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(HANSARD)

Wednesday, April 1, 2015

Speaker: The Honourable Andrew Scheer

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, April 1, 2015

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

• (1405)

[*English*]

The Speaker: It being Wednesday, we will now have the singing of the national anthem, led by the hon. member for North Vancouver.

[*Members sang the national anthem*]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Brent Rathgeber (Edmonton—St. Albert, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, today is April 1, and it is no joke that thousands of temporary foreign workers are packing up and getting ready to leave Canada. In Alberta alone, an estimated 8,000 workers will be affected. This is a loss not only for the Alberta employers who cannot find Canadian workers; it is a bigger loss for the hard-working, dedicated employees who come to Canada with the dream of making a better life for themselves.

The government owns this problem. For years it was told that there was nothing temporary about employee shortages in specific industries, but rather than allowing these valuable employees to permanently immigrate, it relied on four-year temporary foreign work permits, thus creating a revolving door of TFWs.

Some serious but isolated abuses of the program have ruined it for the thousands of workers who love Canada and for the many employers who would love to keep them.

It is time to take the “temporary” and the “foreign” out of TFWs. We owe hard workers prepared to take unskilled jobs that cannot otherwise be filled permanent residency and then citizenship. After four years in Canada, they deserve more than a deportation order.

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PASSOVER

Mr. Mark Adler (York Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this Friday, beginning at sundown, Jews around the world will gather with

family and friends to usher in the Shabbat and the holiday of Passover.

The story of Passover as told during the seder reminds all of us of the importance of freedom. The seder ceremony is filled with the symbols of confinement and liberty, pain and joy and has served as a means of teaching each new generation the story of the liberation of the Jewish people from slavery in Egypt. Most important, it instructs us that it is the responsibility of each generation to teach their children that freedom is something we must always cherish.

The lessons of Passover echo in every corner of the earth. They demonstrate to us that while we must be thankful for the freedom we have, we must also remember all those in the world who yearn to know its many gifts. This year, let us rededicate ourselves to extending the blessings of freedom, democracy, human rights, and liberty to all who seek it.

I want to offer to all celebrating Passover my heartfelt wish for a joyous chag filled with the warmth of family and friends.

[*Member spoke in Hebrew as follows:*]

Chag Pesach kasher v'sameach.

* * *

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Northwest Territories, NDP): Mr. Speaker, northerners are deeply concerned about the position of the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development that the three territories are the same and that their environmental laws should be uniform.

In committee, the minister went on and on about how the government's plan is to have the same laws governing the land and water of all three territories. Any northerner would tell us that we cannot treat the territories the same.

This paternalistic approach by the Conservatives is completely wrong. Each territory is unique, with different demographics, different geography, different cultures, and different relationships with aboriginal governments. We have fought for years to create our identities. The minister and his Conservative colleagues instead tell northerners that their uniqueness, issues, concerns, and political relationships are of no importance to them.

Statements by Members

Northerners are fighting back. The NWT's Tlicho First Nation has won an injunction against the creation of the environmental super-board, and Yukon first nations are already preparing their court case to stop Bill S-6.

Conservative Members from the north, listen up, the opposition will be heard at the ballot box.

* * *

SMALL BUSINESS

Mrs. Pat Perkins (Whitby—Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to recognize the 35th year of business for a thriving fashion destination in Whitby.

Starting with an idea between friends Judy Vipond and Connie Heron, Connie's Brooklin Village Shoppe was born and has maintained years of success. Today the shop provides international and Canadian fashions and merchandise where both locals and out-of-towners continue to visit, season after season.

Connie's Brooklin Village Shoppe is one of the many examples of successful businesses that support, promote, and enhance their communities. In fact, Canada has over one million small and medium-sized businesses that continue to serve their communities while providing local jobs.

Congratulations to Connie and Judy on achieving this wonderful milestone.

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TARTAN DAY

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Tartan Day in Canada, which is celebrated on April 6 because it is the anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Arbroath in 1320, the Scottish declaration of independence.

Tartan Day recognizes and celebrates the contributions of Scots and their descendants to the fabric of Canadian society. They played an important role in mapping the west and north, in running a railway across the country, in creating a system of national parks, and in establishing banks and universities.

Tartan Day gives Canadians a chance to enjoy Gaelic singing, highland dancing, piping, and other Scottish-themed events. If members enjoy Tartan Day celebrations, they should be sure to attend the Highland Games this summer in their areas. I'm especially looking forward to attending the Fergus Highland Games, which have been going strong since 1946 and which I have attended since the age of four.

Ceud mille failte, or 100,000 welcomes!

* * *

• (1410)

WORLD WAR II VETERANS

Mr. LaVar Payne (Medicine Hat, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I stand today to speak about local World War II veterans from the community of Bow Island in my constituency. In December, I had the great honour of presenting these veterans with certificates of recognition and commemorative pins noting their service for King

and country. Veterans Jim Wallwork, Vic Selvig, Ivy Williams, Les Chambers, Peggy Haugen, Kathleen Foss, and Art Anderson were the recipients of the certificates and pins. It is a small way of remembering their brave actions all of those decades ago.

We thank these and countless other veterans who went to fight tyranny in Europe, Africa, and Asia to ensure our freedom. They fought for freedom, liberty, and the democratic values we believe in so strongly in our hearts and minds. All Canadians thank them for their service, and we know that without their commitment to our freedom, we would not live in the greatest country on Earth.

We are so proud of them.

* * *

[*Translation*]

2015 DESJARDINS CUP

Mr. Philip Toone (Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, NDP): Mr. Speaker, our regional hockey championship, the Coupe Desjardins, gets under way officially tomorrow in the Magdalen Islands.

I look forward to attending the 39th edition of the competition, which is chaired this year by Alexis Loiseau, a young Magdalen Islander who is also captain of the Rimouski Oceanic in the Quebec major junior hockey league.

This major sporting event will bring together 225 players and 65 coaches from the Gaspé and the Magdalen Islands. Over the next four days, 14 teams at the atom, peewee, bantam and midget levels will do their best to win the treasured cup. No fewer than 34 hockey games are scheduled during the tournament, which ends on Sunday.

I would like to congratulate and thank all the players, coaches, fans and volunteers for making the 2015 Coupe Desjardins possible.

* * *

[*English*]

TERRY FOX

Mr. Rick Dykstra (St. Catharines, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today at the Canadian Museum of History, a special exhibit is opening. It is entitled "Terry Fox: Running to the Heart of Canada".

For 143 days in 1980, Canadians watched, marvelled at, idolized, mourned, and finally celebrated a nation's hero. Terry Fox's legacy began during that Marathon of Hope.

Over the past 35 years, each and every year, in every community across our country, including my riding and home of St. Catharines, supporters of the Terry Fox legacy continue the Marathon of Hope and together have raised over \$700 million for cancer research.

As Terry himself stated on August 2, 1980, day 113 of his Marathon of Hope, "There can be no reason for me to stop. No matter what pain I suffer, it is nothing compared to the pain of those who have cancer and of those who endure treatment, often with little hope of recovery".

Terry's legacy will be on display at our Canadian Museum of History from today, April 1, until September 20, 2015. I would encourage all Canadians to come and walk through the exhibit on one of our nation's true heroes.

POPE JOHN PAUL II DAY

Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon (Mississauga East—Cooksville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on April 2, 2015, people from across Canada will be celebrating the first ever Pope John Paul II Day. Pope John Paul II's work transcended so many boundaries. He was a courageous champion of acceptance, religious freedom, and forgiveness. He promoted the values of peace and tolerance and a strong stand against human rights violations. These are the values that resonate deeply in our country and with Canadians.

This was always the motivation behind my private member's bill, Bill C-266. I want to thank both Speakers, of the Senate and of the House, and the Canada-Poland Parliamentary Friendship Group for co-hosting a special reception today to celebrate Pope John Paul II Day with colleagues, international representatives, and faith leaders.

I invite all Canadians to join me on April 2 in reflecting on Pope John Paul II and his never-ending message: do not be afraid.

Happy Pope John Paul II Day, and may be peace with us.

* * *

●(1415)

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, tonight Parliament will have an opportunity to vote on my bill, an act to defend the north coast. This bill was born from a decade-long threat that has faced the northwest of British Columbia in the form of Enbridge northern gateway's pipeline.

Yet within this crisis, we have found hope. In this conflict, we have found an opportunity. First nations and non-first nations people are standing shoulder to shoulder, community to community, against this threat and the threat posed by a Conservative government unwilling and unable to listen to the people of my province.

This bill is not just to oppose dangerous resource development; it is a bill that would finally put truth into community consultations and put an end to the rip and ship policies of the government. For the first time in our history, Parliament will have an opportunity to vote to protect B.C.'s coast from the danger of supertankers plying its waters.

Tonight we will have an opportunity to see my Conservative colleagues from B.C. and who they actually stand and represent. Who is it they work for: the Prime Minister and his oil lobby or the people of British Columbia who sent them here?

* * *

TAXATION

Mr. John Carmichael (Don Valley West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is painfully obvious to all Canadians that the high tax and high debt Liberals want higher taxes and bigger government. We know the Liberal leader has not met a tax he did not like.

The member for Kings—Hants stated, "Liberals believe Canadians will not be bothered by being taxed more". On top of that, the member for Toronto Centre stated, "amen to raising taxes".

On this side of the House, we have been clear about our low-tax plan for families and Canadians know what to expect from our

Statements by Members

Conservative government, lower taxes. When it comes to families, our government will always do what is best and give money back to Canadian families.

* * *

[Translation]

STATUS OF WOMEN

Ms. Isabelle Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk about promoting female entrepreneurship and leadership. Every single day, I realize that this goal has become more essential and inescapable than ever.

Many sectors, such as the business sector, are still having a hard time including women. Even now, women in that sector face serious and very real problems that stand in the way of them achieving their potential. We have an incredible number of talented and visionary women who have so much hope to offer our country in terms of development and enrichment.

Today I would like to thank TC Transcontinental's Montreal Island west branches, including *Le Messager Lachine* and *The Chronicle*, which did an amazing job of celebrating International Women's Day with a special insert and a women's networking activity with Ruth Vachon, CEO of the Réseau des femmes d'affaires du Québec. Attendees were able to meet female comrades and talk about their successes and the difficulties and challenges they all face.

[English]

I also want to congratulate the group, Resilient Sisters of Lachine, which was formed two years ago and is made up of women who work hard to create and develop their own businesses. I encourage all Canadians to continue to actively pursue their dreams and live their passions to the fullest.

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VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. Rodney Weston (Saint John, CPC): Mr. Speaker, thanks to the leadership of our Prime Minister and the Minister of Veterans Affairs, our government has announced new initiatives that are further proof of our commitment to treat veterans and their families with care, compassion and respect.

Today we have officially expanded the eligibility criteria for the permanent impairment allowance, so more veterans are eligible for financial support each month. Even more, effective today, the earnings loss benefit is now calculated in the same way for reserve force veterans as it is for regular force veterans. This is about respect for reservists.

These measures, and others in the support for veterans and their families act, are some of the ways our Conservative government is ensuring ill and injured veterans and their families have benefits that will span their entire lives.

*Oral Questions***WORLD AUTISM AWARENESS DAY**

Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, April 2 marks the second World Autism Awareness Day in Canada.

Autism is one the most common developmental disabilities, affecting 1 in 100. Yet many of us are unaware of the extraordinary abilities of many with autism and the challenges they face.

Many on the autism spectrum have above-average intellectual and artistic capabilities, while others have difficulties with motor skills, intellectual disability, sleep interruption, and verbal and math skills.

Autism varies widely. The quality of care and support families receive depends on the province in which one lives. Families struggle to meet the daily challenges of caring for a loved one.

Federal leadership is needed to coordinate approaches to care, to share best practices and research, health, education, income support and caregiving. I know, having worked with many individuals and patients who have autism, that they are all extraordinary persons who contribute to their communities.

In recognition of World Autism Awareness Day, many landmarks will be lit up in blue as part of the campaign. Be aware and work to remove the stigma of autism.

* * *

• (1420)

[Translation]

TAXATION

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, apparently the opposition parties never go grocery shopping or buy clothes for their families.

There is no doubt that every Canadian family needs our tax benefits and our support. That is why our plan helps 100% of families with children, no matter how they choose to use that help.

On the other hand, the NDP wants to impose a plan that would take support away from 90% of families in favour of an increasingly bureaucratic and pointless strategy that would benefit just a fraction of families.

As far as the Liberals are concerned, it is clear that they do not trust families to spend their money wisely.

Our Conservative government is convinced that Canadian families know how to invest their money when it comes to taking care of their children. That is why Canadians support our plan, which allows 100% of Canadian families with children to keep more money in their pockets.

* * *

[English]

THE SENATE

Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the unelectable, unaccountable, under investigation Senate is at it again. There is news today that at least 40 current and former senators have been asked by the Auditor General to account for questionable expenses. Sources have told the CTV that at least one Liberal senator has been unwilling to co-operate.

Also, let us not forget about the growing investigation into Conservative Senator Pamela Wallin. The RCMP is now gathering information from the Canada Border Services Agency and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security about her travels.

Canadians have become tired of the endless Liberal and Conservative scandals in the Senate. They do not believe that an unelected body from the 19th century should be part of Canadian democracy anymore. Now, more than ever, we need a comprehensive approach with the provinces to abolish Canada's Senate. We will get that later this year when we elect Canada's first NDP government.

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WORLD AUTISM AWARENESS DAY

Hon. Mike Lake (Edmonton—Mill Woods—Beaumont, CPC): Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is World Autism Awareness Day, and now 17 years since my son, Jaden, was diagnosed. It is also almost 16 years since his incredible sister, Jenae, was born. When she was just 13, in an interview with Steve Paikin, Jenae was asked a really tough question, "Do you ever sometimes wish that your brother was 'normal', like every other kid?"

Jenae answered without hesitation, "Well, honestly, since Jaden was diagnosed with autism before I was born, I don't exactly know what a 'normal' brother is like, so Jaden kinda is my normal". She continued, "If he didn't have autism anymore, he wouldn't be the same as Jaden is now".

Autism brings with it big challenges, varying significantly across the spectrum. However, as we help him deal with his challenges, we would never want to lose the Jaden we have now. The more that a 'normal' life for Canadians includes people with autism, the more we can work together through the hard stuff, and allow our brothers, sisters, neighbours and friends with autism to thrive.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

THE BUDGET

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it may be April 1 but Canada still does not have a budget, and that is no joke. As usual, the Minister of Finance is just sitting there, not saying a word.

Oral Questions

Can the Prime Minister stop playing tricks on Canadians and finally tell them when the budget will be delivered?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government continues to announce measures as part of its economic action plan. Some measures were introduced recently to put money into the pockets of Canadian families, such as the doubling of the children's fitness tax credit, an increase in the child care expense deduction, the new family tax cut and the enhancement of the universal child care benefit.

These measures are already before the House of Commons, and I encourage the NDP and all parties to support them for the good of the Canadian economy.

• (1425)

[*English*]

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, a quarter of a million more unemployed today than when the crisis hit in 2008, the greatest inequality in Canadian history, a whole generation that, for the first time, will earn less than their parents and grandparents, that is the Conservatives' track record.

The Minister of Finance claims he is holding off on the budget because of "economic uncertainty", but the Bank of Canada moved ahead with stimulus just this January. The provinces, for their part, are moving ahead. They are presenting their budgets, one after the other.

Why is the Prime Minister so singularly incapable of doing his job? When will he present Canada's budget?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us be clear what the record is on this side: 1.2 million net new jobs since the end of the recession; the lowest tax rates in the G7; the lowest debt levels in the G7; but by far, and far ahead of other countries, a balanced budget. That is why our country has good economic growth prospects for the long term.

There are many measures before the House right now, including measures that put money into the pockets of families for child care and other expenses that will do so immediately this year. I call on the NDP and others to drop their ideological belief in high taxes and support things for Canadian families.

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Governor of the Bank of Canada had a one-word summary for that track record, "atrocious".

[*Translation*]

The Prime Minister is the one responsible for this mess. He is the one who gambled everything on oil, despite the NDP's warnings. We told him to be more careful, to diversify and to protect the manufacturing sector. We lost 400,000 good, high-paying jobs in that sector, not the unstable, part-time jobs he just mentioned.

The inevitable happened. The Conservatives are panicking, but they are unable to deliver a budget. What is their excuse? It has been over a generation since a government in power has not presented a budget at the beginning of a fiscal year.

When will we have a budget?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Bank of Canada and all the experts are predicting an increase in economic growth this year.

The leader of the NDP mentioned the manufacturing sector. We have done a lot for the manufacturing sector despite opposition from the NDP. The NDP voted against cutting the corporate income tax rate for that sector. It voted against extending the accelerated capital cost allowance for that sector. The NDP voted against the automotive innovation fund for the auto industry and against the national shipbuilding procurement strategy—

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

* * *

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, one thing is certain: when the Conservatives finally agree to table a budget, they will help themselves to \$7.5 million of taxpayers' money for partisan advertising. That is the truth about their public spending.

What we will not know on budget day is the cost of the Prime Minister's war in Iraq, because he is going to hide that.

If the Prime Minister is so proud of his war in Iraq, why does he intend to hide the true cost?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government has already announced the cost and the Minister of National Defence has already announced the cost.

[*English*]

When we talk about the budget, I can assure the hon. member that the government will not only bring forward a budget, but we will make sure Canadians are well aware of the contents of that budget and how those measures impact them. We will make sure they are aware of the doubling of the children's fitness tax credit, of the increase of the child care expense deduction, of the new family tax cut, and of the enhancement of the universal child care benefit.

I know that the NDP would like to take all those things away and raise people's taxes, but we will make sure they are aware of them and they benefit from them.

• (1430)

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, where the Prime Minister would take billions of dollars from the middle class to give it to the richest 15%, damn right we are going to reverse that.

The Minister of National Defence is misleading Canadians about why our troops are there. The Chief of the Defence Staff is contradicting the minister's claim that Canada has to attack Syria because other countries do not have smart bombs. General Lawson has just confirmed that several of the countries bombing in Iraq and Syria actually do have the same weapons, and they have used them.

Why are Conservatives again misleading Canadians about this war?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us be clear. The NDP would take money away from 100% of Canadian families and give it to bureaucrats, lobbyists, and advocates. That is not what this government supports. Canadians will not let them do it.

In terms of the second question, the Chief of the Defence Staff has already addressed this particular issue. Let me be very clear about the government's position. We will assist our partners around the world in making sure that the so-called Islamic State does not have a safe haven in either Iraq or Syria from which it can launch terrorist attacks against this country. We are committed to making sure that risk and threat to Canadians is degraded.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the middle class needs a plan for jobs and growth. As the economy struggles, the government has not delivered. Unemployment is stubbornly high, and 20,000 young people lost full-time jobs just last month.

Why is the Prime Minister cutting \$9 million from the youth employment strategy this year?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this government has an enviable employment record because we are pursuing a low-tax plan for jobs and growth.

What they want to do on that side is raise taxes on Canadian families. Somehow, they think that would help the middle class, that it would somehow help the middle class to take away the children's fitness tax credit, to take away income splitting from Canadian families and pensioners, and to take away the enhancement of the universal child care benefit.

These are good measures for middle-class families. That is why the Canadian middle class, unlike the middle class in most countries, has had good growth over the past few years. We continue to be committed to moving forward.

* * *

GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

Mr. Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister cut \$9 million from programs that help young people find work, but he is spending \$7.5 million on a new round of partisan government advertising. He has the wrong priorities.

When will the Prime Minister understand that taxpayer funds should be used to help Canadians, not the Conservative Party?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, is the Liberal Party actually asking me about taxpayer dollars? We are still trying to find 40 million of those dollars.

The right priority is to put money into the pockets of Canadians. The wrong priority is the Liberal Party's position against the family tax cut; its position against tax breaks for seniors; its position against the universal child care benefit; its position against the Canada job grant, against the Canada apprenticeship loan, against the apprenticeship grants, and against help for sectors. Those are the wrong priorities.

Mr. Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know the Prime Minister likes to control things, but he does not get to write the Liberal platform.

[Translation]

The Canadian economy needs growth—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, please.

The hon. member for Papineau has the floor.

Mr. Justin Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, the Canadian economy needs growth, jobs and help for young people. The Conservative government's priority is to chop \$9 million from the youth employment strategy in order to buy \$7.5 million worth of partisan ads.

When will the Prime Minister finally understand that taxpayers' money is there to help Canadians, not the Conservative Party?

• (1435)

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I can hardly believe that the Liberal Party is asking a question about advertising expenses after the theft of \$40 million.

[English]

When it comes to the Liberal platform, I would just say that somebody has to write it.

In all seriousness, when the Liberals do get around to writing a platform down there, they do not get to run away from their record; and their record against benefits for families and the middle class is crystal clear and Canadians are going to learn about it.

* * *

[Translation]

ETHICS

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, that is kind of hard to follow.

We recently learned that no fewer than 40 senators are now under investigation by the Auditor General. The Senate has essentially become an all-you-can-eat buffet where Liberal and Conservative cronies feast at taxpayers' expense.

Conservative Pamela Wallin is accused of fraud with respect to her personal travel. Conservative Mike Duffy is accused of breach of trust and corruption, and Liberal Mac Harb is also accused of fraud. People are sick and tired of being taken for a ride.

When will the Senate be abolished?

*Oral Questions**[English]*

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Senate invited the Auditor General in to audit all expenses of senators, and of course we hope that all senators are co-operating with him.

The member mentioned 40 senators. I know there are some 67 NDP members of Parliament who have been found guilty of misusing House of Commons resources. I know the member over there actually owes the Canadian taxpayer \$122,000 for illegal offices in parts of the country where the NDP has no members.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, please. Even for a Wednesday, this is getting quite loud. I will ask members to come to order. I am having great difficulty hearing the questions and the answers.

The hon. member for Timmins—James Bay.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we are not talking about a Conservative kangaroo court; we are talking about hand-picked Conservative senators facing real court. Now this is an important issue because the Auditor General has identified 40 more senators with dodgy expenses. However, the Prime Minister's lead hand in the Senate said it is going to be up to those 40 to decide whether or not they should reimburse the money; but with Duffy, Brazeau, and Wallin facing breach of trust and fraud, that does not cut it.

Will the Prime Minister promise to turn the audit over to the RCMP, so we can determine if any other of these senators should be up on charges?

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, again, the Auditor General was actually invited in by the Senate, and of course we eagerly await the report he will be presenting.

At the same time, we hope he assists us because, as we know, the Leader of the Opposition owes \$400,000 to the taxpayers of Canada for illegal offices and for illegal mailings. The gentleman beside him owes \$122,000, and 66 other members of that caucus owe the remaining \$2.4 million. Hopefully they will get on top of that and repay the taxpayers the money they owe them.

* * *

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, what day is this? Oh yes, it is April Fool's Day. Most of us face it once a year, but for others it is every time they get up to explain the inexplicable, in their defence of the corruption in the Senate.

Now let us move from this culture of corruption to the culture of secrecy. Yesterday, the President of the Treasury Board tried to blow up the Information Commissioner's report by claiming he has released a record number of documents. The commissioner does not buy it. Here is what she said about him: "The volume of pages disclosed...is not a sign of a transparent government", particularly this government.

When will the minister stop with the phony statistics and explain the culture of secrecy that has developed under his watch?

Hon. Tony Clement (President of the Treasury Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am dealing with facts; he is dealing with rhetoric. The facts of the matter are that there has been an increase of disposal of access to information requests in the affirmative by 36% over the term of our government. That is our record, six million pages. He may dismiss that, but we are the most open and transparent government in the history of this country, and we are darn proud of it.

● (1440)

[Translation]

Ms. Ève Pécelet (La Pointe-de-l'Île, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in fact, what the minister refuses to say is that responses to information requests are of poor quality and very late.

The Information Commissioner was clear: "Although the Act was intended to shine a light on government decisions, it has become a shield against transparency and has encouraged a culture of delay."

In 2006, the Conservatives promised Canadians more transparency and a reform of the act.

Is the minister not ashamed of breaking his own promises and maintaining a culture of delay?

Hon. Tony Clement (President of the Treasury Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our record is clear.

In 2013-14, our government processed nearly 59,000 access to information requests, which represents a 9% increase over the previous year and a 36% increase over the previous two years.

Our record is clear. We are proud of having a government that has made processing access to information requests a priority.

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CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé (Saint-Lambert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, thousands of temporary foreign workers have to quit their jobs and leave the country because their work visas are expiring.

Nobody knows how many workers will have to go back home. Nobody knows how many of them got a reprieve or why. Nobody has assessed the consequences of these departures for businesses.

Will the minister finally do something about this and fix the countless serious problems that his government has caused?

Mr. Costas Menegakis (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the temporary foreign worker program is just that: temporary.

Employers and foreign workers have been aware of the four-year limit since 2011, when this policy was announced.

Oral Questions

The real question is this: what is the NDP's position? Today it is saying we should keep the door wide open to a huge number of temporary foreign workers. A few weeks ago, however, it was saying that we did not introduce our reforms soon enough.

The NDP's wishy-washiness on this issue and all immigration policies is worrisome.

[English]

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today thousands of people who came to this country looking for a better life are being kicked out, all because the government made a mess of the temporary foreign worker program. Many were on the verge of gaining permanent residency. Many were cheated out of their savings by unscrupulous consultants. Some will go underground, desperate to stay but denied any pathway to citizenship by the current government. Meanwhile, employers are losing employees.

What are the Conservatives going to do to fix the mess they have made?

Mr. Costas Menegakis (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the purpose of the temporary foreign worker program is to find employees where a Canadian cannot be found to fill that job.

The member speaking today said this on April 24, 2014:

The bottom line is, there are people living in Canada who are being laid off or having their hours cut to facilitate the use of foreign workers.

Today, they are asking something completely different. The incoherence on the part of the opposition and the member for Newton—North Delta on this file, and in fact on Canada's immigration policies more broadly, is startling.

* * *

[Translation]

CHILD CARE

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, not only are the Conservatives incapable of delivering a budget, but they also seem to be unable to assess the budgetary impact of their promises.

Although the Conservatives have promised an enhanced universal child care benefit, we hear that this will be more beneficial to families with no young children. Yes, that is right; the enhancements to the universal child care benefit will be more beneficial to families that have no child care expenses.

We in the NDP have a real plan to ensure that every child has a spot in day care for no more than \$15 a day.

Why will the minister not model his plan on ours, in order to really and truly help Canadian families?

[English]

Hon. Candice Bergen (Minister of State (Social Development), CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is not at all what the PBO report said. In fact, it said that all families would benefit from our plan. That is what we have been saying, that all families with children will benefit from our expanded UCCB.

Here is the insult that the opposition is giving to families. It is saying that unless they use a licensed daycare space, they are not actually providing child care for their child. Whether it is a parent at home, whether it is a parent using a private daycare, a family member or a neighbour, there are a host of options that families use. We respect that. We will not tell families how to care for their children, and we reject the opposition's—

● (1445)

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

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we have a question for the Minister of Finance today. I have a new idea. Maybe we should put a little sign out at the front of Parliament that says, "Lost: one finance minister. Reward: the ability to explain his circumstance to the Canadian public". While he refuses to show up to work, thousands and thousands of Canadians are losing their jobs—

The Speaker: Order, please. I just want to caution the hon. member. He is trying to—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I know. I am just cautioning him to not do indirectly what he is not allowed to do directly. I think he knows what I am talking about.

The hon. member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley.

Mr. Nathan Cullen: Mr. Speaker, under the finance minister's watch the Canadian economy is actually shrinking. There has been 15 months of anemic job growth and the minister's only response is a new \$7.5 million ad campaign for a budget that does not actually exist. I guess that is the going rate to actually spin out a program to spend \$2 billion on the wealthiest 15% of Canadian families.

What is the Conservatives' solution to the thousands and thousands of Canadians who have lost their jobs? Where is their budget?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our solution is to put dollars directly in the pockets of moms and dads so that they can meet the expenses that come with being a parent.

Yesterday, the leader of the NDP made despicable and offensive comments about parents who do not necessarily use traditional institutional paid daycare. He said that those parents have no child care expenses and therefore they should not get any money at all. This will come as news to the stay-at-home parents, to those who use a neighbour or a family member, and to the millions of others out there who make other decisions on how to raise their children. He should stand and apologize to them.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in the Conservatives' so-called child care plan there is nothing for single parents. Their so-called child care plan diverts 15% to the wealthiest people—

Hon. Ed Fast: You're making this up.

Oral Questions

The Speaker: Order, please. The government will have a chance to respond to the question when the member is finished putting it, not before then. Members need to come to order or we will have to make up the time somewhere else.

The hon. member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley has the floor.

Mr. Nathan Cullen: Mr. Speaker, the truth seems to have hit some kind of nerve over there. Here is the truth. To the loss of 400,000 manufacturing jobs, the Conservatives' response was a \$7.5 million ad campaign. There are 250,000 more Canadians out of work than before the recession, and their response is a \$2-billion income-splitting scheme to help the wealthiest 15% of Canadians.

The minister needs to check his facts before he does even further damage to our economy. When is he going to show up to work? When are we finally going to see a budget?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there is still time for the NDP to apologize to parents like Trevor. I met Trevor over the weekend. He is from Osgoode. He has five kids. All of them are too old to go to institutional daycare but he struggles every month to save for their future university education. He said that our new universal child care benefit for older children will go directly into their registered education savings plans so that they can have the dream of a university education. Maybe Trevor's plan is not good enough for the NDP leader but it is good enough for us. That is why we are supporting Trevor and millions of other Canadians.

[Translation]

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc (Beauséjour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, job creation and the economy are in free fall.

Last year, 191,000 fewer jobs were created than just three years ago. To make matters worse, the economy shrank during three out of the past six months. Instead of doing something about it, the Conservatives keep singing the praises of the Minister of Finance, who keeps failing to show up for work.

At a time when job creation is declining and the economy is moving backward, why is the Conservatives' solution to do nothing?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is the type of question we hear from a party whose leader believes that the budget will balance itself.

Canadians understand that budgets do not balance themselves. That is why they support the idea of improving the universal child care benefit, which gives them \$2,000 for every child under 6 and \$720 for every child 6 to 17, not to mention the tax cuts for families.

The Liberals are against the idea and want to take away all these benefits and increase taxes for families. We will never let them do that.

• (1450)

[English]

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there has been a drop in job creation of 191,000 jobs, and that is because there is no economic growth. We cannot lift the middle class and all those working so hard just to get there without greater growth. We cannot

get balanced budgets without greater growth, but the government's growth record is actually the worst of any in 80 years. The Bank of Canada now calls it atrocious, and it is getting worse. All projections are downward.

Why is the government somehow content being atrocious? Where is the plan to fend off another recession?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have a low-tax plan, and it is working. Our approach to job creation is tax cuts, trade and training. So far, we have over a million net new jobs to show for this plan, 85% of them full time, two-thirds in high-wage sectors. The Liberals' only plan is to raise taxes and run deficits.

Canadians understand the budget does not balance itself, even if the Liberal leader does not.

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Wascana, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, here is the government's record: the economy is shrinking, unemployment is up, TD Bank says it is getting worse, CIBC says job quality is at the lowest ebb in 25 years, BNN is reporting the most pessimistic business outlook since the last recession, and the Bank of Canada says only substantial monetary stimulus is keeping Canada from falling back into recession.

When will the government stop undermining Governor Poloz? Where is the fiscal plan to recover the 191,000 jobs lost by the government in the last two years?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Party has a one-point plan on jobs: raise taxes on families. We will not let it do that. We have a plan for tax cuts, training and trade, the three t's of job creation. It is working. There are over a million net new jobs, 85% of them full time and two-thirds in high-wage sectors. We are going to continue creating jobs. Our plan is working, and we are going to move forward.

* * *

[Translation]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Rosane Doré Lefebvre (Alfred-Pellan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives did everything they could to limit debate on Bill C-51. In the end they did what they wanted and only passed their own amendments.

That is not going to solve the problems with Bill C-51, especially the issue of oversight. In its Report on Plans and Priorities, the Security Intelligence Review Committee states that at this time it is unable to review most of CSIS's activities. That is very serious.

Why are the Conservatives refusing to face the truth and withdraw Bill C-51?

Oral Questions

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what is dramatic and pathetic is to watch the NDP, day after day, week after week, month after month, oppose all the measures that our government puts in place to fight terrorism, which is the main threat to national security.

We are working with our allies—the Americans, the French and the British. As you know, we also have a surveillance organization that is the envy of the world. The Supreme Court recognizes its ability to strike a balance between rights and privacy. Furthermore, its director acknowledges that it has the necessary resources. We will continue to provide our support.

[*English*]

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, NDP): Mr. Speaker, with all this chaff, one thing is really clear: the minister just cannot admit he was wrong about Bill C-51. Despite over 90% of witnesses calling for significant changes, yesterday in the public safety committee, the Conservatives refused over 100 reasonable amendments. On top of that, the Security Intelligence Review Committee has again been clear in its report on plans and priorities. SIRC says it can only review “a small number of CSIS activities in any given year”. So much for strong oversight.

SIRC understands the limits of its powers. Why does the minister not?

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the president of the Council for Muslims Facing Tomorrow gets that we need legislation that is important to combat radicalization, that we need better tools to track jihadists who travel overseas, but we also have robust oversight in this country. The Supreme Court said that our review body is a model of the Canadian legal system striking a better balance between the protection of sensitive information and the procedural rights of individuals. We have a great model, and I thank the member for reviewing the bill and getting it to third reading.

• (1455)

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this is more hot air for the minister. If only he cared as much about other public safety issues.

The Canada Border Services Agency desperately needs a new lab to test potentially dangerous items that are coming into Canada. The Conservatives have been warned since 2006 that the 40-year-old lab is not up to modern standards, but instead of taking action the minister has failed to improve facilities while cutting the CBSA budget. Is this how the minister plans to keep Canadians safe?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, obviously, our government is committed to protecting our borders. We are proud of the work the Canada Border Services Agency is doing and we are proud of having increased the number of border officers by 26%. We also have an arming program for these officers.

With regard to facilities, despite the NDP's lack of support, we not only doubled but tripled the capital budget and we will continue to ensure that the agency has the resources it needs to keep our borders secure.

Ms. Rosane Doré Lefebvre (Alfred-Pellan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we are talking about real threats to Canada, such as explosives, radioactive material and smuggled weapons. The government was clearly warned. Since 2006, the ability of researchers to develop tools to counter new threats at the border has been seriously compromised by the lack of space and antiquated lab facilities. That seriously jeopardizes the health and safety of Canadians.

How do the Conservatives justify this nickeling and diming at the expense of our security?

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am very grateful to the members of the Conservative government, who have made it possible to triple the capital budget of the Canada Border Services Agency since 2006. They are doing a great job. Yesterday, six more people were added to the CBSA's wanted list. As we know, the government increased the number of border officers by nearly 26%.

When will the New Democrats support the measures that we are implementing to keep our borders secure?

* * *

[*English*]

RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Bryan Hayes (Sault Ste. Marie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for over a century Algoma Central Railway has played a significant part in the northern Ontario transportation network, providing passenger train service to numerous people in this area. The ACR runs almost 500 km between Sault Ste. Marie and Hearst. In particular, it has served the canoeists, snowmobilers, cottagers and tourists who wish to travel within this beautiful region.

Could the Minister of Transport please update the House on the latest action our government is taking on this important file?

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Transport, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to point out to the House the great work that our colleague, the member for Sault Ste. Marie, has been doing on this file.

I also want to thank the Algoma Central Railway passenger service stakeholder working group for its extensive study on this issue.

I am very pleased to inform the House that our government will be providing funding over the next three years to maintain the operation of the passenger rail service from Sault Ste. Marie to Hearst, Ontario.

[Translation]

FOOD SAFETY

Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau (Berthier—Maskinongé, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are missing in action when it comes to protecting Canadians' health. Twenty-two people died from listeriosis in 2008 after having consumed contaminated meat. However, under the Conservatives, one-third of the food inspector positions at the Canadian Food Inspection Agency remain unfilled. These inspectors are responsible for overseeing the meat processing factories in northern Alberta.

Why are the Conservatives putting Canadians' lives at risk with these completely irresponsible cuts?

[English]

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Minister of Health, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let me say what Dr. Sylvain Charlebois, who is a food safety expert from the University of Guelph said about these allegations from the union. He said that the Canadian Food Inspection Agency method is “the ‘right way’ to approach inspections”.

Keith Warriner, who is also a director of food safety and quality assurance program, to these union allegations said that the suggestion that meat sold in Canada is unsafe is “...scare-mongering”.

In fact The Conference Board of Canada rates our food safety system number one against 17 OECD countries, including the U.S. The union's portrayal of this issue is inaccurate and it is irresponsible. Food safety is number one to CFIA.

• (1500)

Mr. Malcolm Allen (Welland, NDP): Mr. Speaker, one of the key tasks of any government is to keep Canadians safe and yet the government has cut funding to priorities and planning. The book actually tells us that. It has left us with a two-tiered system. We had it once before and now it is back.

It seems to be that meat that goes into the U.S. is inspected one way and meat that comes to Canadian tables is inspected a different way. In fact what we see in Alberta is 100% for American meat product going to the south and 60% for Canadian product.

Canadians need to know that the food is safe, so why has the minister created a two-tiered food inspection system for Canadians?

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Minister of Health, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let me again repeat that The Conference Board of Canada rates our food safety system in Canada as number one against 17 OECD countries, including the United States, which the union alleges is incorrect. In fact, the suggestion that meat sold in Canada is unsafe is “...a little bit of scare-mongering”, said the director of the food safety and quality assurance program at the University of Guelph.

Of course, the member knows full well, as does the union, that the differences in procedures for international products are trade-related, not safety-related.

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CANADIAN HERITAGE

Mr. Dan Harris (Scarborough Southwest, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Remembrance Day is a chance to honour the sacrifices of all those

Oral Questions

who have served our great country, but not everyone can attend services. My bill, Bill C-597, would give all Canadians the opportunity to attend Remembrance Day ceremonies.

The bill was supported by all parties, but now Conservatives are using procedural tricks to try to kill this bill. They say they need another month just to study a bill with one clause.

Will Conservatives abandon their delay tactic, respect our veterans, and stop blocking this bill?

Hon. Shelly Glover (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the suggestion just made by that member is absolute nonsense. We absolutely respect what veterans have to say about a number of things, including this bill. As the member well knows, this is a committee decision, and committees are masters of their own plans.

While I am on my feet, as the granddaughter of three World War II veterans, please allow me to thank all veterans for their service in a number of areas. We are very proud as Canadians of all that they have done.

* * *

[Translation]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in response to a unanimous motion at the Quebec National Assembly calling for Raif Badawi to be freed, Saudi Arabia wrote to elected officials in Quebec to complain about them standing up for human rights, claiming that they were interfering.

Mr. Badawi was sentenced to 10 years in prison and 1,000 lashes for running a pro-democracy blog. Talk about intolerance.

When will the Prime Minister push to have him freed, so that he can finally be reunited with his family here in Canada?

[English]

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have been very clear that the punishment of Mr. Badawi is a violation of human dignity and we continue to call for clemency in his particular case.

Our government has made representations to Saudi Arabia's ambassador here, and our ambassador in Saudi Arabia has met with senior Saudi officials. We have also personally registered our concern with the Government of Saudi Arabia.

*Oral Questions***TAXATION**

Ms. Eve Adams (Mississauga—Brampton South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada's economy shrank again. It has now shrunk in three of the last six months, ripping billions out of the Canadian economy with thousands of jobs lost.

While there are too many young adults without even the prospect of a job, the Minister of Finance has been in hiding and the budget is undelivered.

Will the Minister of Finance back away from implementing his already broken campaign promise that gives a \$2 billion tax break to the rich and does absolutely nothing for most Canadians?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, no one said it better than in the following quote: "I'll vote for the Conservative Family Tax Cut that will allow for income-splitting."

Who said that? It was the Liberal member who just asked the question.

Ms. Eve Adams (Mississauga—Brampton South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, who are they kidding? This income-splitting plan is not the plan any of them campaigned on. Where does that promise stand? The Conservatives also did not campaign on raising the pension age to 67.

At the doors I am hearing from students who cannot find work and parents who are taking on debt to help pay student bills. New documents show the Conservatives are cutting the youth employment strategy funding by more than \$9 million, which is the equivalent of 3,000 summer jobs.

Why are the Conservatives making it even harder for young Canadians to find work?

• (1505)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that member said that she would vote in favour of the Conservative family tax cut, which includes income splitting. Now she says our income splitting does not go far enough. That is interesting, because the Liberal leader wants to take it away altogether for families and for seniors.

As for the OAS, the member was on this side when that change was implemented, and she voted in favour of it.

I think there is some confusion over there. Her Liberal leader thinks that the budget will balance itself. Canadians know better, and that is why they will always rely on us to deliver solid economic leadership.

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ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday Grand Chief Steve Courtoreille of Treaty 8 First Nations wrote to the Prime Minister. The letter speaks for itself:

The behaviour and mannerisms displayed by your Minister during the [March 20] meeting in Calgary can only be described as rude, demeaning, blaming, and condescending. ...

We cannot and will not work with someone who exhibits such blatant disregard for First Nation people.

As such, we demand the immediate removal of [the minister]...

Will the Prime Minister take responsibility for his minister's actions?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I have said on many occasions in this House, the week before last, I did a tour of the prairies and met with several first nations and stakeholders to discuss a wide range of issues.

While I do not disclose specifics of closed-door meetings, the discussions were productive, and our government will continue to work with first nations to address these issues and work on our shared priorities.

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is clear that the meetings were anything but productive when we hear from the first nations leaders who met with this minister.

Let us go back to the words of Grand Grand Chief Steve Courtoreille:

[The Minister of Aboriginal Affairs'] responses and attitude strongly reflects the very same attitude that resulted in Indian residential schools.

These are very strong words, words that must be acknowledged by the Prime Minister.

Let me repeat the question. Will the Prime Minister take responsibility for the shameful actions that we have seen from this minister?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is strange to see this member make this kind of accusation when at every step of the measures we have taken and are taking to improve and reduce the gaps between aboriginal and non-aboriginal Canadians, this party, the NDP, votes against each and every measure.

I am talking about matrimonial property rights. I am talking about water standards on reserves and a host of other measures, all of which they oppose.

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HEALTH

Ms. Joan Crockatt (Calgary Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government has introduced the respect for communities act, which gives local community residents as well as community leaders and police a say when drug injection houses want to open. This is needed and reasonable consideration that should be given, yet this bill continues to be opposed by Liberal MPs and senators. All the while, the Liberal leader is calling for more drug injection houses to open across the country.

I would like the Minister of Health to please update this House on where this important bill is at.

*Oral Questions***TAXATION**

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Minister of Health, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this Conservative government has a strong record of keeping our streets and communities safe from dangerous and addictive drugs, and we will continue to support treatment and recovery programs that actually work to get addicts off drugs and help them recover drug-free lives.

The Liberal leader's pledge to blindly open drug injection houses in neighbourhoods is a disturbing and a risky proposal, and as Minister of Health, I will make sure that communities are consulted before any of these open up.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today is April 1, but with mounting job losses and deepening financial woes across the country, Canadians are not laughing. The government has mismanaged the economy, and now Canadians are paying the price for Conservative incompetence.

Tens of thousands of retail sector jobs have either vanished or are evaporating, such as those at Future Shop, Target, Sony, Zellers, and Jacob, and I direct these to the minister in case he missed all of that.

When will the Conservatives finally admit that their fiscal plan is more like an April Fool's joke than an economic strategy?

• (1510)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the only joke is when the Liberal leader says that budgets balance themselves, but Canadians who have to balance their family budget are not laughing at the Liberal plan for higher taxes.

The Liberals would raise taxes on middle-class families by cancelling income splitting for both parents and seniors. They voted against the universal child care benefit, which would put \$2,000 per preschooler in the pockets of 100% of families with small kids.

We are delivering benefits directly to families. The Liberals would take them away. That will kill jobs and hurt our economy. We will not let them do any of that.

* * *

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this just in: Canadian citizen and journalist Mohamed Fahmy has just received a letter from the government rejecting his request for a passport. The government is requesting a definitive signal from the court that a passport is needed, even though that has already been done. It requests proof that his previous passport is lost, even though that has been reported by the prosecutor in Egypt.

Conservatives were incapable of getting Mr. Fahmy home here to Canada. Will the government at least provide him with a passport, yes or no?

Hon. Lynne Yelich (Minister of State (Foreign Affairs and Consular), CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have a travel document prepared for Mr. Fahmy when he is able to travel. Canada continues to ask for the full and immediate release of Mr. Fahmy, and consular services are being provided to ensure Mr. Fahmy's well-being.

Ms. Joyce Bateman (Winnipeg South Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadian families know that our Conservative government is the only one that trusts moms and dads to make the best decisions for their families. That is why we introduced the family tax cuts, which will save the average Canadian family nearly \$1,200.

Yesterday the PBO looked at this package and released a report on its benefits. Could the Minister of State for Social Development please tell us what the PBO report showed about our plan and the opposition's stance on supporting families?

Hon. Candice Bergen (Minister of State (Social Development), CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the member for Winnipeg South Centre, took a look at the report and she is right. The report shows what we have been saying all along, and that is that every family in Canada with children will benefit from our universal child care benefit.

What has also been seen is the insult that the opposition has given to families who are not using licensed day care. They are still incurring child care costs, and the opposition has completely insulted Canadian families by not acknowledging that and not recognizing it.

The value that these families are providing to their children is huge for our country. The opposition needs to apologize for this insult.

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[*Translation*]

CANADA POST

Mr. François Pilon (Laval—Les Îles, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the City of Laval wants a moratorium on the installation of community mailboxes.

Residents are outraged by the lack of public consultation, and the mayor of Laval deplores the one-way communications from Canada Post. Over 200 municipalities have now spoken out against Canada Post's attitude.

Will the government honour the City of Laval's request or will it plough ahead with the installation of community boxes?

[*English*]

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Transport, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities at its 2014 annual conference at Niagara Falls was very clear with respect to this issue of community mailboxes. It overwhelmingly rejected a resolution, on a vote of 311 to 185, that we not continue with the conversion to community mailboxes.

I encourage the hon. member to speak to Canada Post on the particular issues that his town may be having with respect to the siting of the post office boxes. That is exactly what Canada Post should be doing.

Routine Proceedings

[Translation]

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Mr. Louis Plamondon (Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Quebec budget, which was presented last week, contains a section on transfer payments that talks about the negative impact that Ottawa's unilateral decisions are having on Quebec's finances.

In a letter I tabled in the House, the Bloc Québécois proposed some measures that would allow the federal government to create the flexibility it needs to reconsider some of its decisions.

Will the Minister of Finance first acknowledge the negative impact of his unilateral decisions on Quebec's budget, and will he also pay back that money in the next budget, which he should be delivering any day now?

• (1515)

Hon. Denis Lebel (Minister of Infrastructure, Communities and Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to remind my colleague that federal transfers to Quebec have never in Canadian history been higher than they are today.

In fact, the Government of Canada has transferred \$19.4 billion to the Government of Quebec, including over \$9.3 billion in equalization payments, all while respecting jurisdictions and working on the future.

We also reduced the GST by 2%. Of course, we are allowing the provinces to recover those points, and we continue to work with them. However, never has Quebec had more support from the federal government than under the leadership of this Prime Minister.

* * *

[English]

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I would like to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of Rolly, Fred, Darrell, and Judith Fox, father and siblings of Terry Fox.

The exhibition "Running to the Heart of Canada" is opening tomorrow at the Canadian Museum of History. This exhibition, organized in partnership with the Terry Fox Centre, is marking the 35th anniversary of Terry Fox's heroic Marathon of Hope, a 143-day, 5,300 kilometre journey from St. John's, Newfoundland, to Thunder Bay, Ontario.

* * *

[Translation]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Marc Garneau (Westmount—Ville-Marie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I believe that, if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent for the following motion:

That the House denounce the reprehensible treatment of Raif Badawi and call on the Government of Saudi Arabia to cease his punishment and release him from prison immediately.

[English]

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

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

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INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Mr. David Tilson (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1) I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian delegation of the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association respecting its participation at the first part of the 2015 ordinary session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, held in Strasbourg, France, January 26 to 30, 2015.

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COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Mike Wallace (Burlington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 17th report of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights in relation to Bill C-587, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (increasing parole ineligibility).

[Translation]

TRANSPORT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITIES

Mr. Hoang Mai (Brossard—La Prairie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the seventh report of the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities in relation to Bill C-627, An Act to amend the Railway Safety Act (safety of persons and property).

* * *

[English]

PETITIONS

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Mike Wallace (Burlington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have one petition to present. The petition is with respect to small scale farming, and preserving, exchanging and using seeds.

CHILD CARE

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present petitions from my constituents.

The first petition is from 120 constituents, some of whom pay thousands of dollars each month for child care, if they can find it.

The petitioners call on the House to work with the provinces and territories to create an affordable, quality child care program, so every child who needs a child care space across the country can get one.

• (1520)

CANADA POST

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my second petition is signed by more than 100 constituents who call for a stop to the cuts to Canada Post. Many of my constituents, seniors and people with mobility problems, are very concerned that they will no longer get home delivery.

They call on the government to stop the cuts to our postal service.
[Translation]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Hon. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present two petitions in the House today.

The first petition was signed by over 200 Canadians who are urging the Government of Canada to make immediate use of all diplomatic means necessary to ensure that Raif Badawi is released and reunited with his family, which has sought refuge in Sherbrooke, Quebec.

Raif was sentenced to 10 years in jail and 1,000 lashes for having created an online forum in Saudi Arabia. The petitioners are joining parliamentarians who adopted a unanimous motion to the same end.
[English]

FALUN GONG

Hon. Irwin Cotler (Mount Royal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is on behalf of Canadians who are concerned about the practice of forced organ harvesting by the Chinese regime on prisoners, including Falun Gong practitioners.

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 Falun Gong.

Having introduced Bill C-561 to this effect, I am pleased to stand in solidarity with these petitioners.

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to present a number of petitions from my constituents in Yorkton—Melville and throughout Saskatchewan.

The petitioners ask Parliament to adopt international aid policies that support small family farmers, especially women, and recognize their vital role in the fight against hunger and poverty, ensure that these policies and programs are developed in consultation with small

Routine Proceedings

family farmers and that they protect their rights in the global south to preserve, use and freely exchange these seeds.

Ms. Chris Charlton (Hamilton Mountain, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House today to table a petition with over a dozen pages of signatures from Most Blessed Sacrament parish in my riding of Hamilton Mountain.

The petitioners join with thousands of others in endorsing the campaign of the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace, entitled "So Much Love". It is a global call to action to support small family farmers who are the guardians of the world's seed biodiversity. In a very real way, they are fighting to protect the future of food.

The petitioners ask the government to make two concrete commitments. The first is to adopt international aid policies that support small family farmers, especially women, and recognize their vital role in the fight against hunger and poverty. Second, they want the government to ensure that these policies and programs are developed in consultation with small family farmers and that they protect the rights of small family farmers in the global south to preserve, use and freely exchange seeds.

While the rules of the House do not allow me to endorse a petition, I share wholeheartedly in the desire to build a more just and sustainable food system for our human family.

Ms. Joyce Bateman (Winnipeg South Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to present a petition to the House of Commons today requesting respect for the right of small-scale family farmers to preserve, exchange and use seeds.

I have hundreds of signatures from constituents in Winnipeg South Centre who are concerned that we adopt international aid policies that support small family farmers, especially women, and recognize their vital role in the fight against hunger and poverty.

[Translation]

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Ms. Annick Papillon (Québec, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the fruit of a national day of action and door-knocking to denounce the banks' unfair fees and schemes. Banking fees are too high considering the ever-growing household debt levels and social inequalities. I am pleased to present this petition signed by many people.

The NDP proposed practical solutions to limit ATM user fees to a maximum of 50¢ per transaction, to improve access to low-interest credit cards, and of course to put a stop to collusion in setting the price of gas.

Routine Proceedings

• (1525)
[English]

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Brent Rathgeber (Edmonton—St. Albert, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present two petitions.

The first petition is from 32 individuals in or near the riding of Edmonton—St. Albert.

The petitioners call upon the House to refrain from making any changes that would compromise farmers' rights to add to their costs. They also call upon this Parliament to enshrine in legislation the inalienable rights of farmers and other Canadians to save, reuse, select, exchange and sell seeds.

Similarly, I rise to table a petition from 205 members of the Edmonton—St. Albert constituency.

The petitioners call upon the House to adopt international aid policies that support small family farmers and to ensure that Canadian policies and programs are developed in consultation with small family farmers to use and freely exchange seeds.

IMPAIRED DRIVING

Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to present.

First, I am sad to present a petition today that informs the House that 11-year-old Gracie Wynen was tragically killed by a person who was drunk, who chose to drive while impaired. Gracie's family is devastated.

Families for Justice is a group of Canadians who have had loved ones killed by an impaired driver. These Canadians believe that Canada's impaired driving laws are much too lenient. They want the crime called what it is: vehicular homicide. They also believe that the laws of Canada need to include mandatory sentencing for those who are convicted of vehicular homicide.

SEX SELECTION

Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the second petition highlights, sadly, that in the world right now there over 200 million missing girls due to the practice of sex selection. "It's a girl" are the three deadliest words in the world.

The petitioners call on Parliament to condemn this practice.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Matthew Kellway (Beaches—East York, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to present a petition with respect to the federal lands in Durham Region.

The signatories to this petition note that these federal lands encompass class 1 farmland and the vital watersheds of the Oak Ridges Moraine. They further note that it has been the expressed intention of successive Liberal and Conservative governments to pave over these lands and build an airport.

The petitioners call upon the House to rescind all plans for an airport and non-agricultural uses of these federal lands, and to act instead to preserve the watersheds and the agricultural land of this

irreplaceable natural resource for the long-term benefit of all Canadians.

[Translation]

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Réjean Genest (Shefford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition calling on the government to respect the rights of small family farms to store, trade and use seed.

[English]

CANADA POST

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to present today. The first petition calls for the retention of door-to-door mail delivery.

CONSTITUENCY WORK

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the second petition encourages members of Parliament to travel to all parts of large ridings. Those of us who represent large ridings will understand the reasons why constituents would like to see us travel to all parts of our ridings as much as possible.

SEARCH AND RESCUE

Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am tabling 539 signatures of people in my riding who are still concerned about the closure of the Kitsilano Coast Guard base. They are concerned about marine safety in Vancouver and all the way up to Salmon Arm.

The petitioners ask that this closure be rescinded.

THE ENVIRONMENT

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

The first petition is from residents of Saanich—Gulf Islands. Over 400 people call on the House to develop a national climate strategy to ensure we get to 80% carbon reductions below 1990 levels by mid-century.

The second petition is from residents of my riding as well as from the Vancouver area. The petitioners call for a permanent legislated ban on supertankers on the B.C. coastline.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, several thousand petitioners from across British Columbia have written to me and to the House expressing their opposition to the Enbridge northern gateway pipeline. Consistently, over two-thirds of British Columbians have been opposed to this pipeline. It would threaten both our economy and our environment.

The petitioners call on the House to enact a prescription very similar to the private member's bill we will be voting on tonight, and finally stand up for B.C.'s coast.

*Points of Order***POINTS OF ORDER**

OFFICIAL REPORT

Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of National Defence and Minister for Multiculturalism, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I believe on Monday in question period I quoted a letter from the Chief of the Defence Staff with respect to precision guided munitions used by other air forces in Syria.

The Chief of the Defence Staff has subsequently issued a correction to part of that letter, which I would like to table. He expresses regret for the inaccurate information that was provided. As soon as new information became available, he corrected the record.

As the Minister of National Defence, I am ultimately responsible for all of the information provided by my department. Therefore, I regret this inaccurate information having been put in the public domain and would like to table this to correct the record.

• (1530)

The Speaker: I am sure the House appreciates the clarification.

* * *

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if Questions Nos. 1031 and 1046 could be made orders for return, these returns would be tabled immediately.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 1031—**Mr. MacAulay (Cardigan):**

With regard to government funding since April 1, 2011: (a) how much has been allocated for (i) the AgriFlexibility Fund, (ii) the AgriMarketing Program, (iii) the Agriculture Development Fund, (iv) the Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Program, (v) the Canadian Wheat Board – Transition Costs Program, (vi) Apprenticeship Grants, (vii) the Canada Summer Job Program, (viii) the Homelessness Partnering Strategy, (ix) the Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities, (x) the Skills and Partnership Fund Aboriginal Skills and Employment Strategy, (xi) the Automotive Innovation Fund, (xii) the Automotive Partnership Canada, (xiii) Canada Excellence Research Chairs, (xiv) Canada Research Chairs, (xv) the Strategic Aerospace and Defence Initiative, (xvi) the Building Canada Fund – Communities Component, (xvii) the Building Canada Fund – Major Infrastructure Component, (xviii) the Gas Tax Fund, (xix) the Green Infrastructure Fund, (xx) the Atlantic Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative, (xxi) the Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative, (xxii) the Fleet Operational Readiness Program, (xxiii) the Shore-Based Asset Readiness Program, (xxiv) the Small Craft Harbours Program; (b) how much has been transferred to the intended recipients for each element mentioned in (a); (c) how much has been lapsed for each element in (a); and (d) how much has been spent on advertising and promotion for each element in (a)?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1046—**Mr. Cotler (Mount Royal):**

With regard to the use of administrative segregation in Canadian federal prisons: (a) how does the government define “administrative segregation”; (b) how has the government’s definition of “administrative segregation” changed over the past ten years; (c) with regard to the changes in (b), (i) when were they made, (ii) who made them, (iii) for what reason were they made; (d) what are the objectives of administrative segregation; (e) over the last five years, how has the use of administrative segregation met the objectives in (d); (f) over the last five years, what means of achieving the objectives in (d), other than administrative segregation, has the government (i) considered, (ii) implemented; (g) what are the costs of the means in (f); (h) what factors are considered when determining (i) whether to place an

inmate in administrative segregation, (ii) the length of time an inmate spends in administrative segregation, (iii) whether to remove an inmate from administrative segregation, (iv) the conditions of an inmate’s administrative segregation; (f) if any factors in (h) have changed over the last 10 years, (i) which factors changed, (ii) when did they change, (iii) who changed them, (iv) what was the objective of the change, (v) in what way has the objective been met; (f) who determines (i) whether to place an inmate in administrative segregation, (ii) the length of time an inmate spends in administrative segregation, (iii) whether to remove an inmate from administrative segregation, (iv) the conditions of an inmate’s administrative segregation; (k) in what ways does the government ensure that the use of administrative segregation in Canada complies with (i) the United Nations Convention against Torture, (ii) the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, (iii) the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, (iv) other international laws and standards; (l) over the last five years, what evaluations or studies of the use of administrative segregation has the government conducted, commissioned, or consulted; (m) what are the conclusions of the evaluations and studies in (l); (n) by what amount does placement in administrative detention increase or decrease the cost of housing an inmate;

(o) for the last five years, how many inmates were held in administrative segregation, broken down by (i) year, (ii) facility; (p) for the last five years, how many inmates were held in the general population, broken down by (i) year, (ii) facility; (q) of the inmates in (o), broken down by year and facility, how many were held in administrative segregation for (i) less than two consecutive days, (ii) between two and seven consecutive days, (iii) between eight and 30 consecutive days, (iv) between 31 and consecutive 100 days, (v) more than 100 consecutive days; (r) of the inmates in (o), broken down by year and facility, how many were held in administrative segregation for a total of (i) less than two days, (ii) between two and seven days, (iii) between eight and 30 days, (iv) between 30 and 100 days, (v) over 100 days; (s) of the inmates in (o), broken down by year and facility, how many were placed in administrative segregation at their own request; (t) of the inmates in (o), broken down by year and facility, how many were (i) visible minorities, (ii) aboriginals; (u) of the inmates in (o), broken down by year and facility, how many, at the time of their placement in administrative segregation, were (i) under 20 years old, (ii) between 21 and 25 years old, (iii) between 26 and 35 years old, (iv) over 36 years old; (v) of the inmates in (o), broken down by year and facility, how many had been sentenced to prison terms of (i) less than two years, (ii) between two and five years, (iii) between five and 10 years, (iv) between 10 and 20 years, (v) over 20 years; (w) what procedures or guidelines are in place for assessing the mental health of inmates (i) prior to their placement in administrative segregation, (ii) during their placement in administrative segregation, (iii) following their placement in administrative segregation; (x) of the inmates in (o), broken down by year and facility, how many were diagnosed with a mental illness (i) prior to their placement in administrative segregation, (ii) during their placement in administrative segregation, (iii) following their placement in administrative segregation;

Privilege

(y) of the inmates in (o), broken down by year and facility, how many attempted suicide (i) prior to their placement in administrative segregation, (ii) during their placement in administrative segregation, (iii) in the year following their placement in administrative segregation, (iv) more than a year after their placement in administrative segregation; (z) of the inmates in (o), broken down by year and facility, how many committed suicide (i) prior to their placement in administrative segregation, (ii) during their placement in administrative segregation, (iii) in the year following their placement in administrative segregation, (iv) more than a year after their placement in administrative segregation; (aa) of the inmates in (o), broken down by year and facility, how many committed acts of self-injury (i) prior to their placement in administrative segregation, (ii) during their placement in administrative segregation, (iii) in the year following their placement in administrative segregation, (iv) more than a year after their placement in administrative segregation; (bb) of the inmates in (o), broken down by year and facility, how many committed acts of violence against other inmates (i) prior to their placement in administrative segregation, (ii) during their placement in administrative segregation, (iii) in the year following their placement in administrative segregation, (iv) more than a year after their placement in administrative segregation; (cc) of the inmates in (o), broken down by year and facility, how many committed acts of violence against prison personnel (i) prior to their placement in administrative segregation, (ii) during their placement in administrative segregation, (iii) in the year following their placement in administrative segregation, (iv) more than a year after their placement in administrative segregation; (dd) while an inmate is in administrative segregation, what measures are taken to prevent the inmate from committing acts of (i) self-injury, (ii) violence against other inmates, (iii) violence against prison personnel; (ee) after an inmate is removed from administrative segregation, what measures are taken to prevent the inmate from committing acts of (i) self-injury, (ii) violence against other inmates, (iii) violence against prison personnel; (ff) of the inmates in (o), how many developed health problems while in administrative segregation, broken down by (i) year, (ii) facility; (gg) of the inmates in (o), how many died while in administrative segregation, broken down by (i) year, (ii) facility; (hh) what review of policies and practices, if any, is the government undertaking or will the government undertake; (ii) who has conducted, is conducting, or will conduct the reviews in (hh); (jj) what are the objectives of the reviews in (hh); (kk) when will the reviews in (hh) be completed; (ll) when will the results of the reviews in (hh) be made public; and (mm) what is the cost of the reviews in (hh)?

(Return tabled)

[English]

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

The Speaker: The Chair has notice of a Question of Privilege from the hon. member for Nanaimo—Alberni and I will hear him now.

PRIVILEGE

THE MEMBER FOR NANAIMO—ALBERNI

Mr. James Lunney (Nanaimo—Alberni, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, there is a concerted effort by various interests in Canada to undermine freedom of religion in Canada. The government has established the Office of Religious Freedom under the auspices of the Department of Foreign Affairs, with an excellent ambassador in Andrew Bennett at the helm. I have personally made the case for freedom of religion where developing democracies like the idea but struggle to implement the reality. It is something I hope to contribute to in the next phase of my life through the newly formed International Panel of Parliamentarians for Freedom of Religion or Belief, founded in part through the efforts of the member for Cypress Hills—Grasslands.

Last week, leaders of the faith community were here in Ottawa to express their alarm at increasing and unprecedented attempts to stifle freedom of religion, conscience, and expression in Canada. They identified deliberate attempts to suppress a Christian world view from professional and economic opportunity in law, medicine, and academia. I share these concerns, and I believe there is a growing and malignant trend by what some would call cyber trolls to engage, entrap, belittle, and embarrass politicians of faith over false constructs of the word “evolution”.

In the past month, there were a few words exchanged on social media, apparently inflammatory words: science, managing assumptions, and theory or fact related to macroevolution. My remarks were inflated by media, blended with other unrelated but alleged heretical statements, and became a top story on national media, creating a firestorm of criticism and condemnation. My profession and two institutes of higher learning were subject to slander, and constituents I have represented for 15 years were insulted in the fashion that most would find astounding in a mature democracy. Two other politicians at the provincial level were accosted, and I see this as evidence of a developing phenomenon of crowd shaming on what some would call the dark side of the Internet.

After 15 years of serving among members, most of my colleagues would know that I announced more than a year ago that I would not be seeking re-election, so why not just slough it off, shrug it off, let it blow over, and ride off into the next chapter of my life—why, indeed? Maybe it is because I have a background in science. My credentials, modest as they are, are superior on this file to those of many in the chamber and most of my critics. Maybe it is because I have Irish in me and I do not like to be bullied. Maybe it is because, in my time as an MP, I have been sued and exonerated by the courts over the use of the title “doctor”.

Maybe it is because, when I started my practice 40 years ago in Kitchener and 15 years later on Vancouver Island, there were senior practitioners who spent time in jail, accused of practising medicine without a licence. I admired them for their tenacity and clinical effectiveness, and I knew that I could improve my technical skills if I spent time with them, and in several cases I did. Maybe it is because I am tired of seeing my faith community mocked and belittled. To not respond is to validate my accusers and, worse yet, imply that I lack the courage of my convictions to stand up for what I believe. That is not a legacy I wish to leave behind.

Many colleagues represent constituents beyond the ones who elected them. I hope that no members of any faith community in Canada are compelled to defend the beliefs of their communities in the future. Freedom of religion and conscience are fundamental freedoms in Canada. Bigotry cloaked in defence of science is as intolerable and repugnant as bigotry from any other source. It is contrary to our multiracial, multicultural, and multi-faith character and the tolerance for diversity that defines us as Canadians.

I know that members on all sides of the House are concerned about bullying in general and cyberbullying in particular. The government has brought in new legislative measures to address some aspects of this brutal phenomenon, and there are many social actions that seek to shield the vulnerable, like the pink shirt initiative. We are living in an era where knowledge is increasing at an astounding pace. There are many technical advances, and it is hard to keep up with what we refer to in general as science. It has been parsed into more and more diverse pursuits of knowledge.

I know that time in the House is precious and there are some constraints on time, but I have been in the House for 15 years and am known to most in the House. With the support of my colleagues, I hope you will allow me, Mr. Speaker, the time to express my concerns to my colleagues here in the House, with the co-operation of my colleagues of course.

The question I want to ask is this. Is prevailing science always right, therefore? I want to give an example from my own life experience and that of a brilliant Canadian scientist about how wrong and how long science can be wrong. Dr. Robert Salter, one of Canada's most distinguished medical men of science, is one of my personal heroes. He pioneered innovative surgical procedures and left a legacy that has impacted millions around the world in the management of joint injuries. A tribute to this great man of science on the Hospital for Sick Children—SickKids—website said the following:

● (1535)

For 22 centuries, the traditionally accepted and enforced treatment for diseased and injured joints was immobilization.

Robert Salter determined this strategy was doing immense harm to cartilage and joints. His pioneering work on continuous passive motion is now used in more than 15,000 hospitals in 50 countries. His textbook, *Textbook of Disorders and Injuries of the Musculoskeletal System* has been translated into six languages.

Dr. Salter impacted my own life and practice in a remarkable way. It was 1986. He gave a keynote address to 500 doctors of chiropractic gathered in Toronto at our annual convention. He summed up his work this way: There are three phases we go through when we introduce a model of care that does not fit the current medical thinking. The first is universal rejection: Who do we think we are? The second is equivocation: Well, maybe. The third is universal acceptance: Of course, it is obvious.

He went on to say, "My work is now in the third phase. I'll leave it to you"—

The Speaker: I see the hon. member for Burnaby—New Westminster rising on a point of order. I will let him make his point. We are on a question of privilege, so I will ask him to be mindful of that.

Privilege

The hon. member for Burnaby—New Westminster.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, in O'Brien and Bosc, under which we are governed, there is an ability for a member to make a brief statement on matters of personal privilege. As members know, on page 159 of O'Brien and Bosc, it says:

Members have used this procedure to make personal explanations, to correct errors made in debate, to apologize to the House, to thank the House or acknowledge something done for the Member by the House, to announce a change in party affiliation, to announce a resignation....

I am not quite sure where the member is going on this. I think we all assumed that he was announcing his change in party affiliation or his change to becoming independent. I certainly do not see any point of privilege where he has been impeded in his duty as a member of Parliament.

The Speaker: I will say to the member for Nanaimo—Alberni that, if he does feel that his privileges have been breached, he make that point and bring that point to the Chair's attention. If he would like to seek the floor to make other points, there are other avenues to do so, but not as a question of privilege.

As the member might know, he has to make a link between whatever may have happened or have been said and the effect it has on him as an individual to carry out his parliamentary duties.

I will ask him to get to that part of his intervention as quickly as possible. I think the House would appreciate it.

The hon. member for Nanaimo—Alberni.

Mr. James Lunney: Mr. Speaker, the experience that I went through recently with thousands of hateful communications is still going on, frankly, because of a few words that I spoke about science, managing assumptions, and the foundations of science in general.

There are members in the House who engaged me on the controversy, as it were, and I would like to be able to answer their questions. I have no intention of attacking anyone rhetorically in the House. My personal beliefs and those of many of my constituents and millions of Canadians have come under attack, and I would like the opportunity to express those views before my colleagues here. I hope that my colleagues would support me in that opportunity to clarify what I believe on behalf of myself, many of my constituents, and people across Canada.

If I may proceed, Dr. Robert Salter began his career as a medical missionary with the Grenfell Mission in St. Anthony, Newfoundland. I note his—

● (1540)

The Speaker: Order, please. It seems that the member may wish to make points that are unrelated, as far as the Chair can tell to this point. I do not see where the link is being made to the member's privileges.

He has alluded to the support of colleagues. Am I to infer from that, that he is seeking and asking consent to have the floor to make a statement?

I see that the hon. member for Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor is rising on a point. Maybe I will hear him first.

Privilege

Mr. Scott Simms: Mr. Speaker, very briefly, I think that you, being the master of the House, should extend the privilege to this gentleman. We always preach that, when we want to get up on a point of privilege, we have something to say that is profound.

The gentleman has been here long enough that we should give him that right. I would like to seek consent for him to speak his mind, because I would like to hear it. Whether I agree or not is irrelevant. He does have that right, and we should stand up for it.

The Speaker: Members will know it is important that, when they seek the floor on their questions of privilege, they should make the point of where the perceived breach has been made and make the link clearly and early on.

One can imagine, as the member for Burnaby—New Westminster has indicated, that one of the most precious commodities in the House is time. If we were all seeking to make points outside of normal hours of debate or course of debate, that could get very difficult for the Chair to manage.

The hon. member for Nanaimo—Alberni has had the floor for, I believe, just shy of 10 minutes, although it might be tough to say with the interventions. However, I think it has been gracious of the House to allow him to do so up to this point, as I have not yet heard anything that would indicate where his privileges have been breached. If he would like to make other points on other aspects of the debate that he is talking about, there may be other opportunities for him to do so.

I will give the hon. member the floor one more time, but I think at this point he really does need to quickly establish his points to his privileges as a member.

Mr. James Lunney: Mr. Speaker, I think we are all concerned in this place about the phenomenon, a new phenomenon that probably did not exist when our esteemed reference, O'Brien and Bosc, was written. It is this phenomenon of crowd shaming. It is when a member from the House here with 100,000 followers makes a comment and thousands of followers pound on somebody and insult the beliefs not only of this member but of millions of Canadians, and another member makes a simple comment and that makes thousands of other people begin to pound on religious faith in the country.

Since leaders have been here expressing concerns about freedom of religion, I am asking the House to indulge me and give me the time to make my case on behalf of the community I represent.

The Speaker: The member seems to now be asking for unanimous consent to have the floor to make his statement.

Does the House give its consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: There is no consent.

If the member is now just looking to make a statement on some aspects of things he believes in, without diminishing the importance it may have to him and other members, I do have to go back to what I said: there are many things that we all feel are very important and about which we have very passionate beliefs; however, if 307

members, minus the Speaker, try to do so under questions of privilege, it would be very difficult for the Chair to manage.

I see the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands rising and then the member for Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington as well.

The member for Saanich—Gulf Islands.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that so many members are prepared to hear a member say things that we can only anticipate and expect that we may disagree with.

However, the right of free speech is important, and without putting words in the mouth of my friend for Nanaimo—Alberni, he is sitting in a different place today from where he was sitting yesterday. Something has occurred that has affected his freedom of speech. I would like to know what it is, and I would like to respect his opportunity, after such a momentous change as leaving from sitting there and moving to sit here. I wonder if he will cast light on that. Perhaps that was what affected his privileges.

Mr. Scott Reid: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure whether the member is addressing the House articulately or not. Perhaps he could have expressed his point of view more cogently in his first words. However, we do not know what he is going to say until he says it.

I think we ought to give him the same benefit of the doubt that we have, on other occasions, extended to other members who have been trying to express points of privilege. Let us find out whether or not this is genuinely a point of privilege by letting him speak.

• (1545)

Mr. Mark Warawa: Mr. Speaker, I think you have already made a ruling as far as the issue of a point of privilege is concerned.

My question, Mr. Speaker, is this. If we are speaking right now at this point on a point of order, would the member have an opportunity to speak to this point of order that is on the floor right now?

The Speaker: I suppose there are two aspects to the question of privilege. One is when a member alleges that his privileges have been impeded or affected, or the collective privileges of the House; the other, as the member for Burnaby—New Westminster has already read out, is a brief statement when a member changes party affiliations. The job of the Speaker then is to interpret what a brief statement might look like. As I said, the hon. member has had the floor for just shy of 10 minutes.

If the House is going to indulge in a few more minutes for the hon. member for Nanaimo—Alberni, I suppose I can interpret “brief” a little more generously. However, the member for Nanaimo—Alberni has to realize that if every member took the time to get up on a question of privilege every time he or she felt moved to do so, it would be very difficult for the House to manage.

The member for Saanich—Gulf Islands is right. Freedom of speech is important, and we manage that freedom of speech when we speak to various bills and motions under various rubrics throughout the day. The Chair's job is to ensure that aspect of freedom of speech is incorporated into the usual practices of the House.

Government Orders

However, I think the hon. member for Nanaimo—Alberni can get a sense of where the chamber is at. I hope he will bear that in mind and bring his remarks to a conclusion rapidly or establish that link to where his privileges have been affected.

The hon. member for Nanaimo—Alberni.

Mr. James Lunney: Mr. Speaker, the issue I am addressing here involves people being gagged, and it is not by party leaders necessarily. No party wants to be embroiled in controversy at the provincial level or the federal level. However, there are issues that affect many Canadians.

Scientists are gagged over a false construct related to the theory of evolution, which is bogged down at the cell. It is something I know something about. We are made up of 80 trillion to 100 trillion of them. They cannot explain where the first cell came from. Scientists are gagged and educators who disagree are gagged. Academic freedom is imperiled. In fact, anyone who dares make the slightest remark related to this has an inability to speak. A member of the Alberta provincial legislature, the new education minister, was trapped by this issue.

I have taken the time to prepare to explain a controversial issue. It has cost me something to cross to this seat so that I can address this without appending it to my party. Colleagues, who I care very much about, are dedicated to what they are trying to do.

Mr. Speaker, I am asking if you would give me the time to represent my constituents and millions of Canadians across the country who are increasingly frustrated about their freedoms being eroded. I hope members would give me the time to allow me to express myself on these issues.

One of the issues people are concerned about, like the faith leaders who were here, is freedom of expression and conscience for doctors. They are concerned about the freedom of law graduates who are under unprecedented attack from banks and corporations seeking to prevent a faith-based organization from graduating law students. Doctors are imperiled by changes to conscience provisions. Registrars from the medical colleges across the country are talking about eliminating conscience provisions. The president of the CMA has stated that eliminating conscience provisions is not acceptable. I hope that everyone in the chamber would support him on that.

I wanted to address the member, because he engaged me during this discussion, on social media. He is the former science critic for the Liberal Party of Canada. He is an hon. member with impeccable science credentials himself.

The false construct that a person of faith cannot participate in science is what I am hoping to address here. The member for Westmount—Ville-Marie has a distinguished place in Canadian history as the first Canadian in space. He also has a colleague from NASA who is the fourth-longest serving person in space, Colonel Jeffrey Williams. He spent nearly six months in space, nearly one year combined. When he came back, he wrote a book about his experience and faith. Should that person's science be trashed because he is a person of faith?

Mr. Speaker, I am asking that you give me the time, with the consent of members, to carry on.

•(1550)

The Speaker: I think the House has already denied that request, so I am not sure if it is fruitful to put it to the House again.

I do want to say to the hon. member for Nanaimo—Alberni that I understand that this a matter that is obviously very important to him. It has obviously affected his decision on where to sit in the House, and I am not unsympathetic to that. There may be aspects that he feels he has grievances on, but he must understand the position the Speaker is in, and that other members of the House are in, when it comes to people making decisions like this.

He has had the floor for over 10 minutes, which is more than the normal allotted time we give for most speeches at second and third reading of debate. I think in any interpretation of the word “brief”, when it comes to a brief statement, I would be on thin ground if I gave much more than I already have.

I feel bad that I have to do this, but I will have to stop him there, as he may not be surprised to hear. I do not think there is anything in there for the Chair to rule on. I have not heard anything that would indicate that his privileges have been affected. He may have made a decision, but on his ability to fulfill his parliamentary duties, to me there has been no demonstration that that has been affected by the incidents he is articulating.

From there, we will move on to orders of the day. The hon. government House leader.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

COMMON SENSE FIREARMS LICENSING ACT

BILL C-42—TIME ALLOCATION MOTION

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

That, in relation to Bill C-42, An Act to amend the Firearms Act and the Criminal Code and to make a related amendment and a consequential amendment to other Acts, not more than two further sitting days shall be allotted to the consideration at second reading stage of the Bill; and

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

The Speaker: We will now have a 30-minute question period. I would ask members to keep their questions to around one minute and government responses to a similar length of time.

The hon. member for Burnaby—New Westminster.

[Translation]

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this is the 93rd time in this Parliament that the government moved a time allocation motion to impose closure.

[English]

The government tosses it around like it is candy, but there are serious ramifications.

Government Orders

First, on this bill, Bill C-42, only two members of the opposition have even been able to speak to it, because the government basically sat on it for four months, and now the government is imposing time allocation, closure, just like that.

The other problem, as members know, is that the government has the worst track record of any Canadian government in history in terms of having rejected pieces of legislation. It brings legislation in, it does not subject it to proper debate, it does not allow committees to actually scrutinize the legislation, and it then goes to the courts. In the last year, half a dozen pieces of legislation have been thrown out by the courts, because the legislation was so badly written that the courts could simply not stand for it.

The question is very simple. After two members of the opposition have spoken to this bill, the government is invoking closure. Why is the government so intolerant of debate, and why has it brought forward legislation that is rejected so consistently by the courts?

• (1555)

[Translation]

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

I will go straight to the crux of the matter. During the debate we just had, my colleague spoke about the importance of time management for parliamentary work. I would humbly reply to my colleague that we already know the position of the main political parties on the common sense firearms licensing act.

Therefore, we must now move to the next step, the in-depth study of the bill by a committee of parliamentarians. They will have the opportunity to call all the witnesses they want and proceed with the vote at first reading in order to thoroughly study this bill, while taking into account the reality that there are only a few weeks left in the session.

Thus, we must strike a balance between the opportunity for all parties to have their say and the opportunity to study the bill more thoroughly in committee.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, all Canadians should be concerned about the majority Conservative government's attitude in terms of process and the way the government has made the determination to process legislation through the House of Commons. Time allocation is something that should be used periodically if, in fact, there is a need and a justification for it. We have seen the government abuse time allocation, for whatever reason. The bottom line is that the government has failed to properly manage the legislative agenda of the House of Commons and as a direct result has become completely dependent on time allocation. That is not healthy for a democracy in Canada.

My question to the government House leader is this: How does he justify any sense of democracy and respect for the House when he continues to bring in time allocation only to get the government agenda across? At the end of the day, it is denying Canadians the ability to have their voices heard through their members of Parliament, who are duly elected and have been charged with the

responsibility of holding government accountable for the legislation it introduces in the chamber.

Hon. Steven Blaney: Mr. Speaker, I have the utmost respect for the parliamentary process.

We already know the position of the parties. This bill is about a safe and sensible firearms policy. That is what this bill is all about. It includes measures that will increase the safety of our country, such as mandatory training for anyone who wants to acquire or possess a firearm. That is the kind of measure that is in the bill.

It is important that we have a thorough review of the bill, clause by clause, and that we listen to witnesses. In our parliamentary process, that is not done in this House. We need to send this bill to committee, where all parties will be represented, where there can be discussions, where they can look at the bill in depth, and frankly speaking, where there is sometimes a less partisan environment than there is here in this House of Commons. These are good reasons.

While we already know that the Liberals and NDP members oppose common-sense firearms licensing, we should move this bill into committee. I am ready to respond to any questions.

• (1600)

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have heard this speech before about going to committee and hearing from everyone who wants to appear. That was on Bill C-51. We saw what happened with that.

There is a peculiar thing about this bill. The government rushed in here with this bill, and then we had a sudden delay. Suddenly it was not on the order paper. I wondered if perhaps the minister was actually listening to some of the critics of this bill out there. Then a peculiar thing happened, and I want to ask the minister a very specific question about it. The National Firearms Association was supposed to appear before the public safety committee on Bill C-51. It was going to appear to speak against that bill. Suddenly, at the very last hour, it withdrew as a witness.

Is placing this bill back on the order paper and using time allocation part of a deal the minister cut with the National Firearms Association so that it would not testify against Bill C-51, and the minister agreed, therefore, to bring this forward expeditiously, use time allocation, and pass it through the House? If so, it is not a deal I would want to stand up and talk about.

Hon. Steven Blaney: Mr. Speaker, it looks like it is April Fool's Day. I can tell by the member's question.

Some people take the issue of counterterrorism and anti-terrorism measures very seriously. That is why the public safety and national security committee heard more than 40 witnesses, most of whom were in support of this important legislation.

Let me get back to the core of the reason we are now debating this, which is the importance of increasing safety and security while streamlining the process for law-abiding gun owners. There are many. There are many in Bellechasse, in my riding, which means “nice hunting”.

Government Orders

There are also hunters and fishermen in Yorkton—Melville and in Prince George—Peace River, where those members have dedicated a lot of their work and their careers to making sure that those who want to possess a firearm do it in a safe manner. They are not ostracized because they enjoy outdoor activities. They enjoy one of the founding activities of this country. It is about—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The hon. member for Trinity—Spadina.

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Trinity—Spadina, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I noted with interest that this bill started out as the common sense firearms act, and now the name has been changed. I am just curious as to whether common sense has been thrown out the window with it.

I have another question for the minister. With a world view that sees terrorists around every corner, how are Canadians made more safe by making automatic and semi-automatic weapons easier to get? How are Canadians made safe by making even hunting rifles, as well as other firearms, easier to transport around this country? How does the minister respond to the fact that the rifle used in the attack on Parliament Hill was at one point a legally owned gun that got into the hands of a terrorist?

Why would the minister take steps to make guns easier to get, if that is the public safety threat he is trying to address in front of the House?

Hon. Steven Blaney: Mr. Speaker, I invite the hon. member to read the bill. He will see that there are measures in it to increase safety in the use of firearms.

Actually, there are measures in the bill that were promoted by the former leader of the NDP, Jack Layton, such as the merge of the possession-only licence and the possession-and-acquisition licence. Streamlining a regime of two licences into one licence is common sense.

We would require mandatory firearms safety courses for first-time gun owners. They would have to take the course. We would strengthen firearms prohibition for those who are convicted of domestic violence offences. This is an important part of that bill.

There are also measures in the bill to ensure that law-abiding citizens would not be treated like criminals because they had forgotten to fill out a form within a very short time. These are common-sense measures.

Let us send this bill to committee so that members can review it and get a better understanding. I invite the member to read the bill.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I found some of the minister's comments to be shocking.

If I understand correctly, this is the 93rd time allocation motion. By the way, it is rather ironic that we end up talking about a time allocation motion after an hon. member was trying to have the floor. I see that democracy is alive and well in Canada.

According to the minister, the reason for this 93rd time allocation motion is that he knows where the parties stand on this issue. The idea of having 308 members in the House, who represent places all across Canada and want to express an opinion on a bill, is immaterial

to the minister. The important thing is to know a party's position. The rest does not help him in the least. In any event, he is not concerned about what people think.

This is precisely what I want to ask the minister. I find this somewhat troubling. The bill that only two opposition members were given the time to debate was supposed to be introduced in the House on October 23. If it is such a good safety bill, then why did the government withdraw it the day after the events that took place on Parliament Hill?

● (1605)

Hon. Steven Blaney: Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague knows very well that parliamentarians have a number of opportunities to have their say: at first reading, in committee, at second reading or at third reading. If the committee wishes, it will send the bill back here to the House so that we can continue to debate it. However, it will have already been subject to a detailed study, which has not yet happened.

I simply want to remind my colleague that our public safety and gun control policies work. Since 2008, the number of firearm homicides has gone down by 30%. As of right now, we have reached the lowest rate in more than 50 years.

We want to keep going in this direction and to ensure that our system is even safer. That is why we introduced this bill and why I look forward to meeting with members in committee to explain the merits of this bill.

[*English*]

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege for me to rise and support the minister on Bill C-42.

This bill has been around for almost six months. I have been listening very carefully to the debate here, there, and everywhere, and no new issues have come up. The only thing that I hear them complaining about is that there is another time allocation motion. If a bill has been around and has not been criticized in terms of its substance, I see no problem with it.

I would like to thank the minister for this bill. However, I would like to point out some of the incorrect things that have been said today.

That this bill would make guns easier to get is totally false. That it somehow would make it easier for guns to be transported in Canada is a comment that shows the lack of knowledge of the opposition members in regard to this bill, because it would not have any effect on the transport of guns. There was a statement that most guns are stolen from law-abiding people; how false that statement is.

We have all of these statements being made that are completely false. I wonder if the minister has any comment in regard to that.

Hon. Steven Blaney: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Yorkton—Melville, who has a deep understanding of the way Canadians abide by the law.

Government Orders

This is what we are talking about. We are talking about a bill that intends to streamline the process for law-abiding citizens while improving the safety of Canadians with mechanisms that are not in place at this time. I am a little bit disappointed to see that the opposition member would oppose removal of the licence of an individual who has been convicted of domestic violence.

This is in the bill. There are measures that will increase the safety of our citizens, but the bill would also cut red tape for a large part of the population that for too long has been taken hostage through mechanisms that are actually not safe.

I would like further to comment on some recent decisions that were made in Quebec and the reaction of some organizations.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, once again the use of time allocation particularly prejudices the rights of members of Parliament in parties of fewer than 12 members or those who sit as independents, an increasingly growing number along this row.

I find it particularly difficult, because I just endured, as have other members here, the same minister's rush-through of Bill C-51. When the minister testified at committee, he went out of his way to attack me personally. The chair did not let me respond. I was promised a personal meeting with the minister to discuss Bill C-51. That never occurred.

I am tired of being run over as if there is a tank on the other side that runs over independents and members of small parties on this side. The Green Party has a right to participate in these debates, and every time there is time allocation, our rights are denied.

I ask that the minister please allow us to debate the bill properly.

• (1610)

Hon. Steven Blaney: Mr. Speaker, I did not hear any questions, but I would certainly point out to the member that she can take full advantage of our parliamentary process and that I am always more than happy to be given an opportunity to talk about the measures we are putting forward for countering terrorism.

Once again I am disappointed to see that the Green Party will not support measures that are reasonable and balanced to protect Canadians. Frankly, I think we can do both. We can protect Canadians and we can also protect their privacy. We can work for the economy and we can also work for sustainable development. I am very proud of having been involved in the environment for 20 years.

However, let me get back to what I wanted to say.

[*Translation*]

I want to talk about two organizations in Quebec that support effective policies for firearms registration. One of those organizations is the Fédération québécoise des chasseurs et pêcheurs. The other, Québec Outfitters, also spoke out today in favour of those policies. They are calling on us to implement effective measures and to avoid repeating past mistakes, such as the ineffective long gun registry, which cost taxpayers millions of dollars. They are calling on us to avoid repeating the mistakes of the past.

That is what this bill does. We are fixing these mistakes, we are cutting red tape and we are improving the safety and effectiveness of our country's firearms registry system.

[*English*]

Mr. Craig Scott (Toronto—Danforth, NDP): Mr. Speaker, one of the justifications the minister has offered is that the time is here to go to committee, even though there has been almost no debate on the bill.

In a functioning Parliament, in a Parliament where democracy is taken seriously, the idea of going to committee for an independent and truly fair review of a bill might be something we would want to entertain, were that argument made sincerely and in good faith. However, we know that is not true.

We had the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages up in the House in question period saying to the Speaker that committees are masters of their own house. Everybody in this House knows that is simply not true. Parliamentary secretaries sit on committees as direct conduits from ministers and the PMO. We also have the record of the government not accepting, as a matter of perverse principle, amendments coming from the opposition. There were over 100 amendments from four parties or from independents in the Bill C-51 process, but not one was accepted.

Going to committee as an excuse to cut off debate in the House is totally bogus, and I am wondering if the minister, somehow or other, thinks committees are working independently in this House.

Hon. Steven Blaney: Mr. Speaker, they are, absolutely. The last time I entertained a discussion with the member for Toronto—Danforth was actually at the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, where we were discussing the important legislation this government is putting forward on counterterrorism. We had more than 40 witnesses. There were witnesses from the Conservative Party and also from the opposition Liberals and the NDP. I want to thank the member, who has spent hours on the bill. Last night at 10 o'clock, the committee was still reviewing the bill after hearing many witnesses, who brought many interesting comments. For me, that is clear proof of a committee that has decided to take its job seriously and that has studied the bill for many extended hours. Yes, it is a good example, and now we have a result. The bill has been reviewed by a committee and it is now ready to come back here.

To get back to the common sense firearms licencing act, I expect and I hope that the member will support the bill to be sent at second reading to committee.

• (1615)

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to remind members of what we are here to debate. What we are debating is a time allocation motion. The reason many people are trying to make points about the legislation itself during this debate is that after two speakers, the government has once again moved time allocation to shut down debate.

Government Orders

I was not planning to speak right now, but it is very difficult to sit here and listen to ministers saying that we need to send the bill to committee where we can have an in-depth study and do the hard work and have amendments. That has not been my experience. I did not find that was the case when I was on the immigration committee and wrong-headed policies were changed.

Bill C-51 is a critical bill, yet I did not get an opportunity to speak to it. Today I am ready to speak to this bill, but once again the other side decides to shut down debate.

What are the Conservatives so scared of?

Hon. Steven Blaney: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for speaking, and the member would certainly agree with me that if all 307 members spoke to every bill at every step in the passage of a bill, we might not accomplish the objectives that the people who put us here expect. They expect us to deliver results, and that is why we are working with parties and sharing ideas.

The measures in the bill are shared by the members of this government. Common sense firearms licensing is a measure that would streamline the process for law-abiding citizens and increase security through mandatory training and through removal of the licence from people recognized as being involved in domestic violence.

Yes, this is democracy at work, and we are being given the opportunity to vote on the bill and send it to committee for a thorough review. I expect members will do their jobs seriously and review the bill on its merits and not on urban legend—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Questions. The hon. member for Parkdale—High Park.

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my vision of democracy is one in which people of different viewpoints are able to come together to have an open and honest debate, exchange ideas, and hopefully find some middle ground. Maybe they find a little bit of compromise through listening to each other and make the very best decisions for the people they represent. Surely that is the aspiration we have when we come to the House.

We are dealing with a bill that is extremely important. It is about firearms safety. I come from the largest city in the country, where young people are dying of gunshot wounds and families are being torn apart because of gun violence. It is a serious issue. I know that there are strong views on gun safety and that views differ all across the country. I think the best way to find good legislation is by listening to people on all sides of the issue and trying to find common ground and the best result.

My question for the minister is this: what is the panic on the bill? Why are members not being allowed to debate it? Why is there this offence to fundamental democracy? Why is debate being shut down in this place for the 93rd time? What are they afraid of? Why do they not let us debate the bill?

Hon. Steven Blaney: Mr. Speaker, indeed, we have been hearing about a regime that was put in place many decades ago and needs improvement. I put to the House that this bill is bringing common sense into a regime that has included a lot of paperwork for law-abiding citizens and that has been adding weaknesses in terms of the

safety of communities and the urban communities the member was referring to.

Once again, I put it to the House that by adding mandatory training for anyone who is willing to possess or acquire a firearm in Canada, we are strengthening our Canadian way of dealing with firearms. I would also say that if someone has been convicted of domestic violence, the individual should not have the capacity to possess a firearm. This measure in the bill, along with others, are to streamline the process and treat those who abide by the law with respect.

Indeed, we have nothing to hide. We are proud the bill is up for debate. Let us get it through committee so we can review this bill with the witnesses—

• (1620)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): I thank hon. members for their participation in limiting their interventions this afternoon. We have time for about two more interventions and that will wrap up the 30 minutes.

The hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca.

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, NDP): Mr. Speaker, what we heard from the minister was very disingenuous when he talked about what if all 307 of us spoke. What we are talking about is the government limiting the debate not to 300, but only two members having spoken. He talked again about committees being masters of their own house. We know that the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness speaks for the minister in the House. That is her job. Unfortunately, when she comes to committee, she does the same thing and speaks for the minister.

The initial proposal from the parliamentary secretary was that we only have three meetings and only 18 witnesses. It was only because the NDP conducted a filibuster under the rules did we force the government to allow more witnesses. We only heard 48 of the more than 100 people who wanted to appear.

I want to go back to my question. This bill had been taken off the order paper, suddenly it appeared back on the order paper, and now suddenly we have time allocation. The minister evaded my question. Is this part of a deal he struck with the National Firearms Association to get it to drop out of presenting witnesses on Bill C-51 and to not criticize Bill C-51, which he knows very well it was going to do.

Hon. Steven Blaney: Mr. Speaker, committees are masters of their own destiny. They listen to who they want to listen to, members and witnesses are invited, some agree and some do not agree. It is up to each committee.

Government Orders

I can tell the House that I have been speaking to many Canadians and organizations across the country and they certainly welcome the measures. Once again, I am really proud of this mandatory training for everyone. This is a great improvement. I am sure the member will appreciate this and other measures, such as domestic violence, a measure I have not had time to speak to today.

This is about making sure that when firearms are imported into this country, we will make it mandatory for the RCMP to exchange information with the CBSA so there are no gaps that could be exploited by criminals. They are strong measures to strengthen our licensing regime and to streamline the process for law-abiding citizens.

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, what we just heard was an admission by the minister that there was a deal, no question about it, that the Conservatives would actually put time allocation on this bill to speed it though. The deal was that the National Firearms Association would actually stand down from—

An hon. member: They got caught.

Mr. Paul Dewar: Mr. Speaker, yes, absolutely, caught red-handed. It would stand down on Bill C-51.

We have had time allocation for the 93rd time. The 93rd time that the government has abused democracy was about a deal cut between the government and the minister and the firearms lobby of this country. It is a sad day for democracy when time allocation is brought in 93 times, but it is abhorrent when it is done because the government is cutting a deal with a lobby group.

Can the minister get up and tell us whether he cut a deal, yes or no?

[Translation]

Hon. Steven Blaney: Mr. Speaker, it must still be April Fool's Day.

Absolutely not. On the contrary, members have the opportunity to support a bill at second reading and refer it to committee for a detailed study. The measures in this bill will ensure that a person convicted of domestic violence is no longer authorized to possess or acquire a firearm, and it also introduces mandatory training.

We are interested in working with the opposition parties and all of Canadian society to develop a safe firearms registry system that enhances safety while simplifying the lives of law-abiding individuals and supporting an industry that we can be proud of and that is closely linked to our heritage of hunting, fishing and sport shooting.

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): This brings the 30-minute period for questions to a close. However, before we get to the question, it is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, Public Safety; and the hon. member for Thunder Bay—Superior North, Environment.

Now it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings at this time and put forthwith the question on the motion now before the House.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

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

Some hon. members: Nay.

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

And five or more members having risen:

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

● (1705)

[Translation]

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

(Division No. 370)

YEAS

Members

Ablonczy	Adler
Aglukkaq	Albas
Albrecht	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Allison	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Armstrong
Aspin	Barlow
Bateman	Bergen
Bezan	Blaney
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Butt
Calandra	Cannan
Carmichael	Carrie
Chisu	Chong
Clarke	Clement
Crockatt	Daniel
Davidson	Devolin
Dreeschen	Duncan (Vancouver Island North)
Dykstra	Eglinski
Falk	Fantino
Fast	Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)
Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Fletcher
Galipeau	Gallant
Gill	Goldring
Goodyear	Gosal
Gourde	Grewal
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn
Hayes	Hiebert
Hoback	Holder
James	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kent	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lake
Lauzon	Leaf
Leitch	Lemieux
Leung	Lizon
Lobb	Lukiwski
MacKay (Central Nova)	MacKenzie
Maguire	Mayes
McColeman	McLeod
Menegakis	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)

Moore (Fundy Royal)
Norlock
Opitz
Paradis
Perkins
Preston
Rajotte
Rempel
Saxton
Seeback
Shipley
Smith
Storseth
Sweet
Toet
Trottier
Uppal
Van Loan
Warawa
Watson
Sky Country)
Weston (Saint John)
Williamson
Woodworth
Young (Oakville)
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Choquette
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Leslie
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Marston
Mathysen
McCallum
Michaud
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Mulcair
Nantel
Nicholls
Pacetti
Péclet
Pilon
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Doré Lefebvre
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Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Easter
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Liu
Mai
Martin
May
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
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Sgro	Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind-
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PAIRED

Nil

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

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

[English]

SECOND READING

The House resumed from November 26, 2014, consideration of the motion that Bill C-42, An Act to amend the Firearms Act and the Criminal Code and to make a related amendment and a consequential amendment to other Acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Order, please. When the House last took up debate on the motion, the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville had five minutes remaining for his comments, and that will be followed by five minutes for questions and comments.

The hon. member for Yorkton—Melville.

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to continue from where I left off some time ago. The bill has been before the House for quite some time, so people may not remember those comments. I invite them to look them up in *Hansard*.

The changes that are proposed in Bill C-42 show just how serious we are about improving public safety and keeping the public safe from real threats rather than simply trying to take guns out of the hands of hunters and sports shooters. There are types of common sense measures that are important to bring forward. They keep the public safe without putting needless barriers on law-abiding Canadians. That is the main point I want to continue to make.

I would like to address one of the colossal problems that has been raised in the firearms community, and that has a direct impact on thousands of law-abiding gun owners.

In February of 2014, overnight and by the mere stroke of a bureaucrats pen, thousands of law-abiding gun owners became criminals. Without taking any action on their own at all, thousands of Canadians were unwittingly potentially the subject of criminal charges that came with a mandatory three year prison sentence. I am of course talking about the reclassification of the CZ858 and the Swiss Arms family of rifles.

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Our government took swift and decisive action at that time to condemn this nonsensical decision and to put in place measures to allow people to use their property and to protect them from prosecution. However, at the end of the day, individuals who owned the impacted rifles were still in legal limbo. Their ability to use their property varies across the country. Their ability to sell their own property was halted. They could not even plan for the future use of their asset, given the amnesty had an expiration date.

This legislation would end arbitrary reclassifications once and for all. For the first time, the elected government would have oversight of classification decisions. On the advice of outside experts, elected officials would be able to overturn incorrect decisions. Additionally, once the bill receives royal assent, the impacted rifles will have their original classification status restored.

It is clear that these measures are safe and sensible, as everything else in the bill is. While the bill is by no means a panacea for all responsible gun owners, many think it is a good start, including me.

I know there are MPs in all political parties who support Canadian heritage activities that include hunting and sport shooting. It is my sincere hope that those members, regardless of their political affiliation, will support the legislation. It will save money and focus on fighting crime. If we listen to the experts who agree, the paperwork does not stop gun crime.

I would like to make a few additional comments.

Those who oppose this legislation are never able to explain how what they advocate will ever reduce crime. For example, there was a lot of talk about the gun registry when it was abolished that it would violate public safety, increase crime and all those kinds of things. Murders using long guns—that is rifles and shotguns—have steadily declined since the registry was abolished. If \$2 billion had not been wasted but rather invested in measures that could improve public safety, we could have truly saved lives.

For example, if we had a stronger police presence in some areas of our cities, that would be effective. We need to promote healthy outdoor sports activities for the youth of Canada. That is healthy and good for them.

I would also like to point out that many people on the opposition side use the term “gun control” and they somehow equate it to public safety, but they never explained how it will improve public safety. The one thing they can never explain is how if one lays a piece of paper beside a firearm, it is somehow will control what criminals do with that firearm. It does not make sense. We are bringing in common sense firearm laws. That is what needs to be done.

If we look back in history, we can see that all the criticism the long gun registry received was valid. We changed that and crime did not increase. In fact, crime with firearms decreased.

● (1710)

Mr. Mike Sullivan (York South—Weston, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I noted with interest the suggestion of the member opposite that this had been before the House for a long time. It has actually not been before the House for a lot of time. It was stalled by the government for a considerable period of time and then, surprise, it wants it back

and it wants it back in a hurry, without proper debate. That is the problem.

In light of that, the member talks about public safety. In my riding of York South—Weston, public safety is not going to be affected by anything that the government has done because the public safety that needs to be addressed is stopping handguns at the border. Even in the grade 10 classes that I go to, half of the kids there either have a handgun or know someone who has one. That is an astounding number of people.

What does the government intend to do to stop the flow of handguns at the border? So far, it has not managed to protect the people of my riding.

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz: Mr. Speaker, I am glad to hear the member admitting that it is illegal handguns that are the problem. When we last debated this several months ago, the opposition made the point that most of the guns that were used in crime came from law-abiding citizens because they had been stolen from them. Finally, he admits that we have to put more resources into stopping the flow of illegal guns.

Ninety per cent of the firearms that are involved in crime in Toronto, where he is from, are illegally owned. They are not registered. We have had a handgun registry since 1934. If we had used the \$2 billion that was wasted on the gun registry and had started to put it into police resources to enforce our laws, we would be much safer right now. The opposition often misses this point.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to share with the member a comment that was in the *The Globe and Mail* on December 4, 2014. The interesting thing about the comment is that it comes from a representative of the National Firearms Association. The article states:

“While there are aspects of the bill that may be helpful, it’s really tinkering with a failed system,” NFA president Sheldon Clare said in an interview, later suggesting the bill seems designed more as a political fundraising effort. “The Conservative bill really isn’t a problem-solving bill. It’s a pre-election, you know, ‘we’re trying to tinker with this and give us some money’ bill.”

There is a fair concern that many out there have. They believe this is just the Conservative Party playing with an important issue to try to cater to a certain group and possibly generate money.

How would the member respond to that very serious allegation, given that we are only months away now from an election?

● (1715)

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz: Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that the only comments those members can make are not related to the bill. We are here today to talk about Bill C-42. Why can the member not come up with some issues that concern Bill C-42, rather than some extraneous thing I have not even read and asking me to comment on it?

Government Orders

These are common sense firearms measures. If the member agrees with that, I hope he will support us. If he does not, how about some substantial criticism of the bill?

Mr. David Wilks (Kootenay—Columbia, CPC): Mr. Speaker, maybe I can help the member out by asking him to tell the House how important it is to amalgamate the PAL and the POL together so people who possess firearms will be better able to move and acquire firearms.

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz: Mr. Speaker, that is an excellent question, finally.

Let me explain for those who are watching and may not know what a PAL and a POL are. A license to acquire firearms is a PAL. POL is a license to simply own them and not to acquire any others. We would amalgamate that. It would simplify the paperwork.

People who have had a POL for eight years have proven themselves to be safe. Why not put that into one license? It would simply the paperwork, reduce the bureaucracy and save the government money.

Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP): Mr. Speaker, to follow the act of the member for Yorkton—Melville is going to be quite the challenge for me, that is for sure.

• (1720)

[*Translation*]

Nonetheless, I will do my best.

Since arriving in the House during the current Parliament, I have been upset at how the issue of firearms has been handled, since this topic, which is very important to the members of all the parties in the House, often affects public safety and a part of the population that our friends across the way like to call the “law-abiding hunters of this world”, as though we would not call them that.

The Conservatives also like to claim that the members of the official opposition are against hunters and anything even remotely related to a weapon. As the official opposition justice critic, and like my colleague who talked about public safety and all my NDP colleagues, I think it is important to take this fiercely partisan attitude out of this debate. Often, the way the Conservatives behave is the reason why we cannot give them our support.

For years, they used the gun registry to try to divide Canadians, classifying them as either rural or urban and either hunters or criminals. That is a problem. Other Canadians are also very sensitive to what has happened to the people of Quebec. I was born in Quebec. The massacre at the École polytechnique is part of our daily lives and we are reminded of it every year, especially through stories from parents, victims, friends and everyone who suffered as a result of that terrible tragedy. We also went through the horrific ordeal at Dawson College. As for the events of October 22 that occurred right here, as awful as that experience was, we cannot forget the gunman who entered the National Assembly many years ago and just started shooting.

This is all part of a collective psyche that is very sensitive to the issue of weapons. When a government tries to use something as fundamentally personal for so many people every time it introduces a bill or does some fundraising, it can be hard to see those bills as

having much merit. We know that they are under a lot of pressure, since they created it themselves. Let us not kid ourselves.

Not long ago, someone told me that, at the time, even the Prime Minister voted in favour of the firearms registry. There comes a time when people forget the past. That is unfortunate, because the government tends to have a way of ensuring that history repeats itself and of saying absolutely unbelievable things.

Let us remember the events that led to the creation of this registry. Some members will say that we are not here to talk about the registry, but I will explain the connection from start to finish.

The tragedy at École polytechnique occurred in the 1990s. I was not a member of the House at that time, but as a Quebecker and a Canadian who witnessed that terrible tragedy, I saw politicians clamouring to be the first to respond and put something in place.

Did this registry, which was created by the Liberals, make sense and was it well built? As the member for Yorkton—Melville said, that is certainly the impression people were given. That impression is certainly strengthened by some of the arguments of the members opposite, who have always been happy to say that those who established the registry wanted to criminalize hunters. I have always said that hunters were the innocent victims of the events of the 1990s.

When it comes to an issue such as this, which is so emotional for so many people and so personal for others who live in communities that may not be like the urban area of Gatineau, we need to take a deep breath and examine the situation.

With all due respect for the people and some of my colleagues who like to say that we are opposed to this or that, I really enjoy sitting down with the people of the Gatineau Fish and Game Club. As I already told someone, if you think I put on this weight eating tofu, there's a problem somewhere. I have nothing against meat or hunting.

However, I will always promote public safety. We owe it to Canadians. This government makes a point of boasting about public safety bills at every turn and says that, on this side, we are far too soft and that we do not want to adopt the tough measures that are needed. However, the government brings in all kinds of measures and tries, among other things—I am coming back to the registry—to destroy data that a government that is a partner in the federation had asked for.

The intended result was that the federal government would no longer need the data and that there would be no further criminalization under the Criminal Code. But it took some narrow-minded people and a certain meanness to say that if they were not going to take the data, then we could not have it. That is roughly what happened. The Supreme Court told the government that they had the legal right to do it. Great. However, the government made a political choice and will pay for it. The ruling clearly stated that the federal government made the decision only to harm the provinces. As I have often said, if we are proud to say in the House that the government made a decision that harms a partner of federation, there is a serious problem with Canadian federalism. That is unfortunate.

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That said, with respect to Bill C-42, under the leadership of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Public Safety, we always hear the same kinds of comments from this Conservative federal government and we see that they go through periods of requesting funding from their supporters and from interest groups. These are obviously valid groups. I have nothing against the gun lobby. That is their job. However, it is our job as parliamentarians to not allow ourselves to be pushed around simply because they enjoy it. I will sit down with any lobby, regardless of the side, including those who support not allowing anyone to own a gun under any circumstances. I will listen to what they have to say and I will try to make a decision that makes sense and that has the desired outcome.

We have problems at customs when people cross our borders. We have black markets for guns and all kinds of things. I am not talking about hunters. I am talking about organized crime groups that bring a huge number of weapons into the country. While we argue over the details, we miss doing the important things. Budgets for these crime-fighting measures are being cut.

The government needs to stop laying it on thick and claiming that all we want to do is to prevent hunters, sport shooters and collectors from owning guns and from being able to enjoy them. Similarly, the first nations have inherent rights with respect to hunting and fishing. No one can take those away from them, although some measures in Bill C-42 make me doubt that. This will create some serious problems for the first nations and could undermine some of their inherent rights.

We did not hear many on the Conservative side rise to object to these kinds of things and these kinds of situations. All they do is say that Bill C-42 must be wonderful because it is a government bill. Every time I speak to a bill I always find it amusing to look at the short title. The Conservative Party must pay someone to sit there and come up with bill titles. They have a lot of imagination, and often even more imagination in French than in English. It is rather enlightening when you look at Bill C-42. The English version of the bill states:

• (1725)

[*English*]

This Act may be cited as the Common Sense Firearms Licensing Act.

[*Translation*]

These words please the rest of Canada, in the ridings of my friends across the aisle, and those of many of my colleagues, too, outside of urban centres. The French title is more likely to please Quebecers: *Loi visant la délivrance simple et sécuritaire des permis d'armes à feu*. The French does not use the expression "common sense" and instead refers to safety. This argument might be more successful in Quebec. Sometimes I think the problem with the Conservatives is that the devil is always in the details. As my parents always told me when I was a kid, when someone cries wolf too many times, eventually no one will believe them.

Unfortunately, that is more or less what is happening right now with the federal Conservative government's so-called law and order agenda, or with public safety, or with their haste to send our men and women into a war in Iraq and Syria. The Conservatives have contradicted themselves so many times now that no one is going to

believe them anymore. When we do not believe them, we cannot stand here and agree with something that does not make any sense.

I have no problem with getting rid of unnecessary paperwork for someone who has a hunting rifle that is used only for hunting and is stored properly. However, other bills from the backbenches seek to change the storage rules. When we add all that up, in an effort to say things to try to please everybody, the Prime Minister seems to be saying that everyone within 100 or 60 kilometres of a major centre should have a gun. He might be on board with that, but I do not think that that is what Canadians want.

That being said, I do not want to stop people who want to lawfully use their rifle for hunting, sport or target practice from doing so. I attend cadet ceremonies and I am extremely proud of Gatineau's cadets when I see them win shooting competitions. I do not think that is due to Nintendo's *Duck Hunt*. The government has to stop making fun of people for wanting to be careful and make sure that the measures we are adopting do what they are supposed to do.

This bill contains some measures that are cause for concern. Perhaps it was poorly thought out by the Conservatives. I am not certain that they will be able to fix it in committee. That does not seem to be one of the strengths of the Conservatives, or at least of the Conservative members who sit on the committee. With all due respect for the ministers, given the number of times that parliamentary secretaries have told me that they do what they are told, there is no longer any doubt in my mind. I know very well that they have been given their orders, and that they are doing what the powers above have asked them to do in committee. They even tell us, out in the hall, that they think that what we are saying makes sense but that, unfortunately, they cannot approve it. The ministers opposite should not come here and tell us to our faces that they let the committee members do their job. We are trying and we will continue to try to do our job until the end of this Parliament. We are the party of hope, optimism and love. I am still optimistic, but I have had to put hope on hold.

One problematic aspect of this bill is training, and the committee will have to take a close look at what that means for people who live in rural areas where there might not be any trainers. I also hope that some first nations witnesses will be able to share their opinions on Bill C-42 with the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security.

To me, the most problematic part of the bill is the regulatory aspect. I do not claim to be an expert on firearms. Obviously, I do not want dangerous weapons to be available to criminals, but as I was saying earlier, I have no problem with hunters, sport shooters and collectors having guns, as long as they are using them properly. That being said, I think the regulatory aspect is quite problematic.

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• (1730)

As we realized at the Standing Committee on Justice, bills are often passed hastily. I am not necessarily talking about the time we spend debating here. What I mean is that the Conservatives have come up with so many bills in some areas, such as justice and public safety, that people at the Department of Justice do not have time to analyze all of the details. I am not saying they are not doing a good job, but there is a limit. If I were a legal adviser and I had 52 files to work on in one week, no matter how good I was, I would have a hard time handling that workload. These people are on a mission.

This week, I asked them if there might be a contradiction between the “Life means life” bill, Bill C-587, and Bill C-53, which would eliminate parole before 40 years. They had to admit that could obviously cause some problems in court.

It is the same thing here. There are many bills that deal with firearms, but I encourage my colleagues in the House to focus on Bill S-2, because it will completely change the way that regulations are enacted. I call it the sleeper bill of this legislature. It seems harmless, but it has serious consequences. Without us even knowing, the government could change the regulations through a minister or delegated authority. I am not saying that that is what is going to happen, but it is a possibility. No one can answer me when I ask whether Bill S-2 might conflict with Bill C-42 with regard to the classification of firearms.

That is what concerns me the most. This would not be the case if we had a reasonable and sensible government that was acting in the interest of public safety. However, this government is easily swayed by lobbying efforts. Earlier, my colleague, the public safety critic, asked the Minister of Public Safety whether there was deal between the government and the firearms lobby that would explain why the firearms lobby did not attend the committee meetings on Bill C-51, the Anti-terrorism Act, 2015.

The Conservative member who spoke before me said that this bill has been around a long time. That is strange because we were supposed to debate it on October 23. I was studying this bill when the events occurred on Parliament Hill. The Conservatives are claiming that this bill enhances public safety. The minister says that it is extraordinary. That is ironic because if Bill C-42 is so good for public safety, then it would have been extraordinary if the government had announced, the day after the shooting, that as a good and responsible government, it was letting us debate it and pass it right away.

However, the Conservatives knew very well that this bill had some serious flaws. They used these events to make it more accessible to Canadians, knowing that it could be worrisome for them. Furthermore, since the Conservatives only work based on polls, they withdrew the bill and then brought it back one month later, only to shut down debate after the minister, our critic and the critic from the third party had a chance to speak.

Today, on April 1—this is no April Fool's joke—the Conservatives have brought this bill back and they have the gall to tell us that it has been languishing for six months. That is not our fault. They are the ones who let it languish. There is no real urgency.

This bill has a number of worrisome elements. I know it works to their advantage so it is hard for them to let go of it. They must have been disappointed when the registry was abolished because it was no longer profitable. However, now they have this, so they can continue and say that the member for Gatineau is against hunters. That is not true. I am sick of hearing such nonsense.

Can we be adults here and simply ensure that the right guns are in the hands of the right people? As justice critic for the official opposition I never claimed that the firearms registry would have prevented the crime at the École Polytechnique.

• (1735)

That is not even what police forces came to tell us. All they said was that it helped them during investigations. It gave them a sense of security if they had information—if not some assurance—that firearms might be located somewhere. They acted differently as a result.

With all of that information, we should be able to implement measures that are good for public safety, not for Conservative party funding.

[*English*]

Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened at length and I waited to hear what opposition the member had to the actual regulations.

She kept referring to regulations and that she had a problem with the regulations. However, after 20 minutes, I have not heard one regulation specified with which she has a problem.

I heard a lot of rhetoric and a lot of bluster, but I have not heard a lot of specifics. Seeing as the member is accusing us of not giving her, and the opposition parties, enough time to debate the bill, one would think she would use the time more wisely and get specific about what her problems with the bill are.

I would ask the member to be specific. What specific issues does she have with this bill?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Françoise Boivin: Mr. Speaker, the member's question is so vague and general that he probably did not listen very closely to my speech. One of the problems I see with the bill is the proposed regulation or the process for deciding what kind of weapons will be deregulated.

I am not a member of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, but if I were, that would be one part of the bill that I would definitely take a very close look at.

My general objection is to the way the government operates when it comes to firearms. It seems to want to divide us—us versus them—as though it were impossible for us to agree on certain aspects.

There are a few Conservative MPs in the Toronto area, but I doubt there will be many left come October 2015. People there have the same concerns about what is going on with firearms as my Toronto colleagues.

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We have rural ridings in Quebec too, believe it or not. I do not even need to go to rural ridings, because there is a big hunting community in Gatineau. Those people bring me moose steak. Thank goodness they do not bring me too much because I would have to report that to the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner. That being said, it is extraordinary, and this affects all communities, so they really should stop trying to divide us.

If these kinds of remarks mean nothing to the member, it is no wonder that Parliament has run amok. The Conservatives are not listening to the message that Canadians are sending. For them, it is better to divide people in order to reign more effectively. However, that does not create a strong democracy, and we have no right to go around the world giving lessons on democracy.

• (1740)

[*English*]

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Trinity—Spadina, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the member.

The party opposite wanted a conversation about a regulation that raises concerns. The regulation concerned is about police officers and chief firearms officers as the experts who will decide which guns are safe and which guns are not safe, and about displacing them and putting a political person in charge.

This is the same party that said that your party, the official opposition, denigrated police forces when it said their expertise could not be trusted. This is the same party that has said that, when it comes to police officers, they are the highest authority when it comes to public safety.

What are your concerns about giving a political minister the right to legalize a weapon, instead of giving the police departments and the firearms officers in the provinces the right to make that determination?

The Deputy Speaker: I would remind all members that they are to address their questions and comments to the chair, not to individual members of Parliament.

Ms. Françoise Boivin: Mr. Speaker, it is an excellent question. When I was talking about different trends that are worrying me, and using my expertise as justice critic for the official opposition, that is the benefit in which I would have hoped the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness would have been interested. It is one thing to know that people will vote for or against; it is another thing to know why. There are multiple reasons. We have the reasons of our public security critic, and there are other considerations and different aspects of other members. I have colleagues who are really involved with first nations. I am not saying that I am not involved with first nations, but they are more predominant in their ridings. They are acutely aware of their needs, and so on. Mine is justice and looking at different bills and seeing the similarities in this bill with some of the bills that I have to analyze and discuss at the justice committee, such as the fact that we are giving more and more powers to politicians that we used to give to the experts such as the police.

Even if I were the minister, I would not want that power. We should leave it in the hands of the specialists. We see that in Bill C-53 with the “life means life” thing, we would give the same Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness the

possibility to decide if somebody would get out or not. Thank God it will not happen under him. There is a danger there. He wanted something precise with Bill S-2. I hope he reads it, because it is a sleeper bill that would have an impact on all of these bills.

The Conservatives know what they are doing. They are undermining democracy, and that is a danger. If we do not stand up in our place to go against that, one day we will have nothing to do, and we will all stay home because we do not need to vote or do anything. Who cares?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member's remarks are completely inconsistent, since the NRA, which according to her will raise money with this bill, opposes the bill.

This bill aims to simplify the registration scheme and introduces measures to enhance public safety.

How can the member oppose mandatory training, removing licences from people who have been convicted of domestic violence, and tightening restrictions on importing firearms? Is she prepared to enhance public safety, have an effective system and, as she put it so well, correct the mistakes made with the hunters who were victims of the events of the 1990s?

She has a chance to take action and support the bill. I would like to hear what she has to say about that.

• (1745)

Ms. Françoise Boivin: Mr. Speaker, I was taken aback when the minister mentioned the NRA in his question.

Hon. Steven Blaney: That is what you said in your speech.

Ms. Françoise Boivin: Mr. Speaker, the minister mentioned the NRA in his question, but I will ignore that.

There is no doubt that a bill like this does not make the Conservatives totally happy because what they want is for everyone to be able to walk around with a gun. As long as the Conservative government is unable to achieve that goal, they will have to live with their disappointment.

The article that Evan Dyer published in November, which my colleague from Winnipeg North referred to, said that a number of Conservative supporters were disappointed to see that the firearms issue was not moving forward fast enough or far enough. I would be surprised if they showed up in committee and said they were against the bill; I think they would rather say it did not go far enough. We have seen others say that in some committees.

That being said, there are a few words and clauses to consider, such as “reducing domestic violence”. The Conservatives keep saying that if something is good, then the NDP will vote against it. However, they are leaving out other extremely dangerous aspects of the issue, or things that might be good in and of themselves, but would have an impact on small communities that could create certain problems.

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The minister does not want to listen to us in this debate. Therefore, if he would assure me that he will listen to what will be said in committee and that we will be able to eliminate the irritants, we might see excellent results after the bill is studied in committee.

In any case, I will wait with a great deal of optimism and little hope, as I already said, for the bill to be studied in committee.

Mr. Marc-André Morin (Laurentides—Labelle, NDP): Mr. Speaker, what worries me is that anyone could have access to weapons that were previously classified as restricted weapons—for example, semi-automatic and fully automatic weapons—and which are combat weapons. I own six weapons and they are all registered. Not one of them can shoot more than three bullets. That is all a hunter needs. No one is going to go moose hunting with an AK-47, which would cut a moose in half. That would be pointless and entirely stupid.

Anything can happen with bills that include regulation by reference. It would be hell. I would like my colleague to comment on that.

Ms. Françoise Boivin: Mr. Speaker, I am going to give a few examples to please our Conservative friends and follow up on the question posed by my colleague, whom I thank.

Bill C-42 gives cabinet a new power, namely, the power to change the definitions of the classifications of firearms set out in section 84 of the Criminal Code through regulations that make exceptions. Through a regulation, cabinet could classify firearms that would normally be defined as prohibited or restricted as non-restricted firearms. That is what is set out in proposed subsection 117.15(3).

Similarly, cabinet could declare firearms that would normally be prohibited to be restricted. That is what is set out in proposed subsection 117.15(4).

Rather than focusing on public safety, Bill C-42 gives cabinet the power to establish definitions and classifications of firearms. That is what is troubling about this bill.

There is a clause that refers to domestic violence, and the minister knows that we are working really hard to eliminate that scourge. However, that does not mean that just because of that one clause, I am going to ignore all of the clause that we know we will not be able to amend in committee because the Conservatives will not let us. That is unfortunate. We could have done so much better with this bill.

[English]

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and for Western Economic Diversification, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to note that I will be sharing my time this evening or as the debate goes to the next stage.

As a member of the Conservative government, I am very proud to rise and speak today in favour of Bill C-42, the common sense firearms licensing act. As I go through my speech, I think people are going to recognize why it is called that, because the name very appropriately reflects all the very important measures within the bill.

It should be no surprise to anyone that our government has chosen to champion this bill. We have always been the only Canadian party to believe in a common sense approach to public safety. Criminals,

not law-abiding persons, should face repercussions in the justice system. The bill would make several much-needed amendments to do just that.

The bill has eight components that take a safe and sensible approach to firearms heritage in Canada. It contains elements to target violent criminal behaviour. By cutting red tape, the bill would also reduce the burden on law-abiding Canadians who wish to enjoy full use of their property.

I would like to take this opportunity to outline some of the measures that I think are particularly beneficial to all Canadians in addition to some that will benefit law-abiding hunters, farmers, and sport shooters specifically.

I grew up in an urban setting, and had I never moved to a rural community, I perhaps would not have understood the bill as much as I do, having had the enormous privilege and opportunity to live in a rural area for many years.

Hunting was not part of my life growing up, nor was sport shooting. When we moved to a rural community, one of the things that happened very early on was that I hit a deer with my car in the middle of a very isolated area. The deer was severely injured and was on the side of the road. A person who came by not too long afterward managed to put the deer out of its misery with his rifle.

A few years later, my children were born in a rural community. We lived on some acreage. A cougar had been stalking our children, and our next-door neighbour shot the cougar. Thankfully none of our children was impacted.

As a result, I learned to appreciate that hunters and farmers used firearms as a tool, but it was really, as we so often say, law-abiding hunters and farmers who were getting buried in red tape.

I appreciate how some folks from urban areas might not understand the bill, but we should all agree with the principles of reducing red tape and with some of the protection measures that are going to go into place.

Let us look at the facts. Enjoying a hobby such as sport shooting or utilizing firearms as a part of one's livelihood does not make a criminal, nor does it in any logical way predict the likelihood of committing a crime. I think I gave two very important examples.

That is why the bill would create a six-month grace period for licence renewal at the end of the five-year licence period. People would not be able to use their firearms or purchase ammunition with an expired licence, but they would not be treated like criminals because they made an honest mistake. Who among us has not missed a renewal of car insurance or some other type of important insurance? A little grace period is very appropriate, as any reasonable, sensible person should agree.

Private Members' Business

Possession-only licences would be eliminated. They would be converted to possession-and-acquisition licences, giving the right to purchase firearms to all who hold a valid POL. When I learned about the system that we had in place, I was quite flabbergasted in terms of the POL, the PAL, and the firearms registry. It really seemed like a system that was buried in red tape, so we are not talking about reducing safety; we are talking about reducing a system that is buried in red tape. That means 600,000 Canadians who have owned and used firearms safely, many for more than 20 years, will now be trusted to purchase new firearms if they wish, as they have safely used firearms for years. Again, I think any reasonable person would agree.

• (1750)

This bill proposes that first-time firearms owners must attend firearms training prior to being issued a licence. That is safe and sensible. The bill proposes to create firearms prohibition orders against those who commit domestic violence, thus punishing those who commit criminal actions as opposed to those who stay within the law.

I find it very difficult to understand why people across the floor could possibly oppose this bill, though I must say again that I am not really all that surprised, because I saw what happened with the long gun registry. Some NDP members represent rural communities. I know that they voted against the wishes of their constituents when they voted to keep the long gun registry, and if they vote against this bill, they will be voting against the wishes of the majority of their constituents again. Those constituents should be very concerned, because they are not being represented by their NDP members, the people they sent here to represent them.

Today if a law-abiding gun owner wants to get a restricted firearm repaired for a day at the range next week, they cannot, and I will say why. It is because they would have to submit a piece of paperwork to the Ontario CFO's office to get a letter authorizing them to transport it to that location, even if they have a piece of signed paperwork saying they can take it to their local range. That is simply nonsense.

If someone has a licence and wants to take guns to a licensed armourer, is it really a risk to public safety if the firearms are transported in a locked case, with a trigger lock on the firearms and with the firearms out of arm's reach, as required by law? If it really is a risk to public safety, then why, after waiting several weeks or more for a piece of paperwork from the CFO, is it now somehow made safe? If the CFO thought someone was unsafe, he should never have approved the licence in the first place. The entire process is nonsense. The government's bill would address this aspect as well.

As firearms owners, people are already subject to continuous eligibility screening. This means their licences are checked against the police information system to see if they have committed a crime. This bill proposes to end needless paperwork around authorization to transport restricted firearms by making them a condition of a restricted licence for routine and lawful activities. CFOs who approve licences for firearms owners would now also be approving the legal use of those firearms at the same time.

This bill would end the arbitrary discretion of the chief firearms officers. Without a legitimate public safety need, they would no

longer be able to create regulations that deliberately infringe on the enjoyment of property.

This bill would make two extremely important changes that would benefit many Canadians. One is that the bill proposes to end the loophole that stops information sharing between law enforcement agencies when they are investigating the importation of illegal handguns. The other change proposed in this bill is to put the final say on the classification of a firearm in the hands of the elected government after it receives professional advice on the characteristics of the firearm.

These last two changes would end bureaucratic nonsense. I keep using that word because we can see how bogged down the process is in red tape. Yes, we need to worry about safety, and yes, we need to worry about proper training, but no, we do not need one piece of paperwork after another.

I believe that protecting Canada's heritage is at the core of the bill. Hunters, farmers, and sports shooters are at the very core of Canadian heritage and deserve representation against false perceptions that are being propagated in the House. We have heard many of them already. People are not criminals in this country just because they own firearms, nor should they be made criminals through fearmongering.

On this side of the House, we will always stand up for safe and sensible firearms policy. If we look at the eight points that I brought up, we see that they would reduce red tape and increase safety measures. They are sensible and appropriate, and I suggest that all members on both sides of the House should seriously consider supporting this bill.

• (1755)

They are really reducing red tape and increasing safety measures. They are sensible and appropriate, and I suggest that all members on both sides of the House seriously consider supporting the bill.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

CITIZEN CONSULTATION PRECEDING NATURAL RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

The House resumed from March 27 consideration of the motion.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. It being 6 p.m., the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on Motion M-533, under private members' business.

Call in the members.

• (1840)

[Translation]

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

*Private Members' Business**(Division No. 371)*

YEAS

Members

Adams	Allen (Welland)
Angus	Ashton
Aubin	Ayala
Bennett	Benskin
Bevington	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Boulerice
Brahmi	Brison
Brosseau	Byrne
Caron	Casey
Charlton	Chicoine
Chisholm	Choquette
Christopherson	Côté
Cotler	Crowder
Cullen	Cuzner
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)	Day
Dewar	Dion
Dionne Labelle	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Dubourg
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Dusseault	Easter
Eyking	Foote
Fortin	Freeland
Freeman	Fry
Garneau	Garrison
Genest	Genest-Jourdain
Giguère	Godin
Goodale	Gravelle
Grogohé	Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Harris (St. John's East)	Hsu
Hughes	Hyer
Jones	Julian
Kellway	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Latendresse
LeBlanc (Beauséjour)	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)
Leslie	Liu
MacAulay	Mai
Marston	Martin
Mathysen	May
McCallum	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
Michaud	Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)	Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)	Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
Mulcair	Murray
Nantel	Nash
Nicholls	Nunez-Melo
Pacetti	Papillon
Péclet	Perreault
Pilon	Plamondon
Quach	Rafferty
Regan	Rousseau
Saganash	Sandhu
Scarpaleggia	Scott
Sellah	Sgro
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)	St-Denis
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Stoffer
Sitsabaiesan	Toone
Stewart	Trudeau
Sullivan	Valeriotte
Tremblay	
Turmel	
Vaughan— 121	

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy	Adler
Aglukkaq	Albas
Albrecht	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Allison	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Armstrong
Aspin	Barlow
Bateman	Bergen
Bezan	Blaney
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)

Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Bruinooge
Butt	Calandra
Cannan	Carmichael
Carrie	Chisu
Chong	Clarke
Clement	Crockatt
Daniel	Davidson
Devolin	Dreeshen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dykstra
Eglinski	Falk
Fantino	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Galipeau
Gallant	Gill
Goldring	Goodyear
Gosal	Gourde
Grewal	Harper
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn
Hayes	Hiebert
Hoback	Holder
James	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kent	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lake
Lauzon	Leaf
Leitch	Lemieux
Leung	Lizon
Lobb	Lukiwski
MacKay (Central Nova)	MacKenzie
Maguire	Mayer
McColeman	McLeod
Menegakis	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Nicholson
Norlock	Oliver
O'Neill Gordon	Opitz
O'Toole	Paradis
Payne	Perkins
Poilievre	Preston
Raitt	Rajotte
Rathgeber	Reid
Rempel	Ritz
Saxton	Schellenberger
Seeback	Shea
Shipley	Shory
Smith	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
Storseth	Strahl
Sweet	Tilson
Toet	Trost
Trottier	Truppe
Uppal	Valcourt
Van Loan	Wallace
Warawa	Warkentin
Watson	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)
Weston (Saint John)	Wilks
Williamson	Wong
Woodworth	Yelich
Young (Oakville)	Young (Vancouver South)
Yurdiga	Zimmer— 140

PAIRED

Nil

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion defeated.

* * *

CANADA SHIPPING ACT

The House resumed from March 30 consideration of the motion that Bill C-628, An Act to amend the Canada Shipping Act, 2001 and the National Energy Board Act (oil transportation and pipeline certificate), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Deputy Speaker: The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-628, under private members' business.

Private Members' Business

● (1850)

[English]

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

*(Division No. 372)***YEAS**

Members

Adams	Allen (Welland)
Angus	Ashton
Aubin	Ayala
Bennett	Benskin
Bevington	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Boulerice
Brahmi	Brison
Brosseau	Byrne
Caron	Casey
Charlton	Chicoine
Chisholm	Choquette
Christopherson	Côté
Cotler	Crowder
Cullen	Cuzner
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)	Day
Dewar	Dion
Dionne Labelle	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Dubourg
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Dusseau	Easter
Eyking	Foote
Fortin	Freeland
Freeman	Fry
Garneau	Garrison
Genest	Genest-Jourdain
Giguère	Godin
Goodale	Gravelle
Groghé	Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Harris (St. John's East)	Hsu
Hughes	Hyer
Jones	Julian
Kellway	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Latendresse
LeBlanc (Beauséjour)	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)
Leslie	Liu
MacAulay	Mai
Marston	Martin
Mathysen	May
McCallum	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
Michaud	Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)	Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)	Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
Mulcair	Murray
Nantel	Nash
Nicholls	Nunez-Melo
Pacetti	Papillon
Péclet	Perreault
Pilon	Quach
Rafferty	Regan
Rousseau	Saganash
Sandhu	Scarpaleggia
Scott	Sellah
Sgro	Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind- sor)
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sitsabaiesan
St-Denis	Stewart
Stoffer	Sullivan
Toone	Tremblay
Trudeau	Turmel
Valeriote	Vaughan— 120

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy	Adler
Aglukkaq	Albas
Albrecht	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Allison	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders

Anderson	Armstrong
Aspin	Barlow
Bateman	Bergen
Bezan	Blaney
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Bruinooge
Butt	Calandra
Cannan	Carmichael
Carrie	Chisu
Chong	Clarke
Clement	Crockatt
Daniel	Davidson
Devolin	Dreeshen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dykstra
Eglinski	Falk
Fantino	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Galipeau
Gallant	Gill
Goldring	Goodyear
Gosal	Gourde
Grewal	Harper
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn
Hayes	Hiebert
Hoback	Holder
James	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kent	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lake
Lauzon	Leaf
Leitch	Lemieux
Leung	Lizon
Lobb	Lukiwski
MacKay (Central Nova)	MacKenzie
Maguire	Mayer
McColeman	McLeod
Menegakis	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Nicholson
Norlock	Oliver
O'Neill Gordon	Opitz
O'Toole	Paradis
Payne	Perkins
Plamondon	Poilievre
Preston	Raitt
Rajotte	Rathgeber
Reid	Rempel
Ritz	Saxton
Schellenberger	Seeback
Shea	Shipley
Shory	Smith
Sopuck	Sorenson
Stanton	Storseth
Strahl	Sweet
Tilson	Toet
Trost	Trottier
Truppe	Uppal
Valcourt	Van Loan
Wallace	Warawa
Warkentin	Watson
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)	
Weston (Saint John)	
Wilks	Williamson
Wong	Woodworth
Yelich	Young (Oakville)
Young (Vancouver South)	Yurdiga
Zimmer— 141	

PAIRED

Nil

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion defeated.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[Translation]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

CANADIAN HERITAGE

The House resumed from March 31 consideration of the motion.

The Deputy Speaker: The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion to concur in the 10th report of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage respecting the request for an extension of 30 days to consider Bill C-597, An Act to amend the Holidays Act (Remembrance Day), presented on March 31.

• (1855)

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

(Division No. 373)

YEAS

Members

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

Routine Proceedings

Poilievre	Preston
Raïtt	Rajotte
Reid	Rempel
Ritz	Saxton
Schellenberger	Seeback
Shea	Shipley
Shory	Smith
Sopuck	Sorenson
Stanton	Storseth
Strahl	Sweet
Tilson	Toet
Trost	Trottier
Truppe	Uppal
Valcourt	Van Loan
Wallace	Warawa
Warkentin	Watson
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)	
Weston (Saint John)	
Wilks	Williamson
Wong	Woodworth
Yelich	Young (Oakville)
Young (Vancouver South)	Yurdiga
Zimmer — 139	

NAYS

Members

Adams	Allen (Welland)
Angus	Ashton
Aubin	Ayala
Bennett	Benskin
Bevington	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Boulerice
Brahmi	Brison
Brosseau	Byrne
Caron	Casey
Charlton	Chicoine
Chisholm	Choquette
Christopherson	Côté
Cotler	Crowder
Cullen	Cuzner
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)	Day
Dewar	Dion
Dionne Labelle	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Dubourg
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Dusseau	Easter
Eyking	Foote
Fortin	Freeland
Freeman	Fry
Gameau	Garrison
Genest	Genest-Jourdain
Giguère	Godin
Goodale	Gravelle
Groguhé	Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Harris (St. John's East)	Hsu
Hughes	Hyer
Jones	Julian
Kellway	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Latendresse
LeBlanc (Beauséjour)	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Énard)
Leslie	Liu
MacAulay	Mai
Marston	Martin
Mathysen	May
McCallum	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
Michaud	Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)	Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)	Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
Mulcair	Murray
Nantel	Nash
Nicholls	Nunez-Melo
Pacetti	Papillon
Péclet	Perreault
Pilon	Plamondon
Quach	Rafferty
Rathgeber	Regan
Rousseau	Saganash
Sandhu	Scarpaleggia
Scott	Sellah
Sgro	Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind-
sor)	

Private Members' Business

Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sitsabaiesan
St-Denis	Stewart
Stoffer	Sullivan
Toone	Tremblay
Trudeau	Turnel
Valeriote	Vaughan— 122

PAIRED

Nil

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS
[*English*]**PARLIAMENT OF CANADA ACT**

The House resumed from March 31 consideration of the motion that Bill C-613, an act to amend the Parliament of Canada Act and the Access to Information Act (transparency), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Deputy Speaker: The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-613 under private members' business.

• (1905)

[*Translation*]

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

*(Division No. 374)***YEAS**

Members

Adams	Allen (Welland)
Angus	Ashton
Aubin	Ayala
Bennett	Benskin
Bevington	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Boulerice
Brahmi	Brisson
Brosseau	Byrne
Caron	Casey
Charlton	Chicoine
Chisholm	Choquette
Christopherson	Côté
Cotler	Crowder
Cullen	Cuzner
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)	Day
Dewar	Dion
Dionne Labelle	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Dubourg
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Dusseault	Easter
Eyking	Footé
Fortin	Freeland
Freeman	Fry
Garneau	Garrison
Genest	Genest-Jourdain
Giguère	Godin
Goodale	Gravelle
Grogulé	Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Harris (St. John's East)	Hsu
Hughes	Hyer
Jones	Julian
Kellway	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Latendresse
LeBlanc (Beauséjour)	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)
Leslie	Liu
MacAulay	Mai
Marston	Martin

Mathysen
McCallum
Michaud
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Mulcair
Nantel
Nicholls
Pacetti
Péclét
Pilon
Quach
Rathgeber
Rousseau
Sandhu
Scott
Sgro
sor)
Sims (Newton—North Delta)
St-Denis
Stoffer
Toone
Trudeau
Valeriote

May
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
Murray
Nash
Nunez-Melo
Papillon
Perreault
Plamondon
Rafferty
Regan
Saganash
Scarpaleggia
Sellah
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind-

Sitsabaiesan
Stewart
Sullivan
Tremblay
Turnel
Vaughan— 122

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy
Aglukkaq
Albrecht
Allison
Ambrose
Anderson
Aspin
Bateman
Bezan
Boughen
Breitkreuz
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Butt
Cannan
Carrie
Chong
Clement
Daniel
Devolin
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)
Eglinski
Fantino
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)
Fletcher
Gallant
Goldring
Gosal
Grewal
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hayes
Hoback
James
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Kent
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lauzon
Leitch
Leung
Lobb
MacKay (Central Nova)
Maguire
McColeman
Menegakis
Moore (Fundy Royal)
Norlock
O'Neill Gordon
O'Toole
Payne
Poillievre
Raïtt
Reid
Ritz
Schellenberger
Shea
Shory
Adler
Albas
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Ambler
Anders
Armstrong
Barlow
Bergen
Blaney
Braid
Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brunoogoe
Calandra
Carmichael
Chisu
Clarke
Crockatt
Davidson
Dreeshen
Dykstra
Falk
Fast
Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Galipeau
Gill
Goodyear
Gourde
Harper
Hawn
Hiebert
Holder
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Komarnicki
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Yurdiga

PAIRED

Nil

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion defeated.

[English]

Order, I wish to inform the House that because of the delay, there will be no private members' business hour today.

[Translation]

Accordingly, the orders are postponed to later sittings.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I rise on adjournment proceedings to pursue a question I asked the Prime Minister on February 18. The response came from the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness. The response was not responsive.

On February 18, having been opposing Bill C-51 in this place since February 2, I welcomed with open arms the decision of the official opposition to join me in opposing this quite terrible piece of legislation. I also rose to defend the official opposition, as I discovered through question period that every question was premised on the notion that if a member opposed Bill C-51, he or she was one of two things, either someone who had not read the bill or someone who was ideologically opposed to everything the Conservative Party stood for.

I asked the Prime Minister—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Deputy Speaker: There are a whole bunch of conversations going on here that do not need to be in the House. Please take them outside. I am having some great difficulty hearing the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands.

The member for Saanich—Gulf Islands.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the order in the House.

Adjournment Proceedings

My point on February 18 was how the Conservative Party would reconcile the notion that people who opposed Bill C-51 had not read it or were ideologically opposed to the Conservative Party, when at that point, the editorial position of *The Globe and Mail*, based on having read the bill, based on the detail that was found in their editorials, and also as a newspaper that generally has endorsed the current leader of the Conservative Party, the Prime Minister, time and time again, did not seem to fit the talking points.

Since that time, the *National Post* editorial board has also come out against Bill C-51 as rushed and dangerous. Voices, hardly of the left, such as Conrad Black, on the pages of the *National Post*, said that if Bill C-51 was passed, this country would become, in his words, “an unrecognizable despotism”.

There have also been voices of caution from people such as Rex Murphy. Then, in a more non-partisan sense, we have had the warnings of four former prime ministers, five former Supreme Court justices, and over 100 legal scholars.

In the face of all that opposition, and more, such as the Canadian Bar Association and others, we had the travesty of what was considered a hearings process for Bill C-51. Witness after witness was pushed through quickly.

I would remind the House that back in 2001, when the first anti-terrorism legislation was passed, we certainly did not take a long time to do it after 9/11, but there were witnesses, and they were not insulted. There were witnesses, and they were heard. There were questions from parliamentarians, who were actually interested in the information, not in just shutting down debate, as the parliamentary secretary did over and over again, talking through the time when she might have asked a question to instead attack the people in the room or to presume that she could explain the bill away, explain the problems away.

Having been through this process, I have to say that it is the least respectful, most appalling, anti-democratic treatment of any bill in the history of this country. I have never seen such a travesty of a fake review of legislation, such a bulldozer to push something atrocious through this House.

As a member of Parliament, I am entitled to sit in committees. I then had to sit through clause by clause, where I was coerced into appearing because of a motion passed by that committee that insisted that members like me show up in committee to speak to each motion we make, each amendment, for 60 seconds, but then we were attacked and insulted and treated as though anyone who sees the flaws in this legislation must favour terrorists over Canadians.

This kind of insulting, offensive rhetoric in a parliamentary committee reviewing legislation that offends our Charter of Rights and Freedoms is completely unacceptable.

When will the Conservatives learn that it is not just voices of opposition parties but a wide consensus of Canadians, from the left, from the right, from legal professionals, and from former prime ministers, who say, “Do not pass this bill”?

Adjournment Proceedings

●(1910)

Ms. Roxanne James (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is certainly a pleasure to rise in the House this evening to discuss Bill C-51, the anti-terrorism act, 2015. As we heard from credible witnesses at committee, this is an important bill to ensure the safety and security of Canadians, which remains this government's top priority. The threat of terrorism is all too apparent in the wake of events in Canada and around the world. The committee that studied the bill repeatedly heard that the threat was real, that it had grown and that it was evolving.

Our government needs to evolve with that threat, which is exactly what Bill C-51 proposes to do. The proposed measures in Bill C-51 will ensure that the government is better able to protect Canadians and Canadian values, such as freedom, democracy and tolerance. This is a comprehensive package of measures that will provide our security and law enforcement agencies with the tools and flexibility they need to more effectively detect and disrupt national security threats before they can harm Canadians.

First, it would ensure that information relevant to national security would be shared and actioned in an effective and responsible manner. Second, the bill would enhance the powers of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service in order to better address the threats to the security of our country. The bill would also bolster the protection of information in immigration proceedings when disclosing the information would be injurious to national security or endanger the safety of any person. Fourth, Bill C-51 would further mitigate threats to transportation security and prevent air travel for the purpose of engaging in terrorism.

Additionally, the legislation would better enable police to detain suspected terrorists and to prevent threats. This is a measure that every police representative and person in national security intelligence who appeared before the committee stressed was an important tool to all of them. Although the opposition and the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands have refused to listen to the police testimony regarding the importance of these tools, our government has, and we will provide them to our law enforcement and national security agencies to ensure they can prevent terrorist attacks from taking place in this country.

Finally, the bill would provide witnesses and national security proceedings with additional protection.

These legislative enhancements mirror many of the same authorities already available to our closest allies, including the United Kingdom and Australia.

Bill C-51 will serve as an important step forward in our country's counterterrorism capabilities and reinforce our commitment to protecting Canadians at home and abroad. In doing so, it would also ensure that adequate safeguards would be in place to protect the rights of Canadians. Most important, the measures would be implemented under Canada's already existing robust security review mechanisms and institutions.

Freedom and security go hand in hand. The provisions within Bill C-51 are designed to protect both. The highest responsibility of our government is to keep Canadians safe and keep our country secure.

Although the opposition is unable to come to grips with the need to stop the terrorist plague known as the Islamic State, we will not stand on the sidelines as Canadians are threatened, either at home or from abroad.

Canada's national security institutions require modern tools to counter modern threats. I urge all members to support Bill C-51 and stand behind the work of our law enforcement and national security agencies.

●(1915)

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, I assure the hon. parliamentary secretary that I listened to the witnesses, although I was not allowed to ask them a single question. Even when the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca gave up a point in his minutes to allow me to ask a question, the hon. parliamentary secretary denied me the opportunity. I do not know why the Conservatives were so afraid of my questions.

I have read the bill and I have studied it. I agree with the Canadian Bar Association and with security experts.

Let me stress this one point in the seconds I have left. The bill would not make Canadians safer. It would make us less safe. It would unleash CSIS as a secret agency to disrupt affairs without any obligation to report its activities to the RCMP, and with no pinnacle of security operations to ensure that Canadian border security, the RCMP, CSEC and CSIS know what each other are doing.

As the hon. former Justice John Major of the Supreme Court said, when we have agencies such as this operating in isolation and in silos, mistakes will happen. That is how Air India happened. This bill would make us less safe.

Ms. Roxanne James: Mr. Speaker, all members of this House believe strongly in Canadian values. Freedom, democracy, and the rule of law are bedrocks of Canadian society and so, too, is security.

The important functions of the Privacy Commissioner and Auditor General continue to be respected in ensuring accountability for government activities related to this bill. These are effective institutions, which have served Canadians well. Although, yesterday, the member dismissed as nonsense departmental officials' clarifications regarding the misinformation being spread, we respect our hard-working officials and their expertise, along with the dozens of witnesses who appeared before the committee to explain why the legislation is absolutely critical.

While the opposition continues to work to handcuff our police and blindfold our national security agencies, and fails to support measures to protect Canadians, our government will continue to do the complete opposite to ensure that law enforcement and national security agencies have the tools necessary to protect national security and every single Canadian in this country.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Bruce Hyer (Thunder Bay—Superior North, GP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservative Party, Liberal Party, and NDP have a chance to improve their environmental policies and likely their election chances.

Adjournment Proceedings

Prominent economists and policy advisors from across North America and the political spectrum have recommended carbon fee and dividend as a good way to slow the progress of climate change and the best way to price carbon. Even Preston Manning, one of Canada's most respected Conservatives, has called for a price on carbon.

Canadian CO₂ emissions have been rising for decades under both the Conservatives and the Liberals. Stalling this issue into the future will only worsen our problem. Canada is one of the highest CO₂ polluters per person in the world. We have an obligation to our children and grandchildren to deal with this problem now.

Environmental issues have often taken a back burner in Liberal and Conservative governments. For example, Bill C-311, my climate change bill, is the only bill in Canadian history to be killed in our unelected Senate, without any debate, after passing in the elected House of Commons.

The current government has made Canada the climate pariah of the world. Conservatives have completely ignored international agreements on climate change. Our Prime Minister even boycotted the 2014 United Nations Climate Summit in New York City.

The Liberals, on the other hand, claim they are ready to put a price on carbon, but do not say what kind, when, or how. Now, the Liberal leader has shown incredible lack of initiative or leadership by announcing that any kind of carbon pricing system should be left up to the provinces. Basically, it is somebody else's problem.

Climate change is happening now and is having a very real consequence on people's lives. Climate change is disrupting national economies and ecologies. It is costing us dearly here in Canada today and even more tomorrow.

Canada must implement a carbon fee and dividend policy. It is a simple, transparent, revenue-neutral carbon pricing system that would be easy and inexpensive to administer.

Here is how it works.

Coal mines and oil and gas wells would pay for their CO₂ emissions at the source or at the border, and not a penny would go to the government. The dividends generated from those payments would be paid directly back to Canadians on an equal per capita basis, thus reducing poverty and CO₂ at the same time.

This is not a tax. Carbon fee and dividend would use the marketplace to reduce CO₂ emissions, guide Canada toward a transition to sustainable energy, and put money into the pockets of Canadian consumers who make sustainable choices.

The Conservatives and Liberals have no plan to reduce CO₂. The NDP has a bad plan.

The Green Party is committed to a carbon fee and dividend, as proposed by the Citizens Climate Lobby under the dynamic leadership of Sudbury's Cathy Orlando.

If the Conservative government wants to protect our economy and increase its election chances, it should waste no time in implementing carbon fee and dividend.

Will the government seriously consider carbon fee and dividend?

● (1920)

Ms. Roxanne James (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, under our Conservative government, the tax burden on Canadians is at the lowest level in more than 50 years. On average, Canadian families are paying \$3,400 less in taxes each year than they were under the previous Liberals. In addition, every family with children in Canada will stand to benefit from our latest tax breaks, including the increase and expansion of the universal child care benefit to nearly \$2,000 per year for every child under six and \$720 per year for every child between six and 17, and of course there is the family tax cut as well. The vast majority of these benefits will flow to low- and middle-income families. The Liberals and the NDP would take these benefits away and would increase taxes on Canadian families through a carbon tax.

Our government has been very clear on this issue. It does not intend to address greenhouse gas emissions through a job-killing carbon tax, as supported by the opposition parties. Instead, we will continue to take decisive action on the environment while protecting our economy. In fact, our Conservative government is the first government in Canadian history to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and we will continue to use our sector-by-sector regulatory approach to achieve reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

I would also like to take the time to highlight that our government has already taken action on two of Canada's largest sources of GHG emissions, the transportation and electricity sectors. The transportation sector generates nearly one-quarter of greenhouse gas emissions and has been the key area of focus for our government. We have moved in line with the United States with new regulations for both light- and heavy-duty vehicles. With these regulations, 2025 model year passenger vehicles and light trucks will emit about half as many greenhouse gas emissions as 2008 models.

The 2025 vehicles are also expected to consume up to 50% less fuel than 2008 vehicles. That will lead to significant savings at the pump for Canadians. Greenhouse gas emissions from 2018 model year heavy-duty vehicles will be reduced by up to 23%, which will also cut down on fuel costs.

Furthermore, we have one of the cleanest electricity systems in the world, with 79% of our electricity supply emitting no greenhouse gas emissions at all. 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 phase-out of existing coal fired units without carbon capture. In the first 21 years, the regulations are expected to result in a cumulative reduction equivalent to removing 2.6 million personal vehicles per year from the roads over this timeframe.

Adjournment Proceedings

On this side of the House, we will continue to stand up for hard-working Canadians. Unlike the Liberals, the NDP, and the other parties, we are focused on what matters to Canadians: supporting economic growth and protecting the environment, not raising taxes.

• (1925)

Mr. Bruce Hyer: Mr. Speaker, the lack of a Canadian energy strategy should be a top priority for Conservatives and all of us. It is costing the Canadian economy billions every year and continues our dependence in Thunder Bay—Superior North and all of eastern Canada on unsustainable, expensive, and dangerous foreign oil.

Most Canadians support pricing carbon. The Conservatives have so far chosen ideology over evidence and over the desire of most Canadians. The member does not even seem to know what carbon fee and dividend is, and that it is not a tax. Carbon fee and dividend would reduce our CO₂ emissions, support Canadian economic growth, and put money into Canadians' pockets. As well, it could get the Conservatives re-elected. When will the Conservatives under-

stand what carbon fee and dividend is and finally address climate change?

Ms. Roxanne James: Mr. Speaker, our government will continue to move forward with its sector-by-sector approach. We are reducing emissions without a carbon tax, which would raise the price of everything.

Given the chance, both the NDP and the Liberals have said they would introduce a carbon tax. This would kill jobs and raise the cost of gas, groceries, home heating, and just about everything else. Canadians can count on our government to do exactly the opposite.

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7:28 p.m.)

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