 people because of their faith. No, this is responsible action by Canadians to defend international security and our own.

\* \* \*

**CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION**

**Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, thanks to negotiations between the U.S. and Chinese governments, Americans are now able to get 10-year multiple-entry visas to China, and even though Canada gives Chinese nationals 10-year visas, Canadians can only get a one-year visa for travel to China. This is unfair to Canadians who want to visit China or conduct business there, harms businesses, limits families, drives up costs, and makes our business sector less competitive.

Will the government support my Motion No. 558 and immediately work with the Chinese government to obtain 10-year multiple-entry visas for Canadians?

**Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the member obviously thinks we have our Canadian policies so right that they do not even deserve a motion from him. He needs a motion to go after Chinese policies for visas for Canadians.

We have enhanced the business relationship with China in every way. There are more direct flights. There are more visas being issued. One-quarter of all the visas we issued in the world last year were issued to Chinese citizens, most of them 10-year multiple-entry visas, and yes, we will continue to work with the Chinese to ensure that more tourists come, that business expands, and that business people have every opportunity to grow a vital trade and investment relationship.

[Translation]

**Ms. Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe (Pierrefonds—Dollard, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, the minister clearly has no intention of showing any leadership here. We have been pressing the minister for months and he has yet to do anything tangible.

The Americans managed to negotiate with China to get visas that allow unrestricted movement, including for business people. Canada is still lagging on this.

Will the government show some leadership? Will it support my colleague's motion and work with the Chinese government to obtain a 10-year multiple-entry visa for Canadians?

**Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is a bit rich for the NDP to ask us to support a motion to change the Chinese government's visa policies, when the NDP themselves voted against the investment protection agreement, and when they themselves voted against all our immigration reforms to help Chinese business people, tourists, and students come to Canada. This is just more NDP hypocrisy.

The Conservatives, however, will continue to promote a very dynamic relationship with China.

\* \* \*

● (1455)

**TAXATION**

**Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we would not recommend that a person with dual Canadian-American citizenship contribute to a registered disability savings plan. The current situation is completely unfair. The person is taxed by the United States when the money is deposited and, surprise, taxed again by Canada when the money is withdrawn.

Will the minister change the tax treaty in order to protect the thousands of citizens living with a disability?

[English]

**Hon. Candice Bergen (Minister of State (Social Development), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are very proud of the registered disability savings plan, the only one of its kind in the world. It was created and really birthed by the late Jim Flaherty. It is one that allows families to save for their children or adult children who have disabilities, because for most parents, a very deep concern is what is going to happen to their children when they are gone.

We are absolutely very proud of our registered disability savings plan. We are proud that there has been more and more uptake on it, and we encourage any family that has a child with a disability to invest, because we are providing a huge amount of grant money for that.

**Mr. Mike Sullivan (York South—Weston, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the government is double-taxing the disabled. That is a Conservative failure.

Canadian-American citizens are being taxed twice, once by Canada and once by the U.S., when contributing to their child's disability savings plan. Money invested is meant to increase the financial security of children living with a disability throughout their lifetime.

Why is the minister not listening to families and amending our tax treaty? Why are Conservatives penalizing parents for saving to secure their children's futures?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Minister of State (Finance), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, again, we are delivering historic tax relief, leaving money in all Canadians' pockets. We have increased the amount Canadians can earn tax free. We have introduced the family tax cut. We continue to bring forward measures to keep money in the pockets of Canadians.

\* \* \*

**HOUSING**

**Mr. Adam Vaughan (Trinity—Spadina, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, \$9,000 did not buy much of a speech for our last question, but we will try again.

The finance minister and another minister showed up in Toronto last week to re-announce no new money for housing for Toronto. No doubt the government's response to this is going to be about a Tory praising a Tory, but let me tell the House that it is fake praise in Toronto.

Just yesterday, their Tory was in Ottawa talking to us all about what he needs for that city to get better. What they need is money for transit, money for infrastructure, and—guess what?—new money for housing. Celebrating the status quo means that only 60 units of housing are going to be built in Toronto next year. The waiting list now is 1,500 years for someone on the wait list.

When will the government commit new money for housing? When will it build new housing with new money?

**Hon. Candice Bergen (Minister of State (Social Development), CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we were very pleased to be in the city of Toronto with the Minister of Finance and the mayor of Toronto to announce \$86 million for our homelessness partners.

What did Tim Richter, head of the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness, say? He said:

The policy shift that the federal government announced in its budget this year is going to radically overhaul Canada's response to homelessness.

We will keep making these announcements, working together with our partners and working on evidence-based solutions to end homelessness.

\* \* \*

**CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION**

**Ms. Chrystia Freeland (Toronto Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in an email to the Conservatives about his plans to strip Muslim women of their right to wear the niqab at citizenship ceremonies, the immigration minister got the basic facts wrong. In a cynical political ploy, the government, he said, will appeal a court decision "allowing people to wear the hijab while taking the oath". Surely the minister, of all people, ought to know the difference between a niqab and a hijab.

As the Conservatives seek to restrict the rights of Muslim women, can they not at least pay them the courtesy of getting the facts right?

**Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member may not have had the honour of living in a majority Muslim country where the hijab has been used to cover the face of women just as the niqab has been used and just as the burka has been used under the terrible influence of the

Taliban in places like Afghanistan and Pakistan. Those practices have no place in our citizenship ceremonies, where we insist on confirming the identity and confirming the commitment of new citizens to our laws, to our sovereign, to our values, and to our traditions.

\* \* \*

• (1500)

[Translation]

**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the new round of sanctions against Russia is missing the mark yet again. Vladimir Yakunin, president of the Russian Railways company, is still not on the sanctions list. Yakunin is an old friend of Putin's and they even co-founded a company together.

Why are key individuals such as Yakunin not included in the most recent sanctions against Russia? Why are the Conservatives sparing certain friends of the regime?

[English]

**Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the member could not be more wrong. Nobody is tougher on Putin and those associated with him than this government in its support for Ukraine. This is why just yesterday we announced further sanctions. We have now placed sanctions against 270 individuals and entities. That is the toughest sanctions record in the world. The member should be applauding that.

**Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the minister just told us Yakunin is not on the list, but it gets worse. Including Yakunin, we have Putin's former deputy aide and former deputy prime minister, Igor Sechin. He is not on the list. He just had a meeting with Putin last week, and this person is not on the list.

Why are the Conservatives protecting Putin's friends? It is a very simple question: why are Sechin and Yakunin not on the list?

**Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, nobody has a better record of supporting Ukraine than this government. Why does the NDP not get behind that, just for a change, just to mix it up?

We have been very clear. We have the toughest sanctions regime in the world. We are very proud of that, and it should have the support of the NDP.

*Oral Questions***CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION**

**Mr. Brad Butt (Mississauga—Streetsville, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I attend many citizenship ceremonies in Mississauga. Becoming a Canadian citizen is a proud time when newcomers commit themselves to Canada and embrace all of the rights and privileges that come with being Canadian.

A very important step in joining the Canadian family is reciting the oath of citizenship. Can the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration please explain to this House why the government intends to file a notice of appeal in this matter?

**Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Mississauga—Streetsville for his hard work for his constituents and for Canadian citizenship, because Mississauga is one of the places in this country where we swore in a record number of citizens in 2014, and we did it through a public declaration.

The oath of citizenship is a statement that one is joining the Canadian family and that he or she is committed to Canadian values and traditions. That is why most Canadians find it offensive that someone would conceal their identity at the very moment when they are joining and expressing their commitment to Canadian laws, values, and traditions.

It is not a matter of practical policy. This is a matter of principle. The oath of citizenship is something we do publicly. Someone keeping his or her face hidden from view at the moment he or she joins our country—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Saint-Laurent—Cartierville.

\* \* \*

• (1505)

[*Translation*]

**OFFICIAL LANGUAGES**

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (Saint-Laurent—Cartierville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Canadian Heritage told me that the ministers who were communicating electronically in just one language were sending out personal messages.

Could she explain why francophones are not entitled to personal messages from the Minister of Health?

[*English*]

“It is important to vaccinate your children. Download free information here” or “If you smoke, read more in my message here.”

[*Translation*]

This one is from the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.

[*English*]

“Important reminder: fishermen have until April 12 to comply.”

[*Translation*]

Why are francophones not entitled to get these public service announcements?

[*English*]

**Hon. Shelly Glover (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for repeating messages that are important to all Canadians.

First and foremost, official communications of the government are always in French and English. The fact that our ministers take the time to also put out messages on personal accounts is exactly that: they can do it personally.

We encourage them, of course, to send out messages that have to do with official communications in French and English. However, these are personal Twitter accounts that we are talking about, and they are not subject to the Official Languages Act.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**CANADA POST**

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the community mailboxes being forced on communities are a disaster—and some might say a nightmare.

Canada Post is not following through on its promises. These much-touted boxes are surrounded by garbage, covered in graffiti and are often not cleared of snow. That is not all. We can only imagine what will happen when these mailboxes are installed on Mount Royal, Beaubien or 9th Avenue. It will be an epic disaster.

Unlike Canada Post, the commission on social development and Montreal diversity conducted public consultations. Surprise, surprise, it recommended that Canada Post immediately reverse this decision.

When will the Conservatives finally listen to the public in Montreal and throughout Quebec?

[*English*]

**Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Transport, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canada Post is implementing a five-point plan to ensure that it remains self-sustaining going into the future. One aspect of that plan is the conversion of one million households to community mailboxes. However, in doing so, and I want to be very clear, Canada Post has the obligation to work with the municipalities to ensure that the siting is appropriate.

I know that consultations are ongoing and I encourage Canada Post to continue on with that process.

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**INTERNATIONAL TRADE**

**Mr. Dave Van Kesteren (Chatham-Kent—Essex, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, free and open trade generates jobs, growth, and long-term prosperity. Today Canada, the U.S. federal government, and the State of Michigan have concluded and signed a plan of arrangement regarding the U.S. customs plaza with a new Detroit River international plaza between Windsor and Detroit.

Can the Minister of Transport please update this House on this important project?

*Routine Proceedings*

**Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Transport, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would very much like to thank the member for Chatham-Kent—Essex for that excellent question. I would also like to commend the member for Essex, my parliamentary secretary, for all the great work that he has done on this project.

I can confirm for the House that an arrangement has been signed by all parties and all partners in the project to allow the U.S. customs plaza to be incorporated into the public-private partnership that will be building the other aspects of the bridge.

We said very clearly that we were not going to allow financial considerations to get in the way of having progress on this bridge, and indeed that is the case.

I think it is important to note as well that the entire amount will be compensated—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Beauport—Limoilou.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**HEALTH**

**Mr. Raymond Côté (Beauport—Limoilou, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, overnight, while Quebec Stevedoring was moving nickel concentrate in the port, the air quality in Limoilou deteriorated even more. Quebec's environment minister sounded the alarm, warning that children and seniors could be affected.

This problem has been ongoing for two years and the government refuses to take action. The Prime Minister popped by Quebec City but did not make any announcements about addressing this problem.

When will the Conservative government take the health of people in Quebec City seriously?

[English]

**Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Transport, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we have discussed this matter with the Port of Quebec, and this is what I am told it has undertaken: a full review of the company's operation, installation of sensors in sensitive areas to ensure monitoring of dust emissions, fully operational sprinkler systems in transmission, and washing stations in order to ensure that vehicles returning are free of dust.

The Port of Quebec is working with its tenants to ensure that the citizens of Quebec are actually protected from this.

\* \* \*

• (1510)

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, through you to the Prime Minister, in response to the very important decision today of the official opposition to oppose Bill C-51, I see that the Conservatives' talking points are to accuse opponents of the bill of either not having read it or of being forever ideologically opposed to anything the Conservative Party does.

I wonder if the Prime Minister would square that point with the fact that *The Globe and Mail* editorial board, which has consistently

supported the Conservative Party, has read the bill and condemns it as a secret police act.

**Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we reject the argument we hear every time we talk about security that our freedoms are threatened. Canadians understand that their freedom and security go hand in hand. Canadians expect us to protect both, and there are protections in this legislation to do that. I invite the member to take part in the debate and eventually support the bill. It is important for our country.

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

[English]

**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**

## CANADIAN HERITAGE

**Mr. Gordon Brown (Leeds—Grenville, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the ninth report of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage in relation to Bill S-218, an act respecting National Fiddling Day. The committee has studied the bill and has decided to report the bill back to the House without amendment.

\* \* \*

**CANADA WATER ACT**

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-653, An Act to amend the Canada Water Act (recycling, conservation and efficiency).

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to introduce this bill, an act to amend the Canada Water Act. I call the bill the water efficiency bill.

The bill would allow the federal government to create water efficiency standards for products and processes in Canada that are sold in Canada and that use water. It would also allow the government to recognize water efficiency standards for devices and the like that were developed elsewhere, like in the United States or at the international level.

The bill would also require the government to report on the impacts of the measures on water consumption.

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

\* \* \*

**ANTI-SEMITISM**

**Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of National Defence and Minister for Multiculturalism, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Mount Royal:

That a take-note debate on the subject of the troubling rise in anti-Semitism around the world, as discussed at a special meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on January 22, 2015, take place pursuant to Standing Order 53.1 on Tuesday, February 24, 2015.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

*Routine Proceedings*

(Motion agreed to)

\* \* \*

• (1515)

**PETITIONS**

## ABORTION

**Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to present two petitions to the House today.

The first petition highlights that Canada is the only western nation along with China and North Korea that has no restrictions whatsoever on abortion. The petitioners call upon the House of Commons to speedily enact legislation that would restrict abortion to the greatest extent possible.

## IMPAIRED DRIVING

**Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the other petition I have highlights, sadly, that Bryan McCron, a 49-year-old single dad, was tragically killed by a drunk driver. The drunk driver was driving while his license was suspended. After serving seven months in prison, the drunk driver was released back into the community right near the victim's family.

Families for Justice is a group of Canadians who have lost loved ones killed by an impaired driver. It believes that Canada's laws for impaired driving are much too lenient.

The petitioners want the crime called vehicular homicide, which it is. Over 12,000 Canadians are killed every year by a drunk driver. They also want mandatory sentencing from the government.

[*Translation*]

## AGRICULTURE

**Mr. Jonathan Tremblay (Montmorency—Charlevoix—Haute-Côte-Nord, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present to the House of Commons a petition signed by hundreds of people who are calling on the government to respect the right of small family farmers to store, trade and use seed.

[*English*]

## CANADA POST

**Hon. Mark Eyking (Sydney—Victoria, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition, which is one of many hundreds of others that I have received in my office.

The petitioners call upon the government to reverse the cuts to Canada Post.

## SEX SELECTION

**Mr. Leon Benoit (Vegreville—Wainwright, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have three petitions to present to the House today.

With respect to the first petition, the petitioners call upon the Canadian Parliament to end discrimination against girls and condemn discrimination against girls caused through gender selection of pregnancy termination.

## GENETICALLY MODIFIED ALFALFA

**Mr. Leon Benoit (Vegreville—Wainwright, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in the second petition, the petitioners call upon Parliament to put in place a moratorium on GM alfalfa.

## IMPAIRED DRIVING

**Mr. Leon Benoit (Vegreville—Wainwright, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the petitioners who signed the third petition call for tougher action on impaired driving. They call for a new mandatory sentence for those persons convicted of impaired driving causing death. They also want the offence under the Criminal Code to be redefined from impaired driving causing death to vehicular manslaughter.

## ANAPHYLAXIS

**Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have a petition from a number of Canadians who ask the House of Commons to honour and support a motion that was unanimously voted on in regard to Motion No. 230 on anaphylaxis.

Those who suffer from anaphylaxis are very vulnerable, particularly when they are travelling. In an airplane, at 35,000 feet, it is very difficult to get emergency medical care.

The petitioners ask that Parliament enact policy to reduce the risk of anaphylactic passengers when they are on public transportation.

## AGRICULTURE

**Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a petition today signed by a number of people from Regina and across Saskatchewan.

The petitioners express concern about small family farmers, particularly women farmers. They call upon Parliament to protect the rights of small family farmers to preserve, use and freely exchange seeds.

**Mr. James Rajotte (Edmonton—Leduc, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I stand to present a petition on behalf of hundreds of Canadians in the Edmonton area.

The petitioners ask that the Government of Canada and the House of Commons commit to adopt international aid policies that support small family farmers and ensure that Canadian policies and programs protect the rights of small family farmers in the Global South to preserve, use and freely exchange seeds.

**Mr. Claude Gravelle (Nickel Belt, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to present a petition from dozens of residents of Sudbury.

The petitioners also ask the government to ensure that Canadian policies and programs are developed in consultation with small family farms and to preserve the right to freely exchange seeds.

Recently I held a round table in the community of Verner with the member for Welland. All farmers at the table were very worried about the policies of the government.



## Routine Proceedings

● (1520)

[English]

## AUTISM

FALUN GONG

**Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, autism spectrum disorders are characterized by social and communication challenges and a pattern of repetitive behaviour and interests. They are lifelong, effect development and life experience, and exert emotional financial pressures on families.

The petitioners call on the government to work with the provinces, territories and stakeholders to develop a pan-Canadian strategy for autism spectrum disorder.

## FISHERIES AND OCEANS

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

The first petition I am honoured to present is from residents of Saanich—Gulf Islands, particularly from Sidney and Victoria areas.

The petitioners call on the government to immediately implement all 75 recommendations of the royal commission inquiry into the fate of British Columbia's Fraser River sockeye in 2009. Mr. Justice Cohen's report has still not had an official response.

## THE ENVIRONMENT

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition comes from residents of St. Catharine's, Ontario.

The petitioners call on the government to act to protect the Kipawa Lake system and its important environmental studies against the threat of Matamec Explorations.

## PROTECTION OF THE SAGE GROUSE

**Mr. LaVar Payne (Medicine Hat, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have four petitions to present today.

The first petition is on the recovery strategy for the greater sage grouse. The petitioners ask the government rescind the strategy.

The second petition is also on the protection of the greater sage grouse. The petitioners would like the government to rescind the emergency protection order.

The third petition is also on the emergency protection order. The petitioners also ask that the emergency protection order be rescinded.

## SPECIES AT RISK ACT

**Mr. LaVar Payne (Medicine Hat, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the fourth petition asks the Government of Canada to rescind the Species at Risk Act and replace SARA with an act that encourages voluntary implementation.

[Translation]

## VETERANS

**Mr. Hoang Mai (Brossard—La Prairie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have the pleasure and honour to present a petition regarding support for veterans. Residents of my riding are calling on the government to implement a plan to stop the unfair cuts to pension benefits, reopen the Veterans Affairs Canada offices that were closed and improve access to home care, long-term care and mental health services.

**Hon. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table six petitions today on behalf of some 3,000 Canadians who are concerned about the cruel practice of forced organ harvesting by the Chinese Communist regime on prisoners, including Falun Gong practitioners, resulting in the deaths of some tens of thousands, as documented by David Matas, David Kilgour and Doctors Against Forced Organ Harvesting.

The petitioners call on the government to take measures to end the Chinese regime's practice of killing Falun Gong practitioners for their organs, to amend Canadian legislation to combat forced organ harvesting and to publicly call on China to end its persecution of the Falun Gong.

Having introduced Bill C-561 to further restrict organ trafficking and hearing testimony of this practice at our foreign affairs subcommittee on international human rights, I am pleased to stand in solidarity with these petitioners.

## THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. Matthew Kellway (Beaches—East York, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition in support of my climate change accountability act, Bill C-619.

The signatories to the petition want to draw the attention of the House to the fact that Canadians are concerned about the inaction of successive federal governments to address climate change, all the while giving billions of dollars to the oil and gas industries in the form of subsidies.

The petitioners call on the Government of Canada to support the climate change accountability act, a law that would reduce greenhouse gas emissions and hold the government accountable to those reductions.

**Mr. Bruce Hyer (Thunder Bay—Superior North, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to present today.

The first one is from citizens of Thunder Bay—Superior North who are concerned about the nuclear waste management organization's plan to perhaps bury nuclear waste from southern Ontario in northern Ontario, especially in the Lake Superior watershed, which supplies drinking water indirectly to 60 million people in the Great Lakes Basin, which holds over 20% of the world's fresh water.

The petitioners ask that the proposals be rejected and that transport through Thunder Bay—Superior North also be rejected.

The second petition is with regard to climate change. The petitioners say that the economic costs will be in the tens of billions of dollars annually, that flooding damages to a variety of coastlines will occur and that there are many other effects as well.

*Government Orders*

The petitioners want us to invest in climate adaptations.

● (1525)

## CANADA POST

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I table today a petition signed by residents of Winnipeg North who are quite upset with the fact that Canada Post made the decision to end door-to-door delivery.

The petitioners call upon the government, and particularly the Prime Minister, to take action and censor Canada Post. They are very disappointed that the Prime Minister and the government ultimately supported Canada Post's decision to terminate door-to-door delivery.

[*Translation*]

## OPTIMIST MOVEMENT

**Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Beauharnois—Salaberry, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have three petitions to present.

The first deals with the creation of a national optimist movement awareness day to encourage members of the optimist movement to recruit other volunteers in order to help young people develop their potential and become excellent citizens. The first Thursday of February would be optimist movement awareness day.

## AGRICULTURE

**Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Beauharnois—Salaberry, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition, which was signed by many people from my riding, seeks to support a pan-Canadian food strategy.

The petitioners are calling on the Government of Canada to implement a food strategy to support farmers, improve access to healthy food and allow Canadian products to benefit from a growing market, as in the rest of the world.

## THE ENVIRONMENT

**Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Beauharnois—Salaberry, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the third petition was signed by over 3,000 people, most of whom are from Beauharnois in my riding, since the wreck of the *Kathryn Spirit* has been moored in Lac Saint-Louis since the summer of 2011. The petitioners want this crumbling ship to be safely towed out of Canadian waters because it is currently anchored in a drinking water reservoir.

[*English*]

**Mr. Craig Scott (Toronto—Danforth, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I also rise to present a petition in support of my colleague's climate change accountability act, Bill C-619, the debate on which will start tomorrow. Signatures have been collected by Sharon Howarth from Toronto—Danforth.

I would like to note that the bill, if implemented, would lead the way to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80% below 1990 levels by the year 2050. It is an act this country and the world desperately needs.

\* \* \*

**QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER**

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

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

\* \* \*

**MOTIONS FOR PAPERS**

**Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I ask that all notices of motions for the production of papers be allowed to stand.

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[*Translation*]

**ANTI-TERRORISM ACT, 2015**

**Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC)** moved that Bill C-51, An Act to enact the Security of Canada Information Sharing Act and the Secure Air Travel Act, to amend the Criminal Code, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act and to make related and consequential amendments to other Acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to deliver on our government's firm commitment to fight and protect Canadians from jihadist terrorists who would destroy the very principles that make Canada, our country, a nation of freedom and democracy that is the envy of the world.

The international jihadist movement has declared war on Canada and our allies. As we have seen, terrorists are targeting Canadians simply because they despise our society and the values it represents. Let us not forget the October 20 attack in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu and the attack that happened right here in our national capital. Those incidents are etched in our hearts and in our memory and show us how serious these issues are for us as a country.

These attacks, like the recent attacks against our allies in Sydney, Australia, Paris, France, and Copenhagen, Denmark, speak to the violence that can be committed by determined terrorists. These events reinforced our government's determination to take action. Our Prime Minister said that we would not react excessively, but we would not remain passive in the face of the evolving terrorist threat.

That is why I have the honour to introduce, with my honourable colleague the Minister of Justice, this important bill on behalf of our Conservative government. People worked tirelessly on this bill. They spared no effort to create a balanced bill. It is a bill that ensures that Canadians can count on the government to protect them from the threat of terrorism.

*Government Orders*

Like many people here in the House, I vividly remember the events at the end of October. I remember I was sitting in the caucus room when we heard gunfire and the terrorist being killed just steps away. Frantic moments followed, but we regrouped and have since reacted moderately. In the days that followed, I attended the funeral of Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent. I still remember what his sister said at the funeral. She asked us to make sure that her brother did not die in vain, that he did not fall at the hands of a terrorist in vain.

• (1530)

[*English*]

There is no higher calling of any government than to keep its citizens safe. That is a responsibility that our Conservative government takes very seriously. That is why we have taken, and are taking today, strong action on this file. We have always said that the threat is real and that we must remain vigilant. We must also adjust to that evolving threat. That is why we are tabling this bill.

Indeed, our Conservative government passed the Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act, which listed Syria and Iran as state sponsors of terror. More than a year ago, we passed the Combating Terrorism Act, which made it illegal to travel abroad to engage in terrorism or receive training to engage in barbaric and horrific acts here at home.

We took measures to strip the citizenship and passports of terrorists, despite the lack of support from the opposition. A few weeks ago, we passed the Protection of Canada from Terrorists Act in this House. This important legislation gives CSIS the tools it needs to investigate serious threats to Canada and confirms that it has the mandate to operate here and abroad, and to exchange information with our allies and partners.

We have also listed numerous entities as terrorist organizations, effectively cutting off the lifeblood of their resources.

Unfortunately, when it comes time to vote on these measures, Conservative members often stand alone while others play politics.

[*Translation*]

Our government has been very clear on the need to introduce new measures to guarantee our safety and ensure that our security and intelligence agencies have the tools they need to do their job.

The legislation before us today is an important step toward improving the means our intelligence gathering services and police forces have for effectively fighting the terrorist threat.

[*English*]

The anti-terrorism act, 2015 will give our national security agencies 21st century tools to combat jihadist terrorists, wherever they may be. There are five key elements to this important bill.

[*Translation*]

Although they are complementary in many respects, these measures will allow us to share the federal community's latest knowledge, expertise and work and to use them in a way that will enhance Canada's security.

The first element we must consider is very simple. When we take the time to explain this to people, they ask us why we did not do this

sooner. I am talking about sharing information amongst the various federal agencies.

• (1535)

[*English*]

Canadians legitimately expect that if one branch of government is aware of a threat to their security that this information would be shared with other branches of government to protect Canadians. This is not the case and we need to fix this with this bill.

In many cases, barriers to effective information sharing are rampant across government, slowing the speed of this exchange to a crawl or acting as a total barrier. These barriers exist in the form of often well-intentioned legislation; however, in the national security context, they manifest themselves into unacceptable silos that put Canadians at risk.

[*Translation*]

Consider this example. A passport officer contacts an applicant's reference person as part of a routine check. Without being asked, the reference person expresses some concerns about the applicant's intentions abroad. The reference fears the applicant could go to Iraq to fight alongside ISIL, because he supports its goals. At this time, the passport officer can open an investigation in order to determine if the passport application should be denied for national security reasons. As we have seen, passports can be revoked or not issued for reasons of national security. However, that officer will have a hard time sharing information proactively for further investigation of that threat. This could push the individual to commit a terrorist act in Canada. Indeed, if we prevent him from travelling outside Canada, he becomes a threat here, since he did not get his passport. This increases the threat of a terrorist attack here on Canadian soil.

This situation is unacceptable. That is what we are trying to correct with the first of the five measures set out in this bill, in order to improve the means we have to reduce the terrorist threat here in this country. Under the anti-terrorism act, 2015, passport officers would be able to proactively share information with a national security agency in order to combat this possible terrorist threat.

[*English*]

These obvious changes, through the creation of the security of Canada information sharing act, are common sense solutions to real problems, and it is our duty to make it come through.

*Government Orders*

Contrary to dire suggestions by some members of the opposition, who should certainly read the bill before fearmongering, there are robust safeguards in place to protect the liberties of Canadians, such as review by the Privacy Commissioner, the Auditor General and various other oversight bodies. I will add at this point in time that we have consulted the Office of the Privacy Commissioner in the drafting of this bill.

However, I fundamentally reject the argument that protecting our security threatens our freedom. Indeed, there is no liberty without security.

Canadians I have spoken with about this legislation understand that their freedom and security go hand in hand. The fact of the matter is that our police and national security agencies are working to protect our rights and freedoms, and it is jihadi terrorists who endanger our security and would take away our freedoms.

The second element of this legislation that I would like to share with members is the secure air travel act, which finds its origin in the Air India inquiry action plan. We call it a passenger protect program, or the no-fly list. It currently relies on authorities found in the Aeronautics Act, but has never been given its own legal footing.

[*Translation*]

The air transportation system is still a target for terrorists. That is why this list was established after the attacks on the World Trade Center towers. However, we must also take additional measures to address the growing number of people who fly with the intent of committing terrorist acts abroad. Even though they are not an immediate threat to the plane on which they are travelling, they could represent a direct threat to the country of destination or to Canadian allies abroad.

Canada cannot allow people to commit terrorist acts here or abroad. That is why we must improve the program's mandate in order to include those who travel to take part in a terrorist activity.

The government will thus have another tool to prevent travel for terrorist purposes, including in cases where it is impossible to go ahead with an arrest or legal action at this time. This second element of the bill will also allow the government to use gradual or proportional security measures, such as denying boarding or an additional physical search at the airport, as additional means of managing the risk posed by people who travel on aircraft to take part in terrorist activities.

• (1540)

[*English*]

This enhanced mandate would ensure that our skies are safe and secure, both from those who cause a risk to aviation security, which is actually the case, and from those seeking to travel to seek martyrdom or carry out other twisted ideological violence. That is why, as in the first part, which includes information sharing among federal agencies, we also need to protect our skies from terrorists.

[*Translation*]

I would now like to talk about the third element of this anti-terrorist bill, which is a proposed change in the mandate of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, an agency created 30 years ago to which no major changes have been made since then.

Unlike the security intelligence agencies of our closest allies, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service can only collect intelligence in order to help identify threats against security. However, it cannot take direct measures to protect Canadians and Canada's interests.

[*English*]

What does it mean in practice? I think this issue was raised during question period, so I hope my colleagues are listening carefully. Let us say that CSIS becomes aware of an individual in the process of becoming radicalized. Perhaps the person is acquiring jihadist propaganda or viewing radical material posted on YouTube and, in fact, individuals within the person's own close circle have advised CSIS that they are concerned the person may travel for terrorist purposes.

Currently, CSIS can investigate, but it cannot do anything to stop the individual from travelling. The furthest CSIS can go now is to advise the RCMP that it believes the individual is about to commit an offence, and then the RCMP would launch an investigation. Therefore, we are far from action.

Under the anti-terrorism act, 2015, CSIS could engage a trusted friend or relative to speak with the individual to advise them against travelling for terrorist purposes. Further, CSIS could meet with the individual to advise them that it knows what he or she is planning to do and what the consequences of taking further action would be.

These needless roadblocks have the potential to cost human lives. As I just explained, we have seen all our western allies providing their intelligence services with these kinds of tools.

[*Translation*]

With this strengthened mandate, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service could use a variety of techniques to counter threats in order to thwart plans or even alter behaviour.

For example, CSIS could talk to the family of a potential terrorist about his travel plans. This is a legal activity in which CSIS cannot currently participate because it does not fall within the service's intelligence gathering mandate.

Let me be very clear. As is currently the case with intelligence gathering, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service would have to seek a warrant from the court to make use of any more intrusive techniques.

What is more, as with all CSIS activities, activities to disrupt a threat would be subject to a rigorous external review by the Security Intelligence Review Committee.

*Government Orders*

Under its new mandate, CSIS would be required to conduct an annual review of at least one aspect of its performance and summarize its findings in its annual report, which is tabled here in Parliament. CSIS would also be required to present statistics on its use of warrants to disrupt threats.

• (1545)

[English]

I realize that many of the Liberal and NDP members have expressed concerns about the level of oversight of our national security agencies. On this side of the House, we believe in and are proud of our Canadian model. We have third-party, non-partisan, independent, and expert oversight that is bringing continuity to the monitoring of the intelligence community. We believe that it is much better than importing a made-in-America political intervention in the process.

I would reiterate the important point that often seems to be forgotten around this place, that it is the jihadis who represent a threat, not our own police officers and those protecting us.

I am glad that my colleague, the hon. Minister of Justice, will speak on the bill, because there are two very important measures in it. I see that my time is running out, so let me briefly mention those two measures.

[Translation]

The fourth element of the bill is an amendment to the Criminal Code to allow our police forces, in co-operation with the Attorney General of Canada and with a warrant from a judge, to intervene when an individual poses a threat.

The fifth element—and my colleague and those who speak after me can elaborate on this—deals with how we will increase our prevention efforts. We can do this by eliminating the sources of terrorist propaganda, or in other words, by putting an end to activity on websites that could constitute terrorist propaganda and criminalizing those who may be encouraging terrorist acts.

[English]

We have a robust bill here with five common-sense measures. Who could oppose the federal agencies sharing information among themselves to better protect Canadians with full respect for our charter and Constitution?

I was proud to work on that bill. Unfortunately, as we might expect, we have heard the opposition members engaging in a kind of rhetoric this afternoon, but I am certainly open and hope that we will have an open and fair debate and sound questions on this important bill for the safety of Canadians.

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. minister for his remarks, in which he again made reference to a full debate. Earlier in his speech he talked about giving some answers to items from question period. I will go back to the question I asked him in question period, to which he responded by saying that he was looking forward to starting the debate this afternoon.

Will the minister promise us that we will have a full debate on this bill, and that when we get it to committee, we will listen to experts who have concerns about the effectiveness and the constitutionality

of this bill? Will he listen to Canadians who want to come to committee and testify on this bill, and have a complete and full debate on the bill? Will he make that commitment now, here in the House?

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Mr. Speaker, I expected to hear a question on the bill itself, and not on the process.

The member knows full well that the committee is totally independent of me and that the committee will decide by itself how to proceed. Why do we not have a debate in the House about the merits of this bill?

The opposition members seem to laugh at this bill. This is an important bill for Canadians, and we should devote our time to seeing how we can make it even better. I think Canadians are expecting us to do a thorough review of this bill and to get it through. The threat is real. We saw it in Copenhagen just this weekend. There are no jokes to be made about the terrorist threat and what is happening here and around the world.

• (1550)

**Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the minister said that the bill is well balanced. We certainly question that.

Moreover, the minister stated that SIRC, the Security Intelligence Review Committee, provides third-party oversight. Sadly, at the beginning of this debate, the minister has already misinformed the House. Let me quote from SIRC's annual report:

An oversight body looks on a continual basis at what is taking place inside an intelligence service and has the mandate to evaluate and guide current actions in "real time." SIRC is a review body, so unlike an oversight agency....

SIRC claims that it is not an oversight agency. Why is the minister continuing to claim that it is? His seconder to this bill, the current Minister of Justice, was part of a report in 2004 that called for proper oversight, similar to what our Five Eyes have. He, at the time, refuted that SIRC is a proper oversight agency. Why did the minister leave oversight out of this bill?

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. Minister of Justice reminds me that this very member was occupying that very function not so long ago, and was working with SIRC and expressing his confidence in this great Canadian model.

SIRC is a body that is an extension of Parliament. I encourage the member to read the report a bit further, and he will see that SIRC is an extension of Parliament. It is acting on behalf of us all, but it is non-partisan. It is not a political intervention. It has continuity, expertise, and knowledge. As members may be aware, we just appointed a very respected Canadian, the dean of a law faculty, to it. Mr. Holloway is joining as an honourable member of SIRC and will assist it in its very important duty of keeping an eye on our intelligence community.

*Government Orders*

**Ms. Roxanne James (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, at the start his speech, the minister talked about information sharing and mentioned that Canadians would expect that if one branch came across information pertinent to national security threats against Canadians, it could give that information to another branch. Canadians sitting at home might be saying to themselves, "I thought that was already being done".

Certainly, terrorist threats and how they have evolved have changed over the years. They certainly are not the same as they were 30 years ago when the CSIS Act was first enacted. Certainly, they are not the same as they were 10 years ago.

However, when we talk about information sharing, I wonder if you could elaborate a bit more on who actually controls that information. I know some members of the opposition parties are assuming that there is going to be some sort of big database and that people could just freely access that information. That would not be the case. Could you please clarify that for the opposition parties?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** I am presuming that the parliamentary secretary is not asking me to clarify this. I would like her to direct her comments to the Chair rather than directly to the minister.

The hon. minister.

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the parliamentary secretary for her question and her excellent work. As she comes from a large urban community, certainly one of the largest in our country, she knows how important it is to put in place measures that will keep Canadians safe.

Regarding the question on information sharing, this is enabling legislation that would empower every agency to share information related to national security and direct it to the authorities when they are concerned about national security. I gave the example of an individual who could represent a threat and that this information could be conveyed to the authorities.

We want to prevent Canadians from travelling abroad to commit terrorist attacks, but we also want to make sure that if a part of the Canadian government is aware that an individual could represent a threat and if that individual is prevented from travelling, we are not generating a home grown terrorist who could carry out an attack here on our soil. This is why the bill is so important. It addresses some of the questions that arose from the terrorist attacks that took place on October 20 and 22, especially on October 20 when we knew that the individual was prevented from travelling.

• (1555)

[Translation]

**Ms. Rosane Doré Lefebvre (Alfred-Pellan, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I think everyone in the House would agree that terrorism is a real threat. We can also all agree that governments around the world should consider public safety an important issue.

However, Canadians do not have to choose between public safety and their rights. They go hand in hand. It makes me sad to see the Minister of Public Safety giving Canadians a false choice.

Today I would like to ask the Minister of Public Safety why there is not more civilian oversight of CSIS in this bill. Why is the government not directly addressing radicalization by working with communities on the ground? Why is the government working in a vacuum?

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Mr. Speaker, I want to remind my hon. colleague that we brought in legislation to combat terrorism, as well as a strategy that has been around for several years now, through which we invest in prevention and research.

Unfortunately, we did not have the support of the New Democrats for the first pillar of our anti-terrorism strategy, which is prevention. This afternoon I showed that the bill before us contains elements that will improve and reduce the risk of radicalization, in particular by giving intelligence officers the ability to reduce the threat as soon as they are in contact with an individual who could fall prey to radicalization and also by shutting down websites that could be spreading terrorist propaganda.

The New Democrats have an opportunity to take action by supporting the bill before them this afternoon.

[English]

**Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will come back to my question on oversight. I know that the minister and his parliamentary secretary try to make the point that they want a non-partisan committee. As the current Minister of Justice knows, the other oversight committees among our Five Eyes partners are from all parties. Their interest is national security and they do it in a non-partisan way.

I will quote from the SIRC report:

To establish and maintain the confidence of both chambers of Parliament and the trust of Canadians, Parliament's role in this area must be, and be seen to be, independent of the Executive (Cabinet).

Why, in heaven's name, would the minister not allow Parliament to do its job and provide proper oversight to all the security agencies, including CSIS and the others? Why is the signature of the Minister of Justice not worth much?

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Mr. Speaker, let me remind my hon. colleague that SIRC is a very good oversight mechanism. I am little surprised to hear the member asking that question this afternoon. When he was minister, he was fully happy with the expertise provided by SIRC.

However, I am satisfied. I met with the current chair, the members of the board, and the executive director. I read their report. They are somewhat critical of part of the work that has been done by CSIS, and it is expected that CSIS will respond appropriately to those issues. I would like to remind my hon. colleague of one thing that is more important, that they are acting on our behalf. This is a Canadian model that has expertise and, frankly, we can be proud of the work they are doing on our behalf.

• (1600)

**Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today as leader of Her Majesty's loyal opposition to indicate that the New Democratic Party of Canada will oppose Bill C-51.

*Government Orders*

I do so with a deep sense of responsibility, because, as members know, over the last several months, horrific terrorist attacks have shocked the world. However, at the same time, mourning those events has brought people together and strengthened our resolve to defend our way of life against cowardly attackers who seek to intimidate us and erode our freedoms.

Canadians came together in grief and defiance the day after the Parliament Hill shooting, pledging that violence would not, even for a day, halt the work of our democracy. That day we were united. We were resolved to keep this land strong and free, to protect our freedoms, to stand by our principles.

[*Translation*]

The day after the Parliament Hill shooting, it was important to affirm our duty to stand on guard for Canada, loudly and clearly. Let us be clear: terrorism is a very real threat both at home and abroad. The events of September 11, 2001, changed the face of the world and forced countries to tighten surveillance and take threats seriously. The Canadian government has invested considerable resources over the last two decades and has taken forceful measures to strengthen its laws against terrorism.

Over the same years, many bills have come before the House. Every time, the New Democratic Party has provided a thoughtful and balanced analysis. We have supported some of these bills and opposed others, as we will oppose Bill C-51.

We do the same when there are difficult international issues to deal with. We remember when this House was asked to vote on a mission to bomb Libya in the days of Moammar Gadhafi, and the NDP voted in favour of that mission because there was a mandate from the United Nations. When the mission evolved into an American one aimed at regime change, we withdrew our support. That is what it means to have principles and be consistent.

Some legislation that was created post-2001 is working well. Moreover, that is at the heart of some of our criticism of the government. It is as if these laws that are working well did not even exist. Members will remember that in June 2006, some 400 police officers were involved in the arrest of 18 people in Toronto who were planning attacks on public places such as the Peace Tower here in Ottawa and the CN Tower in Toronto. In 2013, so recently it is still in the news, the RCMP thwarted a planned attack on a VIA Rail train. Just since the beginning of 2015, police officers have laid charges against six individuals here in the Ottawa area for participating in and facilitating the activity of a terrorist group. There are laws in place already. The current system has proved its worth. It produces results. It works well.

The NDP believes that the laws that exist today enable police and intelligence officers to do their work properly. Providing new legislative tools is not the only solution. First and foremost, we must ensure that our officers have the financial resources they need in order to better enforce the law.

• (1605)

In addition, some of the laws enacted to combat terrorism are never used by the police. Nonetheless, the NDP has always stood up in the House to ask questions about each new bill, at each reading, and about the measures proposed by the government, because the

NDP believes that security and freedom are fundamental values that must be preserved at all costs.

We also believe that they go hand in hand and that countries where the people have the most freedom are the safest countries. I believe, fundamentally, that the first duty of every government is to ensure that its citizens are safe. That includes the duty to ensure the safety of the food supply. Let us remember that for ideological reasons, we no longer have government inspectors in meat processing plants. We have a system of self-regulation where the company says whether it is doing a good job. That is not unrelated to the fact that a few years ago, under this government, dozens of Canadians died during the listeriosis crisis. Protecting the public is a duty, and the Conservatives failed in that task. They even made tasteless and inappropriate jokes at the expense of the people who died. Even worse, the person who made those inappropriate jokes is still the Minister of Agriculture. That is shameful.

The government has a duty to ensure that hazardous materials are transported safely. We have all seen the result. Once again, this government's ideological vision means allowing the railway companies to self-regulate, to check off a box and tell the government whether they are doing a good job. We will never forget that one of the few railway companies to have special permission from the Conservative government allowing it to have only one engineer on board was the railway company whose train exploded in Lac-Mégantic. That too is about protecting the public. We are talking about 50 deaths.

The public must be protected in all realms of life. When a legislative framework is put in place, the appropriate financial resources to enable the police and intelligence services to preserve the public peace and protect the public must also be allocated. In fact, what happened in the meat processing plants was the result of a system of self-regulation and the elimination of millions of dollars and hundreds of jobs at the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. What happened with the railway companies is the same thing: a system of self-regulation where the government no longer plays the role that it is its job to play.

We can make a very long list of things that the government gave up on or did not have the courage to move forward with. The Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights unanimously voted in favour of legislation to crack down on impaired driving. Nothing was done. We never heard about it again. The Conservatives love to chat with groups of mothers who lost their children or loved ones to impaired driving, but in all their years in power, they have never done anything to address this important issue. Compelling evidence shows that these changes alone would have saved hundreds of lives. This too is a way of protecting the public.

[*English*]

There is no question that terrorism is a real threat, both here at home and abroad. Taking effective action to protect public safety must be the top priority for any government, but we as parliamentarians also have an obligation to protect Canadians' way of life by standing up for our freedoms and our values.

*Government Orders*

●(1610)

Parliamentarians must come together to address this threat with responsible, effective measures that are targeted on the threat, rather than playing political games as we saw today.

At a time when we need a responsible and serious approach to this threat, an approach that protects Canadians' values and freedoms, we saw the Prime Minister playing games and putting the freedoms of Canadians at risk. Canadians saw it today. We asked him five times to provide one single example, and he was incapable of doing it. Why? It is because this is a political play more than anything else.

The Conservatives have even admitted it. They see the recent events, as one of their officials put it, as a "strategic opportunity" for them, so Canadians are right to suspect that the Prime Minister's new anti-terrorism bill, Bill C-51, goes too far.

[Translation]

The NDP team analyzed, examined and reviewed this bill from every angle. We consulted our civil society partners to see if the Conservatives' new approach would be effective in protecting Canadians and their civil liberties. We also asked for clarification from the Prime Minister and his ministers responsible for this portfolio, but to no avail. As we have seen, they are unable to answer us. That proves that the Conservatives are playing political games.

Unlike the Liberals, who supported this bill without even reading it and abdicated all power to negotiate amendments, the NDP took the time to read, think about and analyze this long and complex piece of legislation. The NDP will not support the Conservatives' Bill C-51 in its present form because it has too many flaws and will undermine the rights of Canadians.

[English]

After studying this complex piece of legislation, after consulting with experts, after talking with Canadians, and after lengthy democratic discussions in our own caucus, the NDP has come to the conclusion that the Prime Minister's approach is one we cannot and shall not support.

Bill C-51 is sweeping, dangerously vague, and ineffective. It does not do things that are proven to work, and it puts politics ahead of protecting Canadians.

Why do I say that? Well, instead of introducing this legislation right here in Parliament, as he should have, the Prime Minister chose to do it in an election-like campaign-style event. That is called tipping one's hand. He even went so far as to make remarks that singled out Canada's Muslim community. That is not leadership that unites Canadians, and he should be ashamed of himself.

Canadians are being told by the Prime Minister that they need to choose between their security and their rights, that safety and freedom are somehow, in the Conservatives' minds, mutually exclusive. It is the classic Conservative political approach, which is not based on good policy but entirely on what Conservatives see as good partisan politics: to drive wedges, to put one region against another and one community against another, and to create false choices.

The Prime Minister should know that it is not either the environment or the economy. It is both. It is not either free trade or human rights. It is both. It is not either public safety or freedom. It is both.

[Translation]

The Conservatives are once again offering us a false choice. We should not have to choose between our freedom and our safety. It is our duty to protect both for everyone at all times, at every opportunity and in every way.

●(1615)

We can and we must have both at the same time. We are convinced that we can have them both.

[English]

The Prime Minister could have decided to put forward concrete measures to make Canadians safer and protect our freedoms. Instead, the Conservatives have once again put politics over principle and have introduced a bill that is so broad it would allow CSIS to investigate anyone who opposes the government's economic, social, or environmental policies. Bill C-51 proposes to give CSIS a sweeping new mandate to disrupt the activities of people or groups it does not like or that it believes pose any kind of threat under any of those chapters.

What has happened to the rule of law in our country? We have been asking the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness to explain what that means. He has been entirely incapable. Neither he nor his officials nor the Prime Minister, for that matter, have been willing or able to describe what activities this new mandate would cover. Anyone who was here today during question period saw what happened: a Prime Minister wholly incapable of providing a single example of what this bill was supposed to correct as mischief. That is because it is a political ploy.

[Translation]

However, according to the brilliant and oh so talented Minister of Public Safety, we must not get caught up in definitions.

As we just heard from his empty speech, however, he has no problem at all getting caught up in the platitudes and talking points written out for him by the Prime Minister's Office, which are completely meaningless.

The rule of law is the very essence of a state of law. It is the very wording of the law; it is the construction of the law; it is what is written in the law. That is why he is incapable of talking about it, because he does not understand what he just wrote in his own bill.

For absolute clarity and so that everyone has the same understanding and the same interpretation of the bill, let us be clear. If the Conservatives had wanted to do things right, they would have begun in Parliament and announced that experts would be given the time to clarify the bill and study it together.



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Instead, we were treated to an election campaign-style announcement hundreds of kilometres away from Parliament, and that revealed their deepest thoughts. This is all a political game to them.

[*English*]

Those experts who are starting to write about this, those highly respected individuals, are warning that the broad measures in Bill C-51 could lump legal dissent together with terrorism and lump strikers together with violent anarchists. Bill C-51 proposes to make it an offence to advocate or promote terrorism “in general”. Can the minister even explain what the words “in general” are doing in a legal text?

Canada already has strong laws that make it an offence to incite a terrorist act. That is why the Conservatives cannot give a single example of what is taken care of by this new bill that is not already taken care of by existing legislation.

Those same experts, and we are seeing more and more of their papers appear, are saying that the language in this new provision is so vague and so open-ended that it could vastly expand the kind of statements that could get a Canadian arrested. Anyone who is genuinely inciting violence against others of course should be stopped. However, we need measures that keep Canadians safe without eroding our fundamental freedoms.

[*Translation*]

This government should be known as the “government of fear”.

When a government plays with people's fear and takes advantage of Canadians' sensitivity and raw emotions following a tragedy, there is a high risk of abuse.

• (1620)

Like many Quebeckers, I remember the improper arrest and detention of hundreds of innocent people when Trudeau's Liberal Party passed the War Measures Act during the October crisis. At the time, the NDP shrugged off criticism, had the courage of its convictions and stood firm against this attack on the rights and freedoms of all Canadians. It was difficult at the time, but history has proven us right, and we are proud of that.

All parliamentarians are responsible for ensuring that such abuses of power are never repeated. Never again. Those who do not learn from the mistakes of the past are condemned to repeat them, and that is what we are seeing with these people.

[*English*]

Today the Conservatives want to give significant new powers to CSIS without addressing serious deficiencies in oversight. We know that there are currently serious deficiencies in the oversight of CSIS. The last report of the under-resourced Security Intelligence Review Committee found that CSIS is “seriously” misleading the committee in one investigation after another, and it faced “difficulties”, which is their term, and “significant delays” in getting information about the spy agency's activities. In other words, they are hiding the information from the people who are supposed to be guaranteeing oversight, because the oversight is deficient, ineffective, and weak. That is the reality. That is before the enhanced responsibilities. It is already problematic.

[*Translation*]

We are concerned that the Conservatives want to give the Canadian Security Intelligence Service more powers without improving the inadequate oversight mechanisms currently in place, mechanisms that resulted in the Conservative government putting Arthur Porter in charge of that oversight. They seem to think that Arthur Porter is a model of ethical conduct.

To us, this is quite straightforward. If the government wants to give CSIS more powers, then it absolutely must increase oversight. That is crucial.

[*English*]

By the way, this is on top of the Conservative decision in 2012 to simply eliminate the position of CSIS inspector general. That, of course, further weakened the reviews, but that is exactly what the Conservatives wanted.

In view of these shortcomings, it is simply irresponsible to give the agency such broad new powers without providing additional oversight and without in any way attempting to prove what such new powers are supposed to do that are not already in the law. The bill also comes on the heels of cuts to our security agencies, cuts that sideline other public safety priorities, and the Prime Minister has yet to offer a plan to support Canadian communities that are combatting radicalization on the ground.

No stranger to the threat of terrorism, the United States of America, under President Obama, has taken a proactive approach to combatting radicalization. The White House has spearheaded work with at-risk communities to make them more resilient against the lure of radicalization. The U.S. government works to support community and faith leaders by connecting them with counter-radicalization experts, providing information on how to recognize the warning signs of radicalization and training in the kinds of tactics that are proven to actually work to diffuse radicalization.

Absolutely none of this is being done in Canada by the Conservatives. In fact, the Conservatives have chosen a very different approach. For example, the RCMP plan to work with communities to counter violent extremism has sat on the drawing board for years. Why? It is because it does not suit the Conservatives' purpose.

• (1625)

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister has cut the budgets of both the RCMP and CSIS, and top officials have testified that they do not have the resources to monitor terrorism suspects and keep fully funding other areas of their policing. Why? It is because they prefer talking about it to doing anything about it.

Instead of doing the things that are proven to work, this bill sees the Conservatives once again putting wedge politics ahead of protecting Canadians.

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[Translation]

Bill C-51 is silent on one element that we feel is essential to attacking terrorism at its root: Canada needs a strategy against radicalization right here at home. We want more measures to help communities. That is what communities are asking for. They want to be able to carry out major educational campaigns.

[English]

How we tackle the threats posed by radicalization, terrorism, and attacks by disturbed lone wolves merits a real debate, but by seeking to divide and score points, the Conservatives have succeeded in intimidating the Liberals into giving them a blank cheque to pass any laws, even before they are tabled and even when they go too far. They say that they are going to write a little something on the memo line, but it is still going to be a blank cheque.

The truth is that if we cannot protect our freedoms, we are sacrificing our freedoms. Freedom and public safety have to go hand in hand. We will hold true to our principles and oppose this overreaching legislation. Our rights and freedoms define our Canadian way of life, and as long as I am here, no one is going to undermine who we are and what we stand for as Canadians.

In the coming days, coming weeks, and coming months, we will urge the government to resist its normal urge to try to railroad legislation through. It has broken all records for using the guillotine to pass things more quickly. It has used time allocation and closure more than any other government in the history of Canada.

There are few things that we have ever looked at in this House that are more important than what we are looking at right now. It deserves serious analysis. It deserves the time to hear the experts who have a lot to bring to this debate. We will be proposing amendments, and we hope that the government will listen to our proposals and their merit and to the experts who come to the committee.

We hope that the government will invite not only experts to committee. We hope that it will invite community leaders as well. These are people we should also be listening to. These are people on the front lines who often have to deal with young people who are facing the siren song of radicalization. We should be listening to them, and we should be putting in place the types of solutions they will be talking to us about.

We also urge the Liberals to reconsider their position to support this bill unconditionally. We hope that we all, as parliamentarians, will take this bill seriously. Here, I want to salute the leader of the Green Party, who has also raised serious concerns about Bill C-51. We hope that Conservative MPs will be willing to consider practical amendments to strengthen oversight and to protect Canadians' freedoms.

Free societies are safe societies. Canadians can count on New Democrats to take a principled stand against this and any Conservative law that undermines the freedoms and values that define our Canadian way of life.

[Translation]

The day after the shooting here in Ottawa, I asked the Prime Minister if he would be able to resist his strong tendency to always attack anyone who speaks out against him and his positions.

● (1630)

I asked him if he understood, if he was able to broaden his perspective enough to realize that even though we do not agree on the approach, all parliamentarians want the same thing: to protect Canadians. Again today, the words that were used demonstrated that he is not able to broaden his perspective.

I know that all parliamentarians and all Canadians want to live in safety and peace. We all want to eradicate terrorism. In this sometimes emotional debate, no one should be playing political games, and the NDP therefore wants to do everything it can to get the government to improve its bill.

It is our duty as legislators to implement intelligent and effective policies to protect Canadians. We cannot make any compromises when it comes to safety and freedom. We need to protect both of these things at the same time and at all times.

In closing, I would simply like to say that if we give in to fear, the terrorists are the ones who win.

**Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I noticed that in his speech, the Leader of the Opposition failed to mention that with the expansion of the powers of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, the powers of the review committee would also automatically be expanded.

I expected a little more from the Leader of the Opposition. I expected more than rhetoric and lame historical references. Impaired driving and food inspection aside, I was expecting a debate on the substance of the bill. He asked whether this bill contains any practical measures.

Let us look at the first measure, which is very simple. It involves sharing information among federal agencies. How can the Leader of the Opposition be opposed to sharing information in order to protect Canadians? Take for example the fact that sometimes passports are revoked, but that information is not necessarily shared with our security agencies. That is a threat to Canadian security.

Is the member interested in supporting the first measure in this bill? If not, why is he opposed to it?

**Hon. Thomas Mulcair:** Mr. Speaker, let us look at the minister's comments one by one. What he said about expanding oversight powers is totally and irrefutably false. There is nothing, nada, zilch in this bill that expands oversight over the Canadian Security Intelligence Service in any way. That is totally and absolutely false. This is conclusive evidence of our second point, which is that the minister may have read his bill, but he does not really understand it.

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I personally had the opportunity this afternoon to ask the Prime Minister five times—and countless times in the case of other members—to provide a single example of an action deemed a crime under this bill that is not already a crime under existing legislation. The red herrings, the attempts to distract us, like a magician putting on a show, keep bringing us back to square one: no one is capable of showing that this bill prohibits an activity that is not already prohibited in Canada, which is proof positive that this is nothing but a political game to the Conservatives.

• (1635)

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we share some of the concerns expressed by the leader of the official opposition. We also intend to put forward amendments to ensure parliamentary oversight and to add sunset clauses or a mandatory review, for example.

Does the Leader of the Opposition really believe that the government opposite will agree to any amendments proposed by the official opposition or our party?

**Hon. Thomas Mulcair:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for his solicitude and point a few things out to him.

A few months ago, when the government introduced an undemocratic bill that would have gutted some of the safeguards set out in the Canada Elections Act, members of the Liberal Party held a press conference where they said that there was nothing they could do because the Conservatives have a majority, but that when the Liberals took office, they would change the law. That is arrogance and incompetence. It is arrogance because the Liberals are assuming that people will vote for them even though they are not doing anything. It is incompetence because they are failing to fulfill their primary obligation as an opposition party.

However, I read with great interest a letter from the Liberal member last week, in which he openly criticized the idea of bringing the RCMP into the House of Commons and provided a detailed explanation as to why. What happened when it came time to vote? The Liberals forgot to vote. He supported the Conservatives through indolence. There is a limit.

[*English*]

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, as usual the Leader of the Opposition has elevated the debate in the House, clearly laying out what is at stake with this legislation.

I want to ask him about something he talked about at the beginning of his speech and then reflected on at the end. We all came together in the House the day after the shooting on Parliament Hill with a commitment that we would not let those who would use violence harm our democracy or our open society. There was an expression by members on all sides of the House that we would cooperate and work together to ensure that was the case.

What does the Leader of the Opposition think happened to that feeling that was so strong on that one day and seems so absent now in the House?

**Hon. Thomas Mulcair:** Mr. Speaker, we are a long way from the hug I received from my bro across.

The French have a good expression, “Chassez le naturel, il revient au galop”, which means if we chase away the natural tendencies they come galloping back, and that is what we have seen here.

When the bill was announced not in Parliament, not with respect to this institution, but as a purely partisan ploy hundreds of kilometres away from here, Canadians immediately understood that this was just another piece being moved on a board game played by the Conservatives. This is their trademark. They are telling Canadians that they have to be afraid, that we have to sacrifice our freedoms if we want to ensure our security.

We know that it is possible to do both. We are going to work hard in parliamentary committee to bring forward amendments that would accomplish that. We will bring in experts if the government does not try to railroad the bill through. We will bring in people who can talk to what could be done constructively in communities across Canada.

If our goal is to strengthen security, we will be there every step of the way. If the goal of the Conservatives is to play politics, we will stand up to them.

**Mr. Rob Clarke (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it was quite interesting to listen to my colleague across the floor.

I look back to July 7, 2006, when three of my colleagues in the RCMP were shot, two passed away seven days later. I listen to the rhetoric here. Members are laughing about it. It is not funny.

This is about protecting Canadians. This is about protecting the law enforcement officers on the streets who have to do the daily battles against everyone. This is about protecting our men and women in the services. This is about protecting all Canadians—

• (1640)

**Mr. Craig Scott:** There's nothing in the bill about that.

**Mrs. Carol Hughes:** It's about taking Canadians' rights away.

**Mr. Rob Clarke:** My NDP colleagues should let me finish, Mr. Speaker. Their position is hug-a-thug day. I do not agree with that.

This is about respecting my colleagues who have passed away. We hear about the abuses and about protecting the freedoms of Canadians. I look back at 2013 when my colleague drove on the Hill and the RCMP tried to pull him over. He asked the officer, “Do you know who I am?”. That is not respecting the institution.

NDP members voted to keep travelling for terrorist purposes legal. They voted to allow convicted terrorists to keep their citizenship. They voted to stop our security agencies from co-operating with our allies and now they are expressing concerns about the important—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** Order. The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Hon. Thomas Mulcair:** Mr. Speaker, no doubt unwittingly, the member has just done us all a service. If there was any lingering doubt in anyone's mind that this is simply a political ploy, he has removed all doubt. There is nothing in the bill about any of the things he has just mentioned.

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It also shows that, like the minister, he has not even read it, which is also bringing us straight back to what is actually driving this, the Prime Minister's Office and the Conservatives' politics for the next election.

We are going to stand up on a question of principle. We know that it is possible and it is indeed primordial for any government to defend both our security and our rights.

I very much regret that someone who believes he once enforced the law does not understand the importance of protecting Canadians' rights.

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the question to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment is as follows: the hon. member for Drummond, The Environment.

[*English*]

The hon. member for Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River is rising on a point of order. I would like to remind the hon. member that this needs to be a point of order and he needs to get to the point of order immediately.

**Mr. Rob Clarke:** Mr. Speaker, going back 18 years and having to enforce the Criminal Code, questions were asked of us about understanding the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. One thing that they are saying over there—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin):** Order, please.

This is clearly not a point of order. If the member wishes to make a point of order he may do so, but this is not a point of debate.

**Mr. Rob Clarke:** You have no respect for policing—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Acting Speaker:** Order. The hon. member for Papineau.

**Mr. Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I do not have to tell anyone in the House today about the threat of terrorism and the fear it can instill within those who have witnessed it.

We all remember clearly the feelings we had in October as we heard and learned that an armed man had entered Centre Block with the intent to kill. We are still thankful for the heroism shown by our security services that day in keeping us safe during a difficult and confusing time.

Coming as it did only days after another, shameful, attack on members of our military, it was a horrible reminder of the murder in cold blood that some people are capable of doing.

[*Translation*]

No matter the motives, terrorism is designed to make us freeze in fear. It is designed to make us constantly question not only our own safety, but also the democratic institutions we have established to keep us safe. It is designed to make us question what is familiar and to suspect what would normally be insignificant.

Terrorism is designed to take us so far that we question everything we have built and everything that is good in our fair, just and open society.

• (1645)

[*English*]

That is the point of terrorism, and it is when we willingly walk over that edge of our own accord that terrorism is ultimately successful. So let us step back from that edge.

Make no mistake, the Liberal Party is alert to the threats and we know that keeping Canadians safe in a manner that is consistent with Canadian values is our most sombre responsibility as legislators and community leaders. To ensure that we never lose sight of our Canadian values and never forget who we are, we should always aim to have both the security of Canadians and the protection of their rights and freedoms in mind when we set out to combat those threats.

I believe that Bill C-51, the government's anti-terrorism act, takes some proper steps in that direction. We welcome the measures in Bill C-51 that build on the powers of preventative arrest, make better use of no-fly lists, and allow for more coordinated information sharing by government departments and agencies. However, Bill C-51 ought to be amended for a few reasons.

As I stated outside this House recently, the Liberal Party plans to bring forward amendments to Bill C-51, and I am happy to outline some of those proposed changes now.

One notable aspect of Bill C-51 is the changes it would make to the mandate of the Canadian Security Intelligence Services, or CSIS.

[*Translation*]

In its current form, Bill C-51 would amend CSIS's mandate, enabling the agency to intervene directly to address security threats, through clandestine and open operations.

That is a significant change to the current role of CSIS, which is to gather and analyze intelligence, while the RCMP is responsible for enforcing the law and taking action to counter security threats.

[*English*]

Yet we are now set to imbue CSIS with broad powers to disrupt not only real or perceived terrorist threats, but also real or perceived threats to economic and financial stability, critical infrastructure, and the security of other states.

The Liberal Party will be bringing forward amendments to narrow and clarify the overly broad scope of the new powers that have been a source of concern for many Canadians. If CSIS is given these new powers, we on this side believe that its mandate must be subject to much stricter supervision and review.

Canadians owe a lot to the security officials at CSIS, and the results of their work in the past have been evident. We know CSIS played key roles in disrupting plans to carry out violence against Canadians, including a plot to place bombs on VIA Rail passenger trains. However, we would now ask CSIS to do something new, and this new direction must be monitored so that we can be sure we are getting it right.

At the moment, the Security Intelligence Review Committee, or SIRC, reviews the work that CSIS does and reports to Parliament on those operations; but there seems to be some confusion in this house as to what SIRC actually does and what it does not do. This distinction is important, and it is the crux of a crucial change that we believe should be made to Bill C-51.

A couple of weeks ago, on February 4, the Prime Minister stated that “[SIRC] provides robust oversight”. However, this is not entirely correct.

SIRC is a review body and it does not fulfill an oversight role. The difference between the two is not merely a quibble over language. The two words are not synonymous. In fact, SIRC states so publicly itself. On page 12 of its annual report, SIRC clearly lays out the difference between a review function and that of oversight. It says:

An oversight body looks on a continual basis at what is taking place inside an intelligence service and has the mandate to evaluate and guide current actions in “real time.”

● (1650)

[Translation]

That is crucial and must be amended, if we are giving CSIS the new powers proposed in Bill C-51 in its current form.

Right now, SIRC can only examine the past activities of CSIS. It does not conduct any real-time monitoring to ensure that those activities are in line with our expectations and fall within the parameters that have been set.

There is no mechanism for fully transparent oversight of what is done for Canadians and against Canadians by our intelligence and security agencies. A part-time oversight agency is unable to keep up with CSIS's rapidly changing operational environment, and it is unable to provide the necessary oversight.

[English]

One may ask what kind of change would ensure that these new powers CSIS is to be granted in Bill C-51 would be properly monitored. A solution can be found not far beyond our borders, as our closest allies have already addressed this issue, and I feel that we can mirror their experience to suit our needs.

Great Britain, our partner in the Five Eyes intelligence community, has established a working and viable oversight body that we can emulate here in Canada. Over there, they call it the Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament. It is a committee of parliamentarians that has been tasked with the direct oversight of intelligence and security matters in the U.K., including the “expenditure, administration, policy and operations” of things like MI-5, MI-6, and GCHQ, the Government Communications Headquarters. This committee is also able to scrutinize work carried out by other parts of

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the U.K. intelligence community, including Britain's Joint Intelligence Organisation and the National Security Secretariat in the Cabinet Office, Defence Intelligence in the Ministry of Defence, and the Office of Security and Counter-Terrorism in the Home Office. This is exactly the kind of committee we should be establishing here in Canada.

Fundamentally, our discussion of Bill C-51 is about what we are trying to protect. In that discussion, we should at all times be doing our best to protect the fundamental tenets of our democratic system: responsible government, and Parliament as the trustee of the people. This means that the only way an oversight body of this nature would be legitimate is if it were composed of elected officials. However, at the moment, Canada is the only nation of its kind without national security oversight being carried out by parliamentarians.

[Translation]

That should have been corrected a long time ago. Therefore, we cannot emphasize enough the importance of making this correction now, when we are giving new and broader powers to our intelligence and security agencies.

Consequently, the Liberal Party is proposing to create this oversight body. We believe that there should be a committee composed of parliamentarians to provide appropriate oversight—and not just review—of the activities of various agencies, including CSIS, the Communications Security Establishment, the RCMP and the Department of National Defence.

● (1655)

[English]

Therefore, we propose the following: first, that the members of this committee be sworn to a lifetime oath of secrecy; second, that the members be unable to claim immunity based on parliamentary privilege with regard to the use of the communication of information that comes into their possession or knowledge as members of this committee; and third, that this committee should not be a parliamentary committee, but a committee of parliamentarians.

I will note here that this is not the first time Parliament has discussed introducing a committee like this. Back in 2004, it was the Liberal government that introduced Bill C-81, which would have established a national security committee composed of parliamentarians. Again, in 2009, after the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security reviewed Justice O'Connor's report, it was again recommended that Bill C-81 be reintroduced to establish such a committee. The Conservative government at that time did not follow through on that recommendation.

We also believe that Bill C-51 requires changes to ensure that its provisions are not granted in perpetuity. This means that Bill C-51 ought to be subject to mandatory review. There is a precedent for this too. In 2001, following the attacks of 9/11, the Liberal government at the time introduced an anti-terrorism act that contained changes to our Criminal Code and to other relevant statutes. One of those changes was to lower the thresholds for police to be able to detain and monitor, with conditions, someone suspected of planning a terrorist activity.

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[Translation]

This change to the law was subject to a mandatory review by Parliament and a sunset clause. In fact, the last time that these provisions were reinstated, in 2013, it was agreed that they would be subject once again to a review in future by a committee that would report to Parliament.

[English]

This is necessary for Bill C-51, because, like the anti-terrorism legislation introduced in 2001, it also makes changes to our Criminal Code. This is why Liberals plan to introduce an amendment to have a mandatory review of Bill C-51 in its entirety after three years. This has been the way we have responsibly introduced anti-terrorism legislation in the past and it strikes me that there is no credible reason to break this pattern.

Finally, Liberals believe that Parliament should consider the resources Canada currently allocates to combatting terrorism. The government should ensure that our security services have what they need to do their jobs, without the risk of depriving them of key resources in other areas.

As I said earlier, there are elements of the bill that we support. However, there are changes that should be made before the bill becomes law. Bill C-51 can be improved. This is why, though we support the bill, Liberals will propose the amendments I have highlighted on oversight, on review, and on narrowing the overly broad definition of national security.

[Translation]

We are prepared to work with our colleagues from the other parties to ensure that Canadians have the best, fairest and clearest legislation to keep us safe. Issues such as those that affect national security should not be partisan.

That is why we want to take a constructive approach and improve this bill. That is what the Liberals are prepared to do, and we will act in good faith to that end. We hope that the government is serious in its approach and that it will set aside partisanship in order to keep Canadians safe while protecting our rights and values.

Concerns about this bill have been expressed outside and inside the House, and I would like to reassure those who expressed them that they have been heard. We are confident that we have the necessary tools and plan to improve this bill, and we will do everything we can to achieve that goal.

• (1700)

[English]

Further, I want to affirm once again to our friends and fellow citizens in the Muslim community that Canadians everywhere know that recent acts of terror committed in the name of Islam are an aberration of their faith. We believe that continued mutual co-operation and respect are critical. The government should develop and fund a structured community process that brings people together and helps prevent the influence of distorted ideological propaganda posing as religion.

Rest assured that as a Liberal, I believe that when a government asks its citizens to give up even a small portion of their liberty, it is

that government's highest responsibility to guarantee that its new powers will not be abused. It is not enough, especially after all we have learned in the past 14 years since 9/11, for governments to simply say, "Trust us." That trust must be earned, it must be checked, and it must be renewed.

This is what Canadians expect of us at all times, but it is perhaps never so important as it is with issues of national security. If we are indeed engaged in a fight of good versus evil, as has been said, we should remember that the side of good cannot win by ceasing to be good. In much the same way, our democratic laws and values will not win out if they stop being based on the fundamentals of democracy: fairness, justice, and the rule of law. Let us not walk over the edge to which terrorism tries to push us.

We are a proud democracy. We are welcoming and peaceful, a country of open arms, open minds, and open hearts. Nobody should be allowed to intimidate us into changing. Instead, we must continue to rely upon these values and principles to guide us forward responsibly in our actions.

**Ms. Joan Crockatt (Calgary Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am very glad to see the Liberals reversing themselves from a soft-on-terror position to come around to the merits of the bill.

I also want to say that I appreciated the comments, certainly from this side of the House, that we believe as well that the terrorist actions we have seen are an aberration of the Muslim faith. There are so many moderate Muslims in Canada who are contributing greatly to our society.

I want to ask the Liberals a question. Canadians may want to know why the Liberals, after voting against so many of the provisions that we are putting in place to protect Canadians' freedom and security, have changed their view and want to support the bill. I appreciate that, and I am wondering if it might have something to do with a statement by the Canadian Coalition Against Terror, which said of the bill that terrorists "...are aware of some of the shortcomings and limitations of our legal systems" and "often exploit these gaps to their advantage."

Could the Liberal leader comment on that?

**Mr. Justin Trudeau:** Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the member for almost removing partisanship from her question.

The fact is that the Liberal Party believes that one of the most important responsibilities that exists here in this House is to assure the safety and protection of Canadians while upholding what it is to be a Canadian in our values. We believe there are specific measures in the bill that provide immediate help for police services and investigative services to keep Canadians safe, and that is why we are happy to support it.

However, we believe that when a government asks to encroach upon Canadians' rights and freedoms, it should justify that. I think one of the things that would be needed is a proper, responsible oversight mechanism, as I have detailed, and a level of review that would be brought in with this legislation.

*Government Orders*

That is why we are encouraging the government to bring forward appropriate oversight and review, and if it chooses not to bring forward that oversight and review, we will gladly be offering it to Canadians in the next election campaign.

• (1705)

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with care to the member for Papineau's address on Bill C-51 and I am still having trouble making sense out of the position he has taken.

It is the primary duty of members of this House to give a full and complete review of bills and to stand up to bad bills, especially those bills that threaten basic rights and freedoms. The member for Papineau has said, "Yes, the bill is flawed, but even if the amendments aren't accepted, we're going to vote for this bill anyway." It is very hard for me to understand when he calls for a review three years down the road. What about ensuring that the review happens now, before this bad legislation is passed? I simply cannot understand where the member is coming from in offering a blank cheque to the Conservatives on this bill.

**Mr. Justin Trudeau:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member opposite has difficulty in understanding, but it is quite simple.

The Liberal Party understands the importance of providing powers to keep Canadians safe in the immediate term. The bill is not perfect and is not the bill that we would have brought in had we had been in government, just as we demonstrated the capacity to do in the very difficult months following 9/11, but there are concrete and real measures in the bill that would immediately increase security for Canadians: specifically, strengthening the no-fly lists, increasing the effectiveness of preventative arrests, and creating much better co-operation and coordination across national security agencies and institutions. That means that there are measures here that would help.

We believe that approving this bill and sitting down and offering constructive amendments that would help improve the bill are exactly what this Parliament is supposed to be doing to keep Canadians safe.

**Hon. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the member for Papineau for his excellent speech, and specifically for what he said on the relationship between security and rights. He made specific recommendations on matters regarding oversight and review. He also made reference to some of the overly broad language in the bill, so I would like to ask him a particular question.

Does he believe that this legislation, given its overly broad language, must have effective vetting to ensure that it comports with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms?

**Mr. Justin Trudeau:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Mount Royal for his question. As always, he is deeply in tune with the issue of rights and gets right down to the heart of the matter.

In fact, there is some overly broad language in the bill that we will be recommending be tightened and clarified a bit so as to not paint an overly broad picture of national security risks to our country. There is also a need for ongoing oversight to minimize any excesses or challenges.

We have to understand that oversight is not just about checks and balances on our security agencies; it is also about ensuring that our security agencies are doing everything they can do and must do to ensure that Canadians are successfully protected. I think that is an aspect of the concerns around oversight that the current government might not be paying full attention to. Oversight actually helps our agencies do a better job of protecting Canadians. That is why we believe in it.

**Mr. Bruce Hyer (Thunder Bay—Superior North, GP):** Mr. Speaker, as a former adjudicator myself, I am quite alarmed by Bill C-51. It is not, in my opinion, primarily directed against terrorism. Let us look the definition of "illegality": "activities that undermine the security of Canada". That is so vague and broad that it could apply to nearly any action taken in an act of non-violent civil disobedience or to groups even considering such actions. Maybe a better name for the bill would have been "an act to monitor and suppress the raging grannies".

My question for the hon. member is this: what would stop the bill from being used against philosophical and political enemies of the party in power?

• (1710)

**Mr. Justin Trudeau:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member's concerns and I share a number of his concerns, which is why we have placed such an emphasis on the need for proper oversight, the need for review, and the need for narrowing the overly broad scope of some of the definitions used in the bill.

However, there are significant elements in the bill that would credibly protect Canadians from threats and immediately give tools to enforcement and security agencies to keep Canadians safe. That is what I believe needs to be top of mind.

The concerns that the member has would certainly be addressed by an election campaign, which would allow parliamentarians a chance to be once again renewed and refreshed by contact with the people across our great democracy.

**Mr. LaVar Payne (Medicine Hat, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to hear that the member is going to support this bill. However, I reject his comments in regard to sufficient oversight. We have a made-in-Canada model with no political interference and with experts in place, so I reject the member's concern in that regard.

I am also concerned that the member may provide only short-lived support for this bill. I say that because the Liberal Party decided to change its support for our previous legislation on the revocation of citizenship of convicted terrorists. My concern is whether that member and his party will support this bill through the whole process.

**Mr. Justin Trudeau:** Mr. Speaker, I would recommend that this member look again to the annual report of SIRC. It specifically explains that SIRC is not an oversight body. It is simply a review body, after the fact, and it is a part-time body at that.

*Government Orders*

The rapidness with which our intelligence agencies must respond to very real threats means we need current and ongoing oversight. I would also be remiss if I did not point out that the government's last idea of an excellent person to oversee our security agencies is currently residing in a Panamanian jail cell.

I think the member will understand that we feel that oversight by elected parliamentarians—by the people of this fine House, on all sides—is a responsible and appropriate mechanism to make sure that Canadians' rights and security are being properly protected.

**Hon. Peter MacKay (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise and take part in what is obviously a very important debate on Bill C-51, the government's comprehensive counterterrorism package. This bill, which is titled the anti-terrorism act, 2015, deals, first and foremost, with public safety and efforts by our government to embrace methods that would improve and enhance safety for all Canadians.

The bill builds upon concrete legislative steps this government has already taken to combat terrorism, including through the Combating Terrorism Act, the Nuclear Terrorism Act of 2013, as well as more recent proposals found in Bill C-44, the protection of Canada from terrorists act. Therefore, members can see there is a litany of legislative action already demonstrated by this government.

We can make no mistake about it, these are real dangers, not theoretical or hypothetical scenarios. As we have seen in places like Paris, Australia, Brussels, and in Canada, these acts have deadly effects. This is why there is simply no denying the existence of the threat and the necessity to take practical steps to improve the way in which our security forces operate, coordinate and respond to acts of terrorism. This is also to increase our capacity to learn from international examples. The ability for CSIS to operate outside of our borders is the security capacity that is found in most of our allies, certainly most of our Five Eyes partners.

The government is involved in broad-based efforts to counter domestic and international terrorism in order to protect our country, our citizens and our interest in our allies. This is consistent with our counterterrorism strategy, which is to build resilience against terrorism. Therefore, clearly working through partnerships, including with all levels of government and community leaders, is key to effectively implementing this strategy.

As the Speaker may know and members may be aware, we have an outreach effort at the Department of Justice that involves a cultural round table where we regularly consult and receive input from various communities around the country. This is an effective way to gain insight and understanding of how Canadians perceive this issue of terrorism.

As well as implementing this strategy, we are including our efforts to counter violent extremism. Engaging with the cross-cultural round tables on security-related issues is of great benefit in getting the balance right. There is also significant collaboration with international partners in addressing the terrorist threat.

As the Minister of Justice, I am responsible for ensuring that Canada's laws remain robust, fair and just. This is particularly important in the area of criminal law. Canada, like its friends and allies, must ensure that our laws remain responsive and effective in

combating the scourge of terrorism, while at the same time ensuring our laws respect our fundamental rights and freedoms.

Bill C-51 contains a suite of criminal law reforms that will do just that by amending the Criminal Code to strengthen terrorism recognizance with conditions and peace bond provisions; create a new criminal offence for abdicating or promoting the commission of terrorism offences in general; provide courts with the powers to seize, forfeit and remove terrorist propaganda, including from web sites located inside our borders; and to better protect individuals participating in national security proceedings and prosecutions.

These steps, in addition to those discussed earlier by my colleague the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, will go a long way to closing any real or perceived gaps in our ability to respond to terrorist acts.

● (1715)

[*Translation*]

I would like to take a closer look at each of the four pillars of criminal law reform in this bill. However, I would like to begin by pointing out that these four pillars of reform have common denominators.

[*English*]

The Criminal Code reforms individually and collectively seek to provide law enforcement agencies with appropriate tools to thwart the activities of terrorists who actively engage in terrorism. Within these reforms, and with these in place, police officers will now be able to intervene sooner, more effectively, and achieve better results before the matters get more serious. This aims to provide our protection for all Canadians through enabling the police to pre-empt and prevent acts of terrorism.

I want to emphasize here that judicial oversight is the backbone of these criminal reforms consistent with Canada's values and principles, including, as the Supreme Court of Canada has often repeated and I will emphasize again today, the values of democracy, constitutionalism and the rule of law. This is the type of oversight that should provide considerable comfort and relief to those who have criticized the bill at its early stage.

I would suggest that this type of insight that comes from the courts in enabling our security agents to make those types of interventions prior to acts of terrorism is at the very crux of what we are attempting to do. It is not just to be responsive; it is to be pre-emptive in protecting Canadians from acts of terrorism.



*Government Orders*

The first area of criminal law reform found in Bill C-51 would strengthen the existing provisions on the recognizance with conditions and terrorism peace bonds contained in sections 83.3 and 810.01, respectively, of the Criminal Code. Let me go further. This Criminal Code recognizance with conditions is already a tool that can be used. It is designed to disrupt and prevent terrorist activity from occurring in the first place. For example, this provision allows a peace officer, with the consent of the Attorney General, a prosecutor acting with delegated authority, to bring an individual before the court with evidence to determine whether there are sufficient grounds to require the individual to abide by specific conditions designed to prevent terrorist activity from occurring.

It bears noting that the individual in question would not necessarily be the person who might carry out that activity. In other words, the person could be a party to the offence or enabling the offence. It is important to note here that the provisions currently require that the court be satisfied that there are reasonable grounds to believe that a terrorism activity will occur and that there be reasonable grounds to suspect that the recognizance with conditions is necessary to prevent that activity from occurring.

To move to the reforms, those introduced in section 83.3 of the Criminal Code found in Bill C-51 would lower the threshold required to obtain the recognizance from reasonable grounds to believe that terrorist activity will be carried out to the test of may be carried out. This threshold is also lowered from reasonable grounds to suspect that conditions are necessary to prevent the carrying out of the terrorist activity to are likely to prevent the carrying out of the terrorist activity.

These changes have the practical effect of making it easier to disrupt terrorist plans before they are executed. Therefore, going before a judge and making the case, based on evidence collected, that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the terrorist activity may be carried out lowers the threshold, thus allowing police to act more efficiently and, in many cases, quicker.

In the bill, our government would also increase the possible maximum period of preventive detention from a total of three days to seven days, with safeguards, including periodic judicial review of the detention, to ensure that it is still required. Again, if we look at international examples, in the United Kingdom, it is twice that period of detention. As it currently stands in Canada, it is three days. We would extend that to allow the police agencies to ensure that they are doing everything in their power to prevent the terrorist act from occurring on Canadian soil.

The bill, through the Criminal Code, would also provide similar measures with respect to preventing the commission of terrorist offences. Terrorism peace bonds, as we know, are preventive tools used to disrupt and prevent individuals from committing terrorism offences. Peace bonds and recognizance are used in the domestic criminal justice system as well, but here there are specific provisions found in this bill that expand the use of recognizance and peace bonds. An application to impose a peace bond can be brought even where there has been no criminal charge or no prior conviction, but enables a judge to impose any reasonable conditions in order to prevent the commission of an offence.

What we are talking about here is enabling the judiciary, the police and the prosecution, to put in place preventive measures, such as requiring the person to forfeit their passports, requiring them to report to police or authorities, or staying away from certain individuals, staying away from certain public places, for example, like a military base.

● (1720)

All of these might be seen as extraordinary in normal circumstances, but I would suggest that in the context of this entire debate, we are talking about an elevated threat assessment based on what occurred here in October, 2014, based on what is happening around the world and based on the assessment of our security forces. These are practical steps that allow our security forces, with judicial oversight, to take preventative steps.

Currently, the Criminal Code provides that any person who fears on reasonable grounds that the individual will commit a terrorism offence, with the consent of the attorney general or a prosecutor in his or her stead, can apply to the court to have a terrorism peace bond imposed requiring the individual to keep the peace and be of good behaviour, or to comply with any other reasonable condition that the court believes necessary to ensure their good conduct, some of the provisions I mentioned. These conditions can be for a period of up to one year or, in the case of a person who has previously been convicted of a terrorism offence, up to two years.

These amendments would strengthen the terrorism peace bond by lowering the threshold to obtain that peace bond to where a person believed an individual “may” commit a terrorism offence, instead of the current “will” commit a terrorism offence. The bill would extend the duration of a terrorism peace bond from two to five years for those previously convicted of a terrorism offence.

More generally, in respect of both recognizance conditions and terrorism peace bond conditions, the bill would authorize the imposition of sureties, which is someone who agrees to take the responsibility of ensuring that the person subject to the court order complies with the conditions imposed. The bill would also require judges to specifically consider the desirability of imposing geographic limitations. I mentioned earlier surrendering passports or other conditions that the judge deems appropriate.

Moreover, these reforms would increase the penalty for breaches of these court ordered conditions from two to four years of imprisonment, consistent with similar conditions imposed found in Bill C-26, the tougher penalties for child predators act.

*Private Members' Business*

Finally, I suggest that these reforms would have the added benefit of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of recognizance with conditions and peace bonds across the country by allowing for the use of video conferencing when necessary and interprovincial transfers of any peace bonds on the consent of the appropriate attorney general.

● (1725)

[Translation]

The proposed reform with respect to recognizance with conditions and recognizance to keep the peace relating to a terrorist offence would also apply to adolescents in accordance with the Youth Criminal Justice Act.

[English]

In short, the proposed amendments, which I have just referred to and described, seek to facilitate the use of the provisions to make them easier to obtain and to make them more effective in preventing terrorism, all with the backdrop of judicial oversight.

[Translation]

It is important to emphasize that the improvements we want to make to our terrorism prevention tools are compatible with what like-minded countries have in place.

For example, the United Kingdom uses similar measures to protect the public by subjecting individuals believed to pose a threat to public safety to conditions.

[English]

Australia also uses these control orders to prevent terrorist acts from occurring, which is to help enable the imposition of conditions on individuals. It is important because it shows that countries with strong democratic conditions, such as ours, and strong institutions which respect the rule of law, like ours, have also recognized that they can take measures that are firm in their response to terrorism, but fair in their approach to citizens, respecting the rights of those who are subject to these preventative tools.

Let us remind ourselves again of what we are trying to prevent: mass casualties, attacks on our institutions and the planting of bombs. What we see in other countries on the nightly news is no longer something that we are protected from merely because of our geography.

There are individuals who have sworn to cause us harm and who continue to make very pointed and prescribed threats against Canadian citizens. That is the backdrop in which we must remind ourselves this bill is rooted.

I pause here to emphasize that we are mindful of the concerns expressed by many stakeholders about these changes. Some have suggested that these proposals pose an unjustified and unnecessary infringement on fundamental charter rights. In response, I would note that there are many safeguards associated with the tools I have just described. I mentioned judicial oversight, the discretion exercised by our judiciary, and the requirement of the Attorney General's consent in their use. We have prosecutors now specifically trained in the use and application of this type of legislation.

In addition, there are reports to Parliament from our security agencies that refer specifically to recognizance with conditions. In addition, there is the requirement of a mandatory parliamentary review in 2018 and a sunset clause with respect to the recognizance with conditions I mentioned. This would all result in an ability to have eyes on and insight into the way the legislation would be applied.

Let us remember the objective of these tools: namely, the imposition of reasonable conditions on persons by the courts with a view to preventing terrorism activity and the commission of terrorism offences.

Our government takes the position that these measures are necessary to protect public safety. They are not to be used arbitrarily, and they are based on genuine concerns that put the public at risk.

The second area of the Criminal Code reform contained in Bill C-51, which would indicate a new indictable offence for advocating or promoting the commission of terrorism offences in general, is again an area of the law we think is necessary.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The time for debate on this bill on this day is now ended. I would advise the minister that he will have three and a half minutes to complete his speech and 10 minutes for questions and comments.

● (1730)

[Translation]

It being 5:30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper.

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

### REFORM ACT, 2014

The House resumed from February 3 consideration of the motion that Bill C-586, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act and the Parliament of Canada Act (candidacy and caucus reforms), be read the third time and passed.

**Mr. Kennedy Stewart (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure to stand today and say that I support something that has originated on the other side of the House.

I would like to congratulate the member for Wellington—Halton Hills for a fantastic job on Bill C-586, which is known as the reform act. I would also like to thank the member for Toronto—Danforth, who sits on this side of the House, for steering our party and for contributing a lot to the debate here as well.

I am proud to say that I jointly seconded this bill and supported it all the way through the process, and will, of course, again support it in its third reading.

The bill addresses how parties nominate candidates, choose their caucus chairs, expel members, undertake leadership reviews, and select interim leaders. It is a very wide-ranging bill that would affect what some people might call “inside baseball”.

*Private Members' Business*

The Canadian public has heard a lot about the bill, but I think once they see the rubber hit the road when the bill finally passes, they will see a difference in how this chamber operates and how Canadian democracy operates. For that reason, I think it is an important bill.

The bill has been through many iterations. There has been a lot of talk across parties and within parties about how it would operate, so I commend the member for sticking with it and getting it to this stage in the process.

However, I worry a little bit about the fate of the bill in the Senate. We know that it has to go through the readings there, and, as the chair of our committee said, we are coming to the end of the runway in terms of this parliamentary sitting. I am worried about how the Senate is going to deal with the bill, in that it might try to delay it or perhaps propose amendments that would delay the passing of the bill until we come to the next election. Then, of course, we would have to start all over again.

What has prompted this worry and concern is that the Senate is currently playing games with a bill from my seatmate, the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca. That is Bill C-279, regarding transgendered rights. The Senate promised it would not interfere with the bill, as it has passed this place, but interference has happened twice. It happened in this Parliament and in a previous Parliament with a bill from the former member of Parliament for Burnaby—Douglas, Bill Siksay. We are now unsure about whether Bill C-279 will make it through the Senate.

Of course, the Senate can delay the bill until there is an election called, and again that process would have to start all over. I think that is probably my largest concern.

With the Prime Minister's support and with our support on this side, I think that all members have now come to a version of the bill that we can agree with, although I worry that the senators will be a main threshold, and the spotlight should be on them.

This is a bill that talks about how we conduct ourselves here in this House, in the green chamber. It is not about the red chamber. I think those in the red chamber should just pass the bill through as quickly as they can so that this measure can be in place before the next election.

In terms of substance, the bill would remove the statutory requirement that party leaders approve party candidates in general elections. I think this is perhaps the tip of the spear and that we are getting into the whole topic of nominations and how candidates are selected. I will touch on that aspect a bit more later.

The bill would also require parties to vote in a formal way on the rules governing their caucuses and enable us as members to choose how power should be balanced between members and our party leaders. I think that in this area the bill has struck a balance with its flexibility.

There are different requirements in different parties, which have different principles on which they stand. I think there is flexibility required, but not so much flexibility that the bill would be meaningless. I think the bill has struck a balance in terms of how different parties would approach this issue.

I think there will be a level of public scrutiny after the next election when the bill is in place and we have to vote on these rules. They will be widely reported, and Canadians will have a much better idea of how parties function within this House.

I am sure that we New Democrats will decide to elect our caucus chairs. The Liberal Party may not choose to do that, and I think that would cause a lot of interest within the public and again distinguish the parties from one another, so I think that is very important.

● (1735)

The bill would establish formal rules on how we expel or re-admit caucus members. It is something that is done but it is not formalized. It is important that it be formalized so that everyone would know the rules of the game before they get into it. It would reduce the speculation and the uncertainty around these processes. Even though the rules may vary between parties, it is important that there be codified rules.

The bill would establish how we remove party leaders and then how we select interim leaders. As we sadly know, that was the situation we faced with the passing of Jack Layton, as has happened throughout the history of Parliament. Codification of how this would happen is critical. When Jack passed away, the party was in shock and it was not time to be making up the rules of the game. The rules should be known before something happens. When leadership or party leaders resign, it is better to have this in place beforehand. It is a good idea.

These are all good ideas. The flexibility shown in the crafting of this legislation and its movement over nearly two years has been well done. I praise my friend for his diligence in seeing this through.

I would also like to thank my colleague from Toronto—Danforth. He suggested in his speech a number of things that he would like to see in the bill and that he might look for in future bills. This will be an ongoing process, and I agree with my colleague from Toronto—Danforth that there will be constant iterations as we go through how we work here, as it has always been. In particular, my colleague from Toronto—Danforth would like to see some changes perhaps made in the timing of when notices are given or decisions are made, or the form in which they are reported. These are things that we can talk about after we have had the first iteration of this in the next Parliament. We could possibly tweak it after the first iteration.

My motion on electronic petitions is now at committee, where it will go through the same process of debate back and forth on how this should work. Once it is in place and tried, then there will be room for adjustments.

I would like to return to the part of the bill that interests me the most, the nomination of candidates. All parties are in the middle of nominating hundreds of candidates who will compete in the upcoming election. It is hard to open a newspaper without seeing some report on a nomination process, either controversial or not. This legislation touches on this by addressing whether or not the party leader has to sign a candidate's nomination papers, but there is more to be said here.

*Private Members' Business*

I am intimately familiar with this process having gone through it myself. My wife, Jeanette Ashe, has just finished her Ph.D. on this topic. She examined 10 years of nomination contest data made available by the British Labour Party. I am happy to be able to call her Dr. Ashe now. The data she collected and the interviews she conducted allowed her to paint a detailed and precise picture of this rather secretive process. I have written about this myself. In the academic world, it is often called the “secret garden” or the “black box” of politics. The public really has very little idea. It is like a sausage machine where meat goes in one end and the sausage comes out the other, if we can refer to ourselves as sausages. However, we do not really know what happens in the middle. This legislation touches on a bit of that. It has been formalized in the Canada Elections Act, but it can change. A party leader or someone else will sign the papers, but what happens within this process is important. It is time that we shed a little light into the secret garden.

Right now Elections Canada looks at the financing of the nomination process. There is a cap on how much individuals can spend and financial disclosure is required. With this legislation, we would have a bit more. We will have a bit more discussion on this.

Elections Canada should perhaps look into having more reporting around the nomination process. For example, Elections Canada does not report on the results. It looks at who wins the process but it does not look at who participated in it.

● (1740)

The key for my wife's study was that the British Labour Party did track this and make it available. Perhaps that could also be more formalized. Perhaps Elections Canada could record, not like the primary system in the U.S., which is completely regulated by electoral officials, but to just have transparency, recording perhaps who ran and how many votes were cast in these contests.

If we are fortunate enough to come back in the next Parliament, I look forward to working on that with my colleague across the way.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would say right from the get-go that the Liberal Party is having a free vote on the member's bill. There is quite a difference in opinions and thoughts, as I am sure the member can anticipate, even within our own caucus. At the very least, he has provoked a good, healthy debate.

I come to the table with some experience in the sense that I have been a parliamentarian for a couple of decades now, and I have also sat on election readiness committees. He just made reference to the nomination process. There has been a lot of interest in how we can improve the system.

If we were to canvass most parliamentarians, we would find that they all have some thoughts they would like to share. The member who spoke before me made reference to the financing of elections, for example.

I am very familiar with nominations. I have had nominations when I have been acclaimed. I have had to run against other individuals. There is something to be said about acclamations, but contested nominations are also of high interest for local communities.

There seems to be a natural evolution toward what I believe is a healthier democratic process. I would cite, for example, leadership, from oppositions to prime ministers. As we all know, at one point, caucuses were responsible for the selection of their own leaders. If a party happened to be the one with the most seats, the leader of that party became the prime minister.

It then moved off in many different forms. It was not that long ago, for example, that the Liberal Party elected leaders through delegates. We had 300 constituencies scattered across Canada. Each constituency would have a number of selected delegates, a large convention would occur, and those elected delegates would then determine who the next leader, in my case, of the Liberal Party of Canada, would be. In our most recent leadership convention, we literally had hundreds of thousands of Canadians engaged directly in that process, from every region of this country. In my short political time, I have witnessed an evolution that ultimately saw the grassroots get engaged in selecting a leader.

Here we talk about how to get rid of a leader. There are mechanisms in political parties, such as leadership reviews. In Manitoba, a small group of four or five NDP members of the legislative assembly chose to go offside of the elected premier, Mr. Selinger. Because of those five NDP MLAs, there is now a leadership convention taking place. Again, delegates and union members will determine who the next leader of the New Democratic Party, and therefore the premier of Manitoba, is going to be.

Different parties are at different stages. From what I have witnessed over my short tenure, there is reason for us to be encouraged. I think of nomination meetings. The leader of the Liberal Party of Canada, upon being elected as the leader of the party, indicated that all nominations are open nominations. We have heard stories or a nomination candidate is upset because he or she did not get a green light or something of that nature.

● (1745)

At the end of the day, I truly believe that all 338 constituency nominations are, in fact, open. We have seen that in terms of just expressions of interest. We have had literally hundreds of people, again from every region of the country, putting in papers, requesting and wanting to get engaged in the Liberal Party, and who want to be candidates.

It is no easy feat having to get the memberships and go through a process that I would argue is very democratic. I am not trying to say that we have the best system in the world. There is always room for improvement.

When I look at the member's bill and some of the things that he is suggesting, for example, the selection or election of caucus chairs, that is something the Liberal caucus currently does. We recognize the important role that our caucus chair plays. I have had the opportunity to participate directly in that. We do sit down as a group of members of Parliament to select who is going to be the chair of our association.

*Private Members' Business*

I have seen other areas where we have made significant improvement. Just over a year ago, it was the issue of the Senate, and the leader of the Liberal Party likely did more for Senate reform than anything that has happened in the last 15 or 20 years, by making it truly more independent.

There are many things that we can actually do without having to pass legislation to ensure that we do get some of the reforms that I believe Canadians as a whole want to see.

There are other types of reforms that are necessary for us to have in terms of legislation. We see that in the Elections Act and financing. These are areas that I, personally, have a deep interest in seeing take place. For example, during a campaign period, there is a fixed amount of money that anyone can actually spend pre-election. In the months leading up to an election, what someone could actually spend is endless. That is something that needs to be looked at.

I brought forward a bill which would have ensured more accountability for advertising, where leaders of a political party or executive officers of non-profits or other organizations, third parties, would have to take responsibility for the advertising that takes place, and doing what takes place in the United States and other jurisdictions. It is called "stand by my ad". For example, an ad would have to be followed by leaders stating that they approve of that particular ad.

There are many different types of reforms where I would like to see legislation required. With respect to this particular piece of legislation, the member brought it forward and it went to PROC. There was a substantial change made to the original proposal. It talked about each party voting after an election on whether to adopt some of the specific provisions.

That was a substantial concession that the member had actually taken into consideration, in essence allowing for the individual caucuses to determine whether or not they would like to proceed on some of the initiatives that the member actually put into this private member's bill.

When I look at the bill overall, there is a great deal of merit to it. I am not 100% sure, in terms of having been someone who supported the bill to go to committee, wanting to see what would take place at committee. I was hoping to see a couple of different things and maybe a little more debate occurring.

All in all, with this particular amendment, the member has made it that much easier for members on all sides to support his bill. I suspect the bill will ultimately pass. I do applaud him for taking what I believe is not an easy path, trying to reform the institution or system in a proactive fashion. I do give him credit for having the courage and the tenacity to continue to push some very important issues that I am sure Canadians will agree with.

• (1750)

**Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to participate in the debate today on Bill C-586, Reform Act, 2014.

I, too, would like to echo the comments of previous speakers by acknowledging the member for Wellington—Halton Hills for the

hard work, dedication and spirit of collaboration he has brought to this process on the bill. The spirit of collaboration is a major reason why we have reached this point today.

There have been a number of changes to the bill from its first iteration, Bill C-559, as amended, and is much different than the original version that was introduced.

I believe the changes that were made are extremely important because they recognize that parties must have the freedom to organize themselves as they see fit. What works well for one party may not work well for another. A one-size-fits-all approach does not work, which is why I fully support the bill as amended by the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

With my time, I will focus on some international examples that are relevant to the content of the reform act, 2014.

It is clear that in developing this legislation the member for Wellington—Halton Hills looked at current practices in Canada and examples in other countries with a Westminster form of government.

On the review of party leadership issue, the hon. member referenced the existence of rules in other countries to empower caucuses. If we examine the international examples, it is quite remarkable to note the number of different rules that exist in different countries and among different parties. In fact, there are about as many different approaches to issues such as leadership review as there are political parties.

For example, in the United Kingdom, all of the major parties have different rules for leadership removal. For the United Kingdom Conservative Party, a vote by 15% of Tory MPs can trigger a leadership review and a leader can be dismissed upon a majority of those voting by secret ballot.

For the Labour Party, a leadership contest can be triggered if a challenger collects nominations from 20% of Labour MPs. The party leader is replaced if the challenger receives a majority of votes using an alternative vote system in an electoral college consisting of Labour MPs, members of the European Parliament, party members and members of affiliate organizations.

The Liberal Democrats take yet a different approach. A leadership contest can be triggered by a majority vote of Liberal Democratic MPs or if 75 local party organizations write to the party president calling for a leadership contest.

Political parties in Australia and New Zealand also have rules that set out thresholds for the review of party leaders. However, as is the case with the United Kingdom, the rules are different from party to party.

The rules of the Australian Labour Party, for example, require the support of 75% of caucus members to initiate a leadership review of a governing leader or 60% to initiate a review of a leader in opposition. These thresholds were increased in 2013 from the previous threshold of 30% because the party believed the threshold was too low and contributed to leadership instability.

*Privilege*

To give an example from New Zealand, the rules of the New Zealand Labour Party provide that a leadership election is triggered upon a vote of 50% plus one of caucus members. The party also has an automatic leadership review by caucus after three months of a general election, where the votes of 60% of caucus members are required to endorse the leader.

The experiences in Australia and New Zealand, like the U.K., show that a one-size-fits-all solution does not work. It is important that parties have the flexibility to determine the rules that govern them.

Bill C-586, as amended by the Procedure and House Affairs Standing Committee, respects that important principle.

Mr. Speaker, I believe there are important lessons that can be taken from the international examples. First, there is the simple fact that while rules do exist in other Westminster systems, they differ quite a lot from party to party. The example of all parties in the U.K. shows us just how varied approaches can be to the same issue in the same country.

In some cases, the votes on leadership reviews are taken only amongst MPs, while in other cases parties involve the wider party membership in these decisions. There are also considerable differences in how those votes are conducted.

It is also important to note that the rules that govern the parties have changed over time and I suspect they will continue to evolve in the future. This is best exemplified by the dramatic differences in the threshold for party leader review made by the Australian Labour Party in 2013.

•(1755)

It is important that political parties have the freedom to make their decisions about what type of approach they would like to pursue. Bill C-586, as amended, would do this.

I would like to take a moment to turn to our government's strong, democratic reform record. We walk the walk when it comes to empowering members of Parliament to bring forward ideas and issues important to them and to their constituents. For instance, the *Globe and Mail* analyzed 162,000 votes over almost two years which showed that members on this side of the House were far more likely to vote independently from their party than were opposition MPs. As well, more backbench MPs have passed bills into law through this majority Conservative Parliament than in over 100 years, the time for which such records are available.

The bill of the member for Wellington—Halton Hills has precipitated important discussion and debate on matters that affect us all. I have listened carefully to the views of my colleagues on both sides of the House regarding the changes that have been made to the reform act, 2014. In my opinion, the changes that were made have improved the bill and take into account concerns that have been raised.

For this reason, I urge all my colleagues to support the bill.

**PRIVILEGE**

STATEMENTS BY PRIME MINISTER REGARDING CANADIAN FORCES IN IRAQ

**Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am rising to supplement my initial submissions in response to the question of privilege raised by the hon. member for St. John's East on Wednesday, January 28.

Subsequent to the making of submissions, there was a joint meeting of the foreign affairs committee and the national defence committee to hear from the then ministers of Foreign Affairs and National Defence, as well as the Chief of the Defence Staff.

Since the Chair cannot normally reach into the proceedings of our committees on his own initiative and in the absence of a report from the committee, I wanted to take this opportunity to ensure that the discussion at that meeting could be considered by the Chair in preparing a ruling on the question of privilege.

Now that the transcript of the joint meeting has been finalized and published, I will be tabling, in both official languages, the evidence of the 42nd meeting of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, held on Thursday, January 29.

There are three passages that I would like to draw to the particular attention of the Chair. These come from the evidence given by the professional, non-partisan and career officer of the Canadian Armed Forces, General Tom Lawson.

The Chief of the Defence Staff notes, at page 5, that:

A non-combat operation, which is exactly what we have a mandate for in advise and assist, is one in which the military, and certainly our special operation forces, carry weaponry but it is used only in self defence.

As to the matter of painting targets, General Lawson noted, later on page 5:

What I had not anticipated in October was that those tactical air controllers would be able to develop techniques that would allow them, from the relative safety of their advise and assist positions, to be able to help the peshmerga, Iraqi security forces, to bring weaponry of coalition bombers to bear. So in fact I provided them, within the advise and assist mission, the authority to go ahead with that well within the mandate given to us by the government.

Finally, at page 7, the general addressed the notion of accompanying:

What we would require to be in combat would be this term "accompany", and you are right to mention that the word "accompany" in everyday language is quite clear; it means "to be with". But in military terms—as you're quoting doctrine—it has a very clear other meaning, and that is that you are now up front with the troops that you have been assigned to, with your weapons being used to compel the enemy. So there is no confusion with our special operators on that "accompany" role.

I want to thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to table these documents.

*Private Members' Business*

●(1800)

**ANTI-TERRORISM ACT, 2015**

BILL C-51—NOTICE OF TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

**Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to advise that agreements could not be reached under the provisions of Standing Order 78(1) or 78(2) with respect to the second reading stage of Bill C-51, an act to enact the security of Canada information sharing act and the secure air travel act, to amend the Criminal Code, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act and to make related and consequential amendments to other Acts.

Under the provisions of Standing Order 78(3), I give notice that a minister of the crown will propose at the next sitting a motion to allot a specific number of days or hours for the consideration and disposal of proceedings at the said stage.

\* \* \*

**REFORM ACT, 2014**

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-586, An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act and the Parliament of Canada Act (candidate and caucus reforms), be read the third time and passed.

**Mr. Larry Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure to rise today to speak to Bill C-586, a bill that my good friend and colleague, the member for Wellington—Halton Hills, has brought forward.

I would like to thank him for his fortitude in putting together the bill. If we are honest with each other, no one likes change, and change in this place is always hard to attain. So I thank him for staying with it. Our hon. colleague across the way, the member for Burnaby—Douglas, mentioned this as well. I think a lot of people in this place, knowing how the process works and how time-consuming it can be, find it discouraging at times. Therefore, I thank the member for staying with it.

I would also like to thank the Minister for Democratic Reform, the member for Nepean—Carleton. He was instrumental in working with the member for Wellington—Halton Hills in making changes to or tweaking the bill in a way that made it acceptable to the House. From the comments I have heard here, I think it is a very strong bill and that it will get very strong support. That is a good thing.

I will speak to some of the amendments to the bill, because I think they are key. However, before I do that we should go back in history and get to why we are where we are today and why we need some changes.

We cannot all be ministers. We cannot all be leaders of parties, but we are all members of Parliament. Whether I am a backbencher MP, the prime minister, or the leader of the opposition, my vote is the same. It is the same as yours, Mr. Speaker, when you are in your chair. We all have that vote. Our people send us here for that. Therefore, we have to protect it.

In about 1969 or 1970, former Prime Minister Trudeau made a statement that, if I had been a member that day, I am sure I would

have been offended by. He basically said that backbenchers were nobodies. I think that was wrong then and is still wrong today. Anything we can do to empower all of us in this place is very important. That is what taxpayers around the country want.

Quite often in the House, because most people only see what happens at question period, they believe that we are always at odds with each other. In this debate and on some other bills we have had, of course there are differences of opinions and philosophies and that type of thing. We need to thank the member for being flexible enough to work with other parties to get something that was acceptable to everyone in Bill C-586. To hear that around this place is very nice and good to see.

The amendments I will speak to were adopted by the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs. I want to explain how these modify the bill.

The member removed the requirement from the bill and Canada Elections Act that party leaders sign a candidate's nomination papers. That has never been an issue in the party that I belong to. Someone has to make sure that all the *i*'s are dotted and the *t*'s crossed. I cannot say that about all parties. Sometimes there is interference in nominations. At the end of the day, what will be improved by this bill is grassroots democracy, as people from the ridings will have more of a say in this. The changes under the bill would confer that power to nomination officers. Those changes would give that authority to a person or persons authorized by the party. Again, that change was made at the procedure and House affairs committee.

●(1805)

This amendment would remove overly prescriptive and outdated provisions and would provide political parties with greater flexibility. Parties, for the first time, would be able to determine their own processes for candidate sign-off, and that is a good thing. They can choose who to vest this power in rather than having it prescribed by law. That is a very key and positive change.

In addition, the committee adopted an amendment that would require the chief agent of each political party to submit a written report to the Chief Electoral Officer of Elections Canada containing the names of the persons designated by the party to endorse prospective candidates. The report would be submitted no later than 25 days before the polling date. This would ensure that Elections Canada and returning officers would be informed of who was authorized by the party to endorse prospective candidates, et cetera.

A consequential amendment was also adopted that would require a party to submit, within 10 days of the writ being issued for a general election, a statement with the names of the persons authorized to endorse prospective candidates in the election to the CEO of Elections Canada. These amendments to the Canada Elections Act are in keeping with the spirit of the reform proposed by the member for Wellington—Halton Hills.

*Private Members' Business*

There are a couple of amendments to the Parliament of Canada Act. I want to talk about those provisions and how they would change. The original proposals in the reform act sparked quite a lot of interest and debate in the House. One of the concerns raised was whether it was appropriate to legislatively regulate the governance of party caucuses, and it was a good discussion to have. In September of last year, the sponsor of the bill announced an amendment that would have each caucus decide whether it would be subject to the caucus rules outlined in the bill instead of the rules being imposed on it.

These amendments were made by the procedure and House affairs committee at the committee stage of the bill. They require that at the first meeting after a general election that each party caucus hold a separate vote to determine whether it wants to adopt the rules outlined in the bill regarding four things: the expulsion and readmission of a member; the election of a caucus chair; leadership reviews; and the election of an interim leader, should that be necessary. This would mean that four separate votes, one for each of these processes, would take place. One caucus may decide to adopt all of these processes while another may decide to adopt none of them or only the rules relating to leadership. What is important is that it is the decision of the caucus, and that is very valuable.

There are some other minor amendments and changes, but to wrap up, I want to pass on my support. The day that the member for Wellington—Halton Hills announced he would table this bill, I was at the press conference, and I have supported him from day one. I am very proud of that, and I will continue to support him. I urge all members in the House to stand in the House next Wednesday and support this.

•(1810)

**Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to thank my colleague from Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound for his support for the bill. I would also like to thank my colleagues in the caucus, including the members for Leeds—Grenville and Edmonton—Leduc, and numerous other members, including the Minister of State for Democratic Reform, for working with me on making amendments to the bill. I would like to thank the dozens of my colleagues in the caucus who both seconded the bill and supported it throughout the entire process.

Members opposite, the members for Toronto—Danforth and Burnaby—Douglas, provided very constructive advice on how to improve the bill. The member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, right from the day I tabled the bill in the House, was very supportive of it. The member for Saint-Laurent—Cartierville also provided some very good advice.

Most particularly, I would like to thank those colleagues of mine who did not support the original bill when it first came out. I want to thank them for their patience and for the advice they gave me. I listened to their concerns. The committee heard their views, and we have incorporated those concerns in this bill. I want to thank them for their patience and advice over the last year. As the member for Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound said, change is never easy. Sometimes change is difficult. I want to thank them truly for that patience.

I just want to make two quick points in closing. The first point is that I believe strongly that our society's greatest invention is

Parliament. More specifically, I believe that our society's greatest invention is this elected House of Commons. Even more specifically, it is this elected House of Commons and its democratic checks and balances on power.

If we were to look around the world today at the societies that have the greatest prosperity, the greatest justice, the greatest social outcomes, and the most stability, they are all liberal democracies with democratic checks and balances on power. That is no accident. It is these very checks and balances on power, democratic in nature, that have produced the kind of wealth, stability, and prosperity we have come to enjoy as citizens in the modern west.

That is why I believe in the principles of this bill so strongly. We need to strengthen these democratic checks and balances on power. If we can do so, we will ensure that the prosperity, stability, and outcomes we have inherited from generations past will be passed on to the generations to come in this great country.

The second point I want to make is that time is short. We are mere months away from the adjournment of this Parliament and the eventual dissolution of this Parliament and the general election. If the bill is successfully adopted at third reading next week, we have a mere four months for the Senate to consider this bill and to adopt it into law.

My message to the Senate is that this bill must be adopted into law. This is a bill that concerns the democratic reform of this elected House of Commons. It is a bill about this House of Commons and how its members govern themselves and organize themselves. This bill is about how this House of Commons elects its own members. For that very reason, I believe that the Senate should expeditiously and swiftly pass this bill.

Constitutionally, we are chambers that are masters of our own destiny. The Senate should respect those constitutional divisions of powers, quickly pass this bill, and strengthen the democratic checks and balances that we have in this place so that we can pass along to future generations a Parliament that is strengthened and prepared to deal with the challenges of the 21st century.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

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

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

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

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

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

*And five or more members having risen:*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Pursuant to Standing Order 98, the recorded division stands deferred until Wednesday, February 25, 2015, immediately before the time provided for private members' business.



*Adjournment Proceedings*

the oil and gas sector, which is responsible for this country's ever-increasing greenhouse gas emissions.

We have been waiting for five years for greenhouse gas targets in this sector. I believe it is time for the government to roll up its sleeves and get to work. Unfortunately, we do not see any effort on the part of the Conservatives to fight climate change, and I must say that the consequences are serious and disastrous for Canadians.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said that the agreement between China and the United States was a major step forward in the fight against climate change. Canada has not been able to take that step.

The two biggest emitters, China and the United States, are working together to fight climate change. Will the Conservatives be able to follow their lead by presenting an ambitious greenhouse gas reduction plan that will also include the oil and gas sector?

• (1820)

[*English*]

**Mrs. Kelly Block (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, our government's record is clear. We have taken decisive action on the environment while protecting our economy.

Domestically on climate change, our government will continue to implement a sector-by-sector regulatory approach to reduce GHG emissions. Our approach allows the government to tailor regulations to each economic sector, to target and reduce emissions most efficiently while protecting the economy. It also allows us to work collaboratively with provincial and territorial colleagues to collectively address emissions. We will continue to engage regularly through bilateral, intergovernmental, and international forums to work closely with provinces, territories, and our largest trading partner, the U.S., as we move to implement announced regulations and other measures.

With our government's coal-fired electricity regulations, Canada became the first major coal user to ban the construction of traditional coal-fired electricity generation units. The regulations also require the phasing out of existing coal-fired units without carbon capture. In the first 21 years, the regulations are expected to result in a cumulative reduction of about 214 megatonnes in greenhouse gas emissions, equivalent to removing some 2.6 million personal vehicles per year from the road over this period.

In collaboration with the U.S., our government has developed regulations to limit greenhouse gas emissions from new passenger automobiles and light trucks. With these regulations, it is projected that cars and trucks in 2025 will produce about 50% less greenhouse gas emissions than vehicles in 2008 did. Our government has also developed regulations to limit greenhouse gas emissions from new on-road heavy-duty vehicles. With these regulations, it is projected that heavy-duty vehicles in 2018 will emit up to 23% less greenhouse gas emissions.

**ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS**

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

• (1815)

[*Translation*]

## THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House today for an adjournment debate on a question I asked on December 10 about greenhouse gas emissions by the oil and gas sector. This is not the first time we have talked about this.

At the time, I asked the Minister of the Environment about the major agreement between China and the United States on reducing their greenhouse gas emissions and the recent Canada-U.S. air quality agreement presented by the Minister of the Environment.

As hon. members may know, this air quality agreement makes no mention of regulations for the oil and gas sector when it comes to greenhouse gas emissions. That is odd because greenhouse gas emissions contribute to air pollution. Every country, including Canada, urgently needs to make a concerted effort to address the problem of climate change.

Unfortunately, since the Conservative government came to power, our credibility on the world stage has taken a serious hit. We have been severely affected by the Conservative government's dismal environmental record.

This is the precise wording of the question:

Whereas China and the United States have struck a deal to cut greenhouse gas emissions, the most recent Canada-U.S. air quality agreement presented by the Minister of the Environment makes no mention of regulations for the oil and gas sector. Does that mean that the Minister of the Environment does not believe that greenhouse gas emissions produced by the oil and gas sector affect air quality?

When I asked her this question, I expected her to say that yes, she had made a mistake and she would remedy the situation. She did not. She once again gave the same insipid answer she always gives, which did not even have anything to do with what I asked.

Let us take a quick look at the greenhouse gas emissions produced by the oil and gas sector in Canada. A committee of senior officials, co-chaired by the Deputy Minister of the Environment and the Deputy Minister of Natural Resources, recently revealed that the federal government has not yet released the environmental standards that will be imposed on the oil and gas industry. According to the deputy ministers, this sector will be responsible for nearly 27% of greenhouse gas emissions in 2020.

This sector is growing and we need to take action quickly. We need to quickly implement practical measures.

At the last climate conference in Lima, Peru, the Minister of the Environment announced that her government did not plan to regulate

*Adjournment Proceedings*

Internationally, Canada is playing a constructive role in United Nations negotiations towards a fair and effective new, post-2020 climate change agreement. We have always said that for any international agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, all major economies and emitters must do their part. We are very encouraged to see that the United States and China, which account for 39% of global greenhouse gas emissions, are taking action, particularly as Canada only emits less than 2% of the global greenhouse gas emissions. We will continue to play our part by reducing emissions at home and by working with our partners across the globe to establish an international agreement that includes all emitters.

Through our chairmanship of the Arctic Council, and as a founding member and major financial contributor to an international organization on climate and clean air, we are taking real action to address short-lived climate pollutants, such as black carbon and methane. Reducing these types of pollutants can achieve more immediate climate benefits, particularly in the north, due to these pollutants' short lifespan. Our government will build on these actions by working in concert with the U.S. Because Canadian and American energy markets are integrated, we must coordinate on developing new regulations for this sector.

We are reducing emissions without damaging the economy, as the Liberals and the NDP would do with their job-killing carbon tax.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. François Choquette:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to get back to the economic benefits of combatting climate change.

A study by the OECD and the Pembina Institute confirmed that natural resource development without regard for the environmental consequences is harmful to Canada's economic development.

The Conservatives' approach will be detrimental, not helpful, to Canada's economic development. In fact, it is already hurting our

development. The Conservatives' focus on oil and gas is having a negative impact on Canada's economy by creating socio-economic disparities across Canada. That comes from the OECD, which is pretty significant.

We have a clear plan. We want to combat climate change and promote a diverse, sustainable economy, for the good of our environment.

What will the member do to ensure that we have better economic diversification and environmental protections in order to stimulate Canada's economic development?

• (1825)

[*English*]

**Mrs. Kelly Block:** Mr. Speaker, Canada is working diligently to reach an agreement in Paris that is fair to Canada and includes all emitters and all economies. Currently, Canada emits less than 2% of greenhouse gases globally. Canada also has one of the cleanest electricity systems in the world, with 79% of our electricity supply emitting no greenhouse gases.

Our government has made significant investments to transition Canada to a clean energy economy and advance this country's climate change objectives. Since 2006, our government has invested over \$10 billion in green infrastructure, energy efficiency, the development of clean energy technologies, and the production of cleaner energy and fuels.

[*Translation*]

**The Deputy Speaker:** 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 6:26 p.m.)





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