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(HANSARD)

Friday, February 3, 2017

Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, February 3, 2017

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

● (1005)

[*Translation*]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I would like the House to take note of today's use of the wooden mace.

[*English*]

The wooden mace is traditionally used when the House sits on February 3, to mark the anniversary of the fire that claimed seven lives and destroyed the original Parliament Buildings on this day in 1916.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

CANADA-EUROPEAN UNION COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC AND TRADE AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-30, An Act to implement the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement between Canada and the European Union and its Member States and to provide for certain other measures, as reported (with amendments) from the committee.

[*English*]

SPEAKER'S RULING

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): There are 53 motions in amendment standing on the Notice Paper for the report stage of Bill C-30.

Motions Nos. 1 to 53 will be grouped for debate and voted upon according to the voting pattern available at the table.

Seeing that the member is not present to move Motion No. 1, I will now put Motions Nos. 2 to 53 to the House.

MOTIONS IN AMENDMENT

Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP) moved:

Motion No. 2

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 11.

Motion No. 3

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 12.
Motion No. 4

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 13.
Motion No. 5

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 32.
Motion No. 6

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 33.
Motion No. 7

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 34.
Motion No. 8

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 35.
Motion No. 9

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 36.
Motion No. 10

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 37.
Motion No. 11

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 38.
Motion No. 12

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 39.
Motion No. 13

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 40.
Motion No. 14

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 41.
Motion No. 15

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 42.
Motion No. 16

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 43.
Motion No. 17

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 44.
Motion No. 18

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 45.
Motion No. 19

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 46.
Motion No. 20

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 47.
Motion No. 21

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 48.
Motion No. 22

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 49.
Motion No. 23

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 50.
Motion No. 24

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 51.
Motion No. 25

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 52.
Motion No. 26

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 53.
Motion No. 27

Government Orders

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 54.
Motion No. 28

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 55.
Motion No. 29

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 56.
Motion No. 30

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 57.
Motion No. 31

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 58.
Motion No. 32

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 59.
Motion No. 33

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 67.
Motion No. 34

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 80.
Motion No. 35

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 81.
Motion No. 36

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 91.
Motion No. 37

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 92.
Motion No. 38

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 93.
Motion No. 39

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 94.
Motion No. 40

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 118.
Motion No. 41

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 119.
Motion No. 42

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 120.
Motion No. 43

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 121.
Motion No. 44

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 122.
Motion No. 45

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 123.
Motion No. 46

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 124.
Motion No. 47

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 125.
Motion No. 48

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 126.
Motion No. 49

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 127.
Motion No. 50

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 128.
Motion No. 51

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 129.
Motion No. 52

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Clause 138.
Motion No. 53

That Bill C-30 be amended by deleting Schedule 3.

●(1015)

She said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak at report stage of Bill C-30, an act to implement the comprehensive economic and trade agreement between Canada and the European Union and its member states and to provide for certain other measures. It is a very important

piece of legislation, one that I fear has not been given due study or consideration by parliamentarians.

As a member of the Standing Committee on International Trade, I was dismayed to be the only member of Parliament who voted against a heavy-handed motion that restricted our committee from receiving feedback on this legislation from anyone but the few witnesses who were selected to appear.

It is vitally important that we hear from Canadians on the legislation that comes before us at committee. Shutting the door on the voices of Canadians goes against the spirit of openness and transparency, which should be the very cornerstones of our democracy.

With limited committee meetings and witnesses, there were many issues that the committee failed to properly address, such as the impact of CETA on mariners' jobs. Even of those few witnesses we heard from, groups that are supportive of the deal have concerns about how it will be implemented and how the government will support their industries in accessing potential new markets.

CETA has been called the biggest trade and investment deal since NAFTA. It covers a wide array of issues, including significant reforms to Canadian intellectual property rules related to generic and non-generic pharmaceutical drugs.

Deals like CETA are part of a new generation of trade deals, such as the trans-Pacific partnership, which include many controversial aspects that have more to do with investors' interests than the public's interest.

There is growing concern around the world, where people are questioning if these massive trade and investment deals are in the public's best interests. The Minister of Foreign Affairs claims that swift passage of CETA is necessary to send a message that Canada still supports these deals in the face of mounting public opposition to trade agreements. However, passing this legislation with little study of its impacts on the lives of everyday Canadians is the opposite of how we as legislators should be proceeding.

Much has changed in the world since CETA was signed. We are having many conversations about the trade agenda of the newly elected U.S. president and what it means to have fair trade or free trade.

I would like to read a quote from Angella MacEwen, senior economist at the Canadian Labour Congress, who testified before our trade committee:

There are market failures, distributional impacts, and very real concerns that workers have, because trade deals can increase inequality if you don't take proper action to make sure they don't. The answer isn't in rushing more trade deals through. The answer is in taking a minute to examine those very real concerns that people have and those very real negative impacts to see how you can mitigate them.

I agree that the proper response is not rushing more trade deals through. This is why I pushed at committee for more meetings, more study, and more input from Canadians on CETA.

I proposed various amendments at committee and I was pleased to see the Liberals agreed there need to be some changes to the bill's intellectual property rights. We agreed on several amendments to these provisions in the bill.

Government Orders

I also proposed amendments to limit CETA's controversial investment chapter. There is no reason Bill C-30 should have contained these provisions. European states, namely Belgium, have made it clear that investor-state provisions must be removed before it is willing to ratify CETA, yet the Liberals are asking parliamentarians to sign off on CETA as it stands, including these investor-state provisions. If these provisions will not be provisionally applied and will be rejected for ratification in Europe, why would Parliament sign off on them?

In the event that an investor court system is established as Bill C-30 proposes to do, there is an issue with how tribunal panellists will be selected. As pointed out by Gus Van Harten, these panellists will hold incredible power yet their appointments will be unilaterally selected solely by the Minister of International Trade. I proposed an amendment at committee that this process be opened up and I was disappointed to see that government MPs had no interest in debating my proposal.

I also proposed an amendment to remove the increased threshold for mandatory foreign takeover reviews. CETA includes a clause that would raise this threshold from \$600 million to \$1.5 billion, meaning foreign takeovers of Canadian companies under \$1.5 billion would not be subject to review of whether such a takeover would be in our national interest.

● (1020)

I would also like to discuss the issue of how CETA impacts maritime jobs. CETA will, for the first time, legally allow foreign-owned vessels and foreign crews to transport goods between Canadian ports and will open up domestic dredging contracts to foreign suppliers. This will lead to the estimated loss of 3,000 Canadian seafarers' jobs. These are high quality, well-paying jobs. This industry as a whole supports 250,000 direct and indirect jobs.

I received a phone call in my office over the holiday period from a woman who was distraught over the impact on maritime workers. She was also distraught that her Liberal MP would not respond to her request to understand the situation he was putting their community in. These communities rely on these good-paying jobs, and this has simply been ignored.

I was shocked that the Liberals did not even say a word at committee during the debate around this motion. There was not one word. That is incredibly disappointing for parliamentarians who are committed not only to represent the people in their own riding but across the country, when they sit on such an important committee as the international trade committee.

We also know that CETA will allow foreign boats to bring in foreign workers, with no requirement for a labour market impact assessment. These workers can be paid as little as \$2 an hour, and suffer from low safety standards and poor working conditions. Over the holiday period, there was a ship on the west coast that came in with workers who had not been paid and workers who had been on the ship a year beyond their contract and could not be released to go back home. These workers are being mistreated, and only when they reach Canadian ports and someone discovers this is happening are Canadians able to intervene on their behalf. This is an issue of human rights in our own waters.

I would also like to point out that by permitting more foreign flag vessels CETA encourages tax avoidance, since foreign ships registered in flags of convenience countries, such as Malta or Cypress, take advantage of tax havens and the cheapest labour available.

Today, at report stage, on behalf of the New Democratic Party of Canada, I am proposing amendments to delete clauses of Bill C-30 that would implement parts of CETA's investment chapter, implement changes to the pharmaceutical intellectual property rights, implement a host of new geographical indicators, raise the threshold for foreign reviews, and change the rules for coasting trade.

I want to go back to the geographical indicators for a moment, because the European Union was quite clear. It requested over 170 carve-outs for geographical indicators. Some in the House may be asking what these exactly are. These are things like cheese designation for Asiago cheese, or feta cheese. It is things like champagne or Darjeeling tea. These are things that Canadian producers will no longer be able to label with those names because they will own those geographical indicators in Europe. If Canadian suppliers or producers attempt to put the name on them, they will be in violation of CETA.

The interesting part about this is Canada received zero geographical indicators. Think about Nanaimo bars, Saskatoon berries, maple syrup, or Montreal smoked meat. None of these things are protected. That means European companies can continue to label their products in this way. This is a huge loss to all of these growth industries.

I look forward to further debating these amendments today, and I ask fellow parliamentarians to take a serious look at these proposed changes before the House moves on to the third reading of Bill C-30. There are many unanswered questions and outstanding concerns regarding CETA. As parliamentarians, we cannot simply turn a blind eye to the very real concerns that exist in this trade deal.

It is disheartening to me that the Liberals refuse to address the increase in the cost of pharmaceutical drugs that will impact every person in their riding, I believe it is a disservice to Canadians not to look at the good and bad in every piece of trade legislation that comes before the House. We actually are obligated to do that. We have taken an oath to do that. I ask parliamentarians to take that seriously today.

● (1025)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Linda Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for my colleague, who, like me, has been a member of the Standing Committee on International Trade for the past year.

Government Orders

In committee, we studied the trans-Pacific partnership and the Canada-European Union comprehensive economic and trade agreement. Compare the two, and it is easy to see that CETA is a progressive agreement. We will gain tariff-free access to 500 million new customers for Canada in the European market.

My colleague just said that some workers make \$2 per hour. I would like to know where in Europe that is the case. After all, working conditions there are very much like ours. I would be very surprised if that were true, and I would like my colleague to comment on that.

If we miss this opportunity to sign CETA, I have no idea what could happen given everything that is happening in every country around the world.

Like me, the member keeps up with the news, so I would like her to comment on that. I cannot imagine why she would consider saying no to signing this agreement.

[*English*]

Ms. Tracey Ramsey: Mr. Speaker, I sit on the trade committee with the member opposite. I am pleased to see her rise, because she was silent when all of these amendments came forward. She said not one word when all of these amendments came to the trade committee. Therefore, I am very curious as to why she is rising in the House today, when she was silent in the period of time when we were going clause by clause in committee before the House rose for the holidays. That is shocking to me. If there were legitimate concerns that she wanted to bring forward, why did she not do so when she had the opportunity with the minister and chief negotiators? Was she under a gag order? That is how it appeared on the Liberal side during clause-by-clause.

Even one of the European Union's standing committees released a report saying that it was against signing CETA because there were no economic benefits, there would not be jobs. Similar reports have come from think tanks here in Canada. Unfortunately, the studies we have on CETA predate the Liberal government, so we do not have current statistics on where we are at and, of course, this is post Brexit.

There are many moving parts in CETA. Trade with Europe is too important to get wrong. This deal can be fixed and these amendments speak to the things that could fix this trade deal in a way that would represent Canadians' interests. There was no attempt to do so in the negotiating phases. Therefore, as parliamentarians, we have a responsibility to those we represent to bring forward the amendments that we feel will best benefit.

The other thing that shocks me about the member opposite is that she did not support my proposal to have more people appear before the committee. We heard from a very limited number of voices. In fact, the witnesses brought by the Liberals were all for CETA, so there was no balance in the conversation. There was an unwillingness by the government to listen to any opposing views or any concerned Canadians.

Mr. Erin Weir (Regina—Lewvan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite suggested that European countries have very similar wages and labour standards as Canada. I am wondering if my colleague from Essex could explain to the House the risk of vessels

flagged in places of convenience, like Cyprus or Malta, coming in with very low-wage workers and if she might also speak a bit about the level of wages and labour conditions in a number of eastern European countries that are members of the EU.

Ms. Tracey Ramsey: Mr. Speaker, it is important that we have a conversation about maritime workers in our country. The member opposite asked me about the \$2 per hour. This was a flag of convenience ship, which means that the flag belongs to another country and is sitting in our waters. It is bringing products into our ports, staffed with people who are having their human rights violated. They were being paid \$2 per hour on that one particular ship. There were reports of being paid less, to be honest, and in a lot of cases, they are not being paid at all.

How are Canadians, working in this field, supposed to compete? Aside from ensuring that the health and labour standards of these workers are being protected, how are Canadian workers supposed to compete with workers at that wage in our own waters? This is in Canada. They are transporting things across Canada.

This puts our maritime workers at an extreme disadvantage and I fought at committee to remove the pieces from Canada's Coasting Trade Act that were being changed. The maritime industry was not consulted on this and it will lose jobs.

● (1030)

Ms. Pam Goldsmith-Jones (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise in the House in support of the legislation before us today, and to introduce why the historic Canada-EU comprehensive economic and trade agreement, also known as CETA, is so important.

It is a great step forward in our government's progressive trade agenda. CETA addresses a full range of Canadian interests and touches on all sectors with Canada's second-largest trading partner, the European Union. The foundation of our international relations between Canada and the countries of the EU is a clear example of working together towards greater prosperity for Canada and our trading partners in Europe.

The EU is Canada's second-largest trading partner after the United States. In 2015, Canadian merchandise exports to the EU reached \$38 billion, and imports totalled \$61 billion. The EU is a strong, established market to which Canadian firms will gain preferential access when CETA enters into force. Canada and the EU already share a robust commercial relationship, which is about to become much deeper, to great mutual benefit.

Government Orders

With a total population of 507 million people and a combined GDP of over \$21 trillion, the EU is the world's largest foreign investor and trader. It accounts for approximately 16% of global trade. Investment also forms a substantial portion of the Canada-EU economic relationship. The EU is Canada's second-largest source of foreign direct investment, something which is very important to our minister, totalling \$242 billion in 2015 and representing over 30% of total foreign direct investment in Canada.

As well, Canada has significant investments in the EU. Our foreign direct investment totalled \$210 billion in 2015, which is 21% of our foreign direct investment abroad. Clearly, our commercial ties to the EU are significant.

Trade is about goods and services, and procurement. The services sector is responsible for 70% of economic activity in both Canada and the EU, which is reflected in the current volume of trade and services. We exported \$16 billion in services to the EU in 2015, and imported \$22 billion during the same period.

Hon. members know that the EU is currently the world's largest importer of services. This is very good news for Canada, as we are one of the largest exporters of services in the world. Our service providers will benefit from the best market access the EU has ever provided in a trade agreement, as well as the most ambitious commitments on temporary entry that the EU has ever granted to a trading partner.

During the pre-study on Bill C-30 by the Standing Committee on International Trade, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business said that the reasons their members want to increase their trade into Europe to expand their business and pursue more opportunities as their economy recovers is because this is an alternative and important opportunity on top of their arrangements with the U.S. market.

CETA recognizes the increasingly important role that services play in global trade. It creates a wealth of new business opportunities for Canadian service providers. This agreement will ensure that Canadian service suppliers compete on equal footing with domestic providers in the EU. Canadian companies will receive better treatment than most competitors from non-EU countries.

CETA covers nearly all sectors and aspects of Canada-EU trade. It addresses the removal of tariffs, the conforming of product standards, professional certification and assessment procedures, the cultivation of investment, and alignment of regulatory regimes.

CETA creates greater certainty for business, greater protection for investments, vastly improved access to EU markets for goods and services, and new opportunities for procurement markets. That will translate into real benefits for Canadians and contribute to Canada's long-term prosperity.

CETA will provide Canadian companies with a distinct advantage in the EU market over our competitors, including the United States. It will enable Canadian businesses to have first mover advantage in developing customer relationships, networks, and joint projects. It offers Canadian small and medium-sized business enterprises the opportunity to be part of global supply chains anchored in the EU.

CETA leverages not only EU markets, but also the other trading partners of the EU. Approximately 98% of the EU's tariff lines on Canadian goods will be duty free immediately upon implementation. The elimination of tariffs under CETA creates enhanced opportunities for many of our exports to the EU, where tariffs to this day remain high. For example, Canadian fish and seafood exporters currently face EU tariffs as high as 25%. Tariffs on wood products may be as high as 14%. These tariffs will be virtually eliminated under CETA.

• (1035)

A protocol on conforming assessment will allow Canadian manufacturers in certain sectors to have their products tested and certified in Canada for sale in the EU. This is a significant innovation that will save companies, especially small and medium-sized enterprises, time and money.

CETA also includes provisions to enhance the recognition of professional qualifications in Canada and the EU, which is a key aspect of labour mobility. CETA's labour mobility provisions will enhance the ability of Canadian and EU business people to move across borders. It will make it easier for short-term business visitors, intra-company transferees, investors, contract service suppliers, and independent professionals to conduct business in the EU.

As well, CETA will open up new opportunities for Canadian businesses in the EU's estimated \$3.3 trillion government procurement market. Once CETA enters into force, Canadian firms will be able to supply goods and select services to all levels of EU government, including its 28 member states and thousands of regional and local government entities.

CETA's obligations are backed by a mechanism for investment dispute resolution, which includes an appellate tribunal. Canada needs to attract more investment. More investment means more jobs for Canadian workers, more growth for our economy, and a stronger middle class. At the same time, it is very important to ensure that CETA protects the rights of governments to regulate in the public interest. We need to ensure that increased trade does not happen at the expense of environmental protection or labour rights. We need to ensure that trade is fair and that everyone benefits from the increased economic activity that trade delivers.

Government Orders

Our government believes strongly in an open global economy, and we will continue to champion an open society and open global trade. However, we cannot ignore the fact that many people are very concerned about trade globalization, which is blamed for job losses. We are now seeing the growth of anti-trade and anti-globalization sentiment. We are seeing a rise in protectionism. It is imperative that we understand and address this concern.

This is why one of the most important things that our government did right after taking office was to listen to the critics of CETA, both in Canada and in the EU. It is important to appreciate that we partnered with stakeholder, labour, and environmental groups to ensure that CETA is the most progressive trade agreement ever negotiated, and that it reflects today's expectations for doing business in a way that respects the environment, the economy, and our shared social values.

CETA represents an important step towards the development of our progressive trade agenda, one that places more emphasis on the promotion of strong labour and environmental standards; clear provisions to ensure that governments can regulate in the public interest in areas such as health, safety, and the environment; as well as the promotion and protection of cultural diversity.

CETA is a progressive trade agreement with the EU, a like-minded and long-standing trading partner. The relationship between Canada and Europe is the result of extensive historical, cultural, political, economic, and deep people-to-people relationships. We believe our shared values are important for the dignity and prosperity of all, and increasingly important in a world of shifting global power. CETA is a progressive trade agreement that upholds and promotes the values that we share with the EU.

We look forward to implementing this landmark agreement with our European partners in 2017.

• (1040)

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, obviously I am a huge supporter of trade, and expanding trade to create jobs for Canadians. However, one question I have is about the details of the CETA agreement and how it will be impacted by Brexit. Will that have an impact on the deal? If it does, are we planning to do something separately with Britain? What is the government's thinking on that?

Ms. Pam Goldsmith-Jones: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for the question and for the work by the previous government and this government to make CETA the best possible deal.

If CETA is passed by the EU, we will have a deal with the U.K. until things unfold in that country. Canada, of course, has an interest in maintaining access to the significant U.K. marketplace, and we believe very strongly that CETA provides an excellent baseline for future negotiations.

Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank the new Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, through Foreign Affairs, I believe.

I would like to address one of the things she spoke about, "this being the best possible deal". With all due respect, that is not the case. Saying that they went around Europe to speak to people is

absolutely true. There is clear evidence that they were in Europe talking to partners there about the implications; we see that in the side agreement that came forward. However, where was that happening in Canada? It did not happen at the international trade committee. It did not happen across all of the provinces. It did not happen in a consultative phase as it did with TPP. We certainly did not see any engagement with the public from the government around CETA. I think it is disingenuous to say that this is the best deal for Canadians when Canadians were not even a part of that conversation.

The Liberals like to speak about the positives of the deal, but I want to speak about the very real losses, because the losses are there. They exist and they will impact people.

Let us go coast to coast. Let us start in Newfoundland and Labrador. Fish processing plants will be impacted. There is still nothing from the government on what will happen with them. There is no compensation package, as was promised under the previous Conservative government.

Then we move to Quebec, where there are lots of dairy jobs. This will devastate them. Half of all the dairy farms are in Quebec. They will see significant losses from CETA. The money that came forward from the government is simply not enough to bear the brunt of that over the next five years, I would say. Within a generation, we will see a massive loss of family farms.

We see all of Canada being impacted by the increased cost of drugs. Everyone who sits in this House, everyone, will be impacted by the increased cost of pharmaceuticals that we are signing on to in CETA. Twenty-five per cent of this legislation has changes to the Patent Act for pharmaceutical drugs.

Then we move to the member's end of the country, on the west coast. I believe she sits in a coastal riding, so we are talking about coastal jobs. We are talking about maritime jobs where people take the work that they do very seriously. They are often the ones who first see an indicator of something that is wrong on the waters. They are the ones who call into the designated departments and say there is a spill or there is something happening.

This member represents cabotage workers, maritime workers. Where is the analysis from the federal government on the job loss, province by province and sector by sector, that will be incurred under CETA?

Government Orders

Ms. Pam Goldsmith-Jones: With regard to consultations across the country, we have taken that very seriously, and we learned a lot about the individual provinces and their concerns. The provinces are on board. For instance, tariffs for fish and seafood products will be reduced by 25% in the EU marketplace. As we know, the minister has announced an up to \$350 million package for dairy in order to recognize the shift that this opportunity represents.

It is precipitous and perhaps somewhat alarming to suggest that drug costs will go up. Europe has lower costs right now for pharmaceuticals than Canada. As we have heard the Minister of Health say many times, she is working diligently on improving the cost of pharmaceuticals to Canadians.

Mr. Robert Kitchen (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am thankful for the opportunity to rise today in the House to discuss the importance of the comprehensive economic trade agreement, also known as CETA, between Canada and the European Union. I am glad to speak to it as aspects of it will have major effects on my riding of Souris—Moose Mountain, located in southeast Saskatchewan.

Saskatchewan has the potential to benefit greatly under CETA. The EU is Saskatchewan's fourth-largest export destination and the fourth-largest trading partner. With 28 member states, the EU represents 500 million people and an annual economic activity of almost \$18 trillion. It is the world's largest economy and is also the world's largest importing market for goods.

This party strongly supports international trade initiatives that will generate increased economic activity, drive prosperity and job creation, as well as foster greater co-operation between our democratic allies.

The Canada-EU trade agreement will emphasize the importance of secure access to international markets through a rules-based trading system. Canada should strive to maximize the benefits we have as a free trading nation, and the need to establish trading relationships beyond North America is exactly what CETA would accomplish.

In short, the EU represents a huge market. Having access to that market would significantly and positively impact producers in Saskatchewan, especially within the agriculture industry.

Right now times are tough in my riding. The downturn in the oil and gas industry has hit my constituency hard. Thousands of men and women are out of work, and part of the issue is the jobs simply are not there. This has a trickle-down effect as well. Without the oil and gas workers, small businesses, such as restaurants and retail stores, are having to close their doors for good, as their customer base is disappearing. Parents are wondering how they are going to feed their families once their employment insurance runs out. It affects all levels of the population and the economy.

The announcement of a Liberal carbon tax, as well as the planned phase-out of the coal-fired electricity, has also devastated my constituents at a time when jobs are already scarce. At this point in time, my constituents are looking for their government to create jobs and get them back to work.

Despite the Liberals' lack of action on that front, I am pleased that CETA will provide an opportunity for employment through the opening of markets for several industries, namely agriculture.

Once CETA comes into force, 98% of all tariffs between Canada and the EU will immediately be eliminated. The tariff exemption on goods will result in over \$1.4 billion being added to Canada's merchandise exports to the EU by 2022. It is hoped that the removal of tariffs and barriers to trade will create the jobs my constituents so badly need and that it would improve productivity and promote growth.

My riding contains hundreds of farms. The agricultural industry is the backbone of my constituency. I am greatly supportive of any trade deal that would bolster that industry. Farmers feed Canada and the world and so anything that can be done to increase the access of these farmers to international markets should be done. Through CETA, these producers will have an additional 500 million consumers to which they can market their agricultural and agrifood products.

For agricultural and agrifood products, specifically, almost 94% of the EU tariff lines on Canadians goods will be duty-free once CETA enters into force. As the tariff phase-outs are completed, this will rise to 95% of products, approximately seven years after the agreement comes into force.

This is great news for Saskatchewan producers. From 2013 to 2015, 80% of principal merchandise exports from Saskatchewan to the EU were from the agriculture and agrifood industry, amounting to \$935.4 million. With the current EU tariff, tariffs on products such as durum wheat are as high as 148 euros per tonne. Once CETA comes into force, tariffs such as this would be eliminated completely.

Again, this will create a trickle-down effect, but a positive one. Agricultural producers will not only have access to a large and mature market, but they will also save money when it comes to the elimination of tariffs on their exports. This will mean they will be able to hire more employees, creating jobs, while also gaining access to the world's largest market. This is exactly what Saskatchewan and, in particular, my constituents need at this time.

● (1045)

I am also pleased that CETA will provide Canadian producers with preferential access to markets. As this is the first comprehensive trade deal between the EU and any other country, Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers will be in a position to market their products to the largest economy in the world, products such as beef, pork, and bison. I know my constituents are supportive of any initiative that opens up markets for trade. I hope the government can recognize just how important it is to have this happen as soon as possible.

Government Orders

A joint Canada-EU study that supported the launch of negotiations concluded that a trade agreement with the EU could bring a 20% boost in bilateral trade, and a \$12 billion annual increase to Canada's economy. This is the economic equivalent of adding \$1,000 to the income of the average Canadian family, or almost 80,000 new jobs to the Canadian economy. At a time when jobs are scarce in my constituency, this added revenue will make a huge difference in the lives of those who are struggling to find work. By opening new markets, jobs are both directly and indirectly created, something that is badly needed in my riding.

The implementation of CETA will also affect a number of other industries, though more indirectly. For example, when a farmer needs to get his grain to market, he has to hire someone to transport that product. This is a job that might otherwise not exist, and so it is essentially job creation. Farmers also need to utilize services of maintenance workers for their heavy machinery and equipment. Again, this is job creation. At a time when my riding is in dire need of jobs, CETA allows easier market access to producers, which allows producers to hire more people, especially in the services industry, and benefits the economy of Saskatchewan overall.

While the focus of my speech has so far been mainly on agriculture, the services industry I just mentioned will also benefit from CETA coming into force. The services sector is a key contributor to Saskatchewan's economy, accounting for 57% of the province's total GDP, and employing more than 394,000 Saskatchewan residents in 2015. With preferential access and greater transparency in the EU services market, there will be more secure and predictable market access in the areas of interest to Saskatchewan, such as construction services, as well as research and development services.

Currently, Saskatchewan is recognized as a world leader in agricultural biotechnology and life sciences, with cutting-edge research centres spawning high-tech industries. An example of this is the Canadian Light Source synchrotron and Innovation Place research parks.

Through CETA, Saskatchewan and Canada will have preferential access, as well as greater transparency, in the EU services market, something that can only stand to benefit our research and development sector.

Saskatchewan is a vast province. In addition to agricultural exports of \$15.1 billion in 2015, the province is gaining worldwide attention for its wealth of mineral and energy resources. Saskatchewan is Canada's second-largest oil-producing province and third-largest natural gas-producing province, making the oil and gas industry one of the largest contributors to the provincial economy, with sales of \$15.9 billion in 2014. Despite the downturn in oil and gas prices, the industry remains integral to the economic well-being of the province.

For those who may not be aware, Saskatchewan is also a world leader in carbon capture and storage, with expertise in enhanced oil recovery. SaskPower, the province's power utility, has undertaken one of the world's largest carbon capture and storage projects at the Boundary Dam power station, located in my hometown of Estevan. This project is one of the first to develop and demonstrate carbon dioxide capture at a coal-fired power generation plant on a

commercial scale, in part, because of the previous Conservative government's funding of \$250 million toward the project. I have toured the facility and have seen first hand just how much work has gone into developing this initiative. Governments worldwide are sending their representatives to Boundary Dam in order to learn about this technology.

The comprehensive economic trade agreement between Canada and Europe is good news. It is good news for our farmers, our manufacturers, our service suppliers, and many other industries. It is pertinent that this deal comes into force as soon as possible.

My riding is struggling right now, and many of the provisions contained in CETA could help to alleviate that. We need job creation, and this trade deal has the potential to meet that need.

I am proud to support this agreement that would not only help Saskatchewan's varied economy, but also strengthen the relationship between Canada and Europe.

● (1050)

Ms. Karen Ludwig (New Brunswick Southwest, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my colleague and I both share something in common. We represent ridings that border on the United States.

The fish and seafood industry in my riding is thrilled with this agreement but also anxious for the agreement to be ratified. One in four jobs is related directly to trade and services, as my colleague mentioned. There is a ripple effect.

Canada has a good opportunity geographically. We have the CETA agreement but we also have NAFTA, so we have the potential to be a trading nation within a population of one billion people.

As the representative of a U.S. border riding like mine, would the hon. member agree that CETA will offer Canadian businesses unique opportunities as the springboard to our neighbours to the south?

● (1055)

Mr. Robert Kitchen: Mr. Speaker, the southern part of my riding sits on the U.S. border and it makes up half of the province. We have established a trade corridor, and a huge amount of trade goes back and forth across that border. CETA provides the opportunity to allow for U.S. goods to come into Canada, like NAFTA, but also extends that into Europe. I see that as a win-win situation.

I tell everyone in my riding that our province is an export province. It exports wheat, coal, gas, and potash. Many people have moved to other countries, but some have come back to the riding and we want to keep them there.

I see CETA as a win-win situation. It will create jobs and that is what we want to see.

*Statements by Members***STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS***[Translation]***PIERRE DEMERS**

Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Pierre Demers, a distinguished physician and true Quebec patriot, passed away on January 29 at the age of 102. His contributions to science earned him the Prix du Quebec and the Grand Prix des sciences Léon-Lortie. Founder of the Ligue internationale des scientifiques pour l'usage de la langue française, an alliance of French-speaking scientists, he remained actively engaged in the cause of Quebec independence throughout his life. He never missed an opportunity to contribute to it.

Recently, his research focused on the Act of Union. According to his findings, Quebecers have spent an estimated \$264 billion, in today's dollars, to pay down Upper Canada's debt. It is important to keep this in mind any time someone disingenuously talks about the issue of equalization.

On behalf of the Bloc Québécois, I want to offer my condolences to Pierre Demers' entire family. This great Quebecer will be sadly missed.

* * *

*[English]***VAUGHAN AFRICAN CANADIAN ASSOCIATION**

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Black History Month. It has been more than 20 years since the Parliament of Canada proclaimed February to celebrate the many men and women of African and Caribbean descent who helped shape the social, cultural, and economic fabric of our country.

I would like to acknowledge one organization in my riding, the Vaughan African Canadian Association, which provides innovative programs and services for African Caribbean Canadians in York Region. Under the leadership of executive director Shernett Martin, who was named one of 100 accomplished black Canadian women, the association is helping to raise awareness of the significant contributions of the black community. VACA was founded with the common goal of giving back and working to provide a better future for youth.

During February and beyond, I encourage all members and Canadians to celebrate black history. Diversity is our strength.

* * *

SOUTH SASKATCHEWAN SELECTS FOOTBALL

Mr. Robert Kitchen (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize some of my young constituents who have been chosen to travel to Florida at the end of this month as part of the South Saskatchewan Selects football program. Skyler Patterson, Chase Fillmore, Keith Allin, Tiki Umbach, Cash Cuthbert, Clay Gust, Blair Gust, and Xander Shayne, all from Weyburn; and James Knibbs, Hunter Eagles, Lucas Rooks, and Clayton Fornwald, of Estevan, have all been selected from a variety of age groups to participate. All of these athletes have been training hard throughout the year to earn this honour.

Ms. Georgina Jolibois (Desnethé—Missinipi—Churchill River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, is the member concerned that CETA will lead to the increased cost of prescription drugs for Canadians, given that Canadians already pay more for prescription drugs than nearly every OECD country?

Mr. Robert Kitchen: Mr. Speaker, when the bill comes into force, we expect that the Liberal government will honour the commitments it has made.

As we look at the issue of pharmaceuticals, we recognize the patent agreement will stay the same when it comes to Canada and how things are done in our country.

Ms. Karen Ludwig (New Brunswick Southwest, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we heard from the chief negotiators on CETA that the phase-in would take place over the course of 10 years.

Looking at the cost of pharmaceutical drugs, if there is no clear measurement on that, then we as Canadians should always be concerned about that.

Looking at past trade agreements, would my hon. colleague not agree with me that we should not be making rash decisions, that we should be working with all stakeholders to keep the cost of prescription drugs down and not scare Canadians about something that may not take effect?

Mr. Robert Kitchen: Yes, I do, Mr. Speaker. We need to continue to work with these organizations and ensure that all of the issues are looked at, including patent issues, et cetera, and focus on keeping those costs down throughout Canada.

Mr. Kevin Waugh (Saskatoon—Grasswood, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as everyone knows, the province of Saskatchewan is the lone jurisdiction in our country that is against carbon capture.

My colleague mentioned NAFTA and the United States. Our Saskatchewan premier has really been worried about the trading agreements, especially those in agriculture, where they will be unbalanced. The Americans will have the advantage over us because of carbon tax.

How will CETA affect our province and, more important, NAFTA, which should be coming up shortly?

Mr. Robert Kitchen: Mr. Speaker, with the implementation of a carbon tax and the impact that will have on our farming industry, it is a big worry in Saskatchewan. It is going to drive up the costs of everything, from fuel to equipment to fertilizer, et cetera. Those costs will put us into the position of selling our wheat and our canola at higher costs than the U.S. Therefore, the huge impact the carbon tax will have on the province is a big concern for the people of Saskatchewan.

• (1100)

Mr. Kevin Waugh: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. During my question, I said “carbon capture”, and I should have said “carbon tax”. Please make that correction for me.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Thank you for clarifying that.

Statements by Members

The South Saskatchewan Selects have been competing against players from the U.S. in an international championship for five years in a row. The players will also receive high-level coaching while in Florida to help improve their skills.

Congratulations to all the participants, hopefully our future Riders, and best of luck in the championship game.

* * *

COMMUNITY INCLUSIONS PIONEER AWARD

Mr. Robert Morrissey (Egmont, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Theresa Arseneault, a woman in my riding who has spent more than 20 years caring for people with intellectual disabilities.

In 1984, Theresa quit her job to care for her daughter Lisa, who has Down syndrome. In 1996, Theresa applied to provide room and board, supervision, and support to other individuals with disabilities in the area. Since then, she has housed more than a dozen people in her own home, one for more than 20 years, another for 14 years, and another for 10 years.

Theresa is paid only enough to provide food and clothing for her residents, but she says that she has never thought of it as work. In her 20 years of service, she has had only three weekends off.

In recognition of her tireless work, Theresa was recently given the Community Inclusions Pioneer Award. I extend congratulations and thanks to Theresa Arseneault.

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STEEL INDUSTRY

Mr. Erin Weir (Regina—Lewvan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government recently approved two major pipeline projects without knowing where or how the pipe would be produced. Making a ton of steel in China and shipping it here emits five times as much carbon as making it at the Evraz steel mill in Regina. Unlike imported pipe, we can test Canadian-made pipe throughout the manufacturing process.

Fortunately, Enbridge will use pipe made in Regina for its Line 3 replacement project. Unfortunately, Kinder Morgan has not indicated where it will source pipe for the Trans Mountain expansion.

A new review process for pipelines should consider the pipe supplier's emissions and reliability. Doing so would favour Canadian-made steel and support good jobs at Evraz in Regina.

* * *

●(1105)

[*Translation*]

WINTERLUDE

Mr. Steven MacKinnon (Gatineau, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Winterlude kicks off today in Ottawa-Gatineau and continues until February 20. On January 12, I had the pleasure of unveiling the official program for the 39th edition of Winterlude in this 150th anniversary year of Confederation.

First of all, Jacques-Cartier Park in Gatineau will feature snow slides and many outdoor family activities. In Confederation Park visitors will be able to admire magnificent ice sculptures. Marion

Dewar Plaza will be transformed into a snowflake kingdom, and lastly, of course, the Rideau Canal becomes the world's largest skating rink.

I invite all my colleagues to bundle up and take some time to celebrate winter in the national capital over the next couple of weeks.

* * *

[*English*]

CHINESE NEW YEAR

Mr. Bob Saroya (Markham—Unionville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, *Gong hey fat choy*. Markham residents have been welcoming the Year of the Rooster. I was happy to host a Chinese new year celebration at Angus Glen Community Centre, where hundreds of Markham residents attended. Special thanks to Toronto Chinese Ai Yue Philharmonic Arts Centre and the Chinese Cultural Association of Unionville for providing entertaining artistic performances.

I was especially pleased to ring in the new year with our incredible opposition leader at the Cham Shan Temple in Markham. I also had a great time handing out hundreds of red pockets at First Markham Place. Finally, this week we hosted an annual new year celebration on Parliament Hill, where everyone enjoyed incredible dancing and delicious Chinese food.

I am definitely looking forward to next year's celebration.

Xin nian kuai le.

* * *

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AWARD

Mr. Sean Casey (Charlottetown, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our teachers and school administrators play a key role in helping develop our youngest citizens into the best and brightest. They encourage us, they inspire us, and they help us see the potential within.

Earlier this week, The Learning Partnership named Erin Johnston, principal of Prince Street Elementary School in Charlottetown, one of Canada's outstanding principals.

[*Translation*]

Erin's devotion, enthusiasm, and experience are patently undeniable. Under her watch, the school created a clothing assistance program and a breakfast program for those in need of a meal in the morning. She is sincerely concerned about the well-being of her students.

[*English*]

Under her watch, reading scores are up, student leadership has increased, and students feel more positive about learning.

[*Translation*]

I have expressed my most sincere congratulations to Erin Johnston for this well-deserved recognition and honour.

Statements by Members

[English]

JOLLIBEE FOODS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a few weeks ago, I was in the Philippines with my daughter Cindy, who happens to be my local MLA. We were able to visit a number of communities inside and outside Manila, and wherever we went, we would see the popular restaurant known as Jollibee. If one can imagine what McDonald's and KFC are to Canada, one can imagine what Jollibee is to the Philippines.

People no longer have to travel to the Philippines to check out Jollibee. They can now come to Winnipeg to get that experience.

Last week, while on his cross-Canada town hall tour, the Prime Minister was in Winnipeg. He took the time to join me at Jollibee as he met with staff and chatted with customers, and of course, there were pictures too. I know the Prime Minister enjoyed his experience at Jollibee.

The good news does not stop there, as later this year, Winnipeg will be getting its second franchise. Jollibee coming to Canada, in good part, is a reflection of Canada's diversity, and I am proud of the fact that Winnipeg was chosen as the first franchise location. I choose to believe it is because of one of our greatest strengths, that being our rich Canadian-Filipino heritage.

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THORSBY AND DRAYTON VALLEY

Mr. Jim Eglinski (Yellowhead, CPC): Mr. Speaker, not only is 2017 our nation's 150th birthday, it is also an important milestone for communities in my riding.

On January 1, the village of Thorsby was officially recognized as a town. As many rural municipalities are losing residents due to urban centres, I am proud to see the growth of this community and look forward to the positive impact it will continue to bring to the surrounding area.

Also in 2017, the town of Drayton Valley is celebrating its own birthday, marking 60 years. This town has been a leader in oil and gas development as well as a trailblazer in sustainability and environmental responsibility.

As we celebrate Canada's birthday, let us not forget the people and communities whose successes have made our 150th milestone a reality.

* * *

●(1110)

[Translation]

DANIELLE LAVIGNE

Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Longueuil—Charles-LeMoine, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the member for Longueuil—Charles-LeMoine, I rise today to acknowledge the retirement of an exceptional woman whose commitment to her community helped ensure the well-being of many individuals and families in our riding.

On December 31, Danielle Lavigne passed the torch after 27 years of faithful service to La Mosaïque, an organization dedicated to strengthening the social fabric of Longueuil.

Through her leadership and passion, Mrs. Lavigne helped La Mosaïque become an indispensable resource in making life better for the less fortunate.

Many thanks to Mrs. Lavigne for everything she did for our community. I wish her an excellent well-deserved retirement. Thank you.

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[English]

TORONTO

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Spadina—Fort York, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, insulting people because of where they come from is not just bad manners, it is wrong; so why are people of Toronto treated this way?

When some members say “Bay Street”, they hurl it around like an insult. In my riding, Bay Street is home to seniors, shopkeepers, unionized workers, senior citizens, and yes, a few corporate giants, but sneering at people because of what street they live on is just plain awful.

Recently, a different member of this chamber suggested that people in Toronto have no sense of community, that effectively we are bad neighbours. That is mean. It is silly, and it is wrong.

Nobody in this House should look down their nose at people just because of what part of the country they come from, regardless of whether it is a town, a region, or a province.

I am proud to represent the good people of Toronto in this House. I love to call it home.

Let me tell members that we are all good people. Many of us come from members' hometowns. Whether it is shovelling each other's snow or giving gifts to the kid next door, we are a city full of great neighbours. Even if all people need is a cup of sugar, trust me, they can knock on their neighbour's door, and they will find some sweetness.

Insulting people because they come from Toronto is not just bad leadership, it is bad politics.

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MORTGAGE REGULATIONS

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this week in the finance committee we heard alarming news that part of the Liberal government's changes to mortgage regulations is that refinancing a mortgage will no longer be CMHC insurable. What this means is that if people are refinancing their home to access their equity, the costs of doing that are going to greatly increase as a result of much higher interest rates.

Statements by Members

At committee we heard that Canadians refinance for many reasons: to invest in a small business, home renovations, to buy out a spouse at divorce, long labour strikes or lockouts, unemployment, debt consolidation, and more. Even the Liberals' own witnesses chastised this damaging new policy that will harm middle-class Canadians.

Fortunately enough, Liberal members of the finance committee voted with the official opposition to bring the finance minister before the committee, so that he can explain why he thinks middle-class Canadians should pay higher interest costs when they need to access their home equity.

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VOLUNTEERISM

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege today to draw attention to an inspiring example, Becca Schofield, a 17-year-old from Riverview, New Brunswick, who has battled brain cancer for two years.

Becca, a generous, vibrant, and joyful young woman, is setting an example that is catching on across the globe. In a spirit that most of us can only hope to emulate, she is encouraging people to spread acts of kindness and post them to social media using the hashtag #BeccaToldMeTo.

When Becca had every right to think of herself, she chose to think of others. Where many would be bitter, she chose hope. Where many might look inward, Becca started a movement that has uplifted people around the world.

In honour of Becca's inspirational example, let us all recognize the lasting impact of her compassion and her humanity, and let us recommit ourselves to the essential work of creating a future free from cancer.

* * *

[Translation]

JOSEPH BÉRUBÉ

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in each and every one of our ridings there are exceptional people whom we are fortunate to have the privilege of knowing. I would like to talk about such a person today.

On January 22, Joseph Bérubé passed away at the venerable age of 97. He was a notary whose career spanned 72 years, the equivalent of two consecutive careers, and who worked right up until his death.

This man was a force of nature, a remarkable model of dedication, commitment, humility, and generosity. Despite the deaths of his wife in 2006 and his son in 2007, Mr. Bérubé continued to volunteer with and lend his expertise to different organizations, especially those that support seniors and the most vulnerable. Among other things, he oversaw the purchase of a building for the activities of the Cercle culturel de l'amitié, whose mandate is to combat the isolation that too many of our seniors experience.

Tomorrow, Mr. Bérubé's community will lay him to rest. Having had the privilege of knowing this man, I wanted to pay homage to

him in the House so that his memory will live on and so that we can loudly applaud the memory of this extraordinary man.

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●(1115)

[English]

EATING DISORDER AWARENESS WEEK

Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, February 1 to 7 is Eating Disorder Awareness Week. Eating disorder groups across the country are carrying out awareness-raising and educational activities in their communities. They have created the hashtags #NotAChoice and #EDAW2017, and in French #SEMTA2017.

It is through open, supportive dialogue that we can help break the shame, stigma, and silence that affect nearly one million Canadians living with a diagnosed eating disorder, and the millions of others struggling with food and weight preoccupation.

Last month I had the honour of touring the BridgePoint Center for Eating Disorders located in Mildred, Saskatchewan, in my riding. It was a pleasure meeting with staff and board members to learn about the very important work they do.

I encourage all of my colleagues in this place to help raise awareness of eating disorders during this week.

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LUNAR NEW YEAR

Mr. Terry Duguid (Winnipeg South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this past Saturday was the beginning of the lunar new year. I would like to send my best wishes to all those of Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese heritage celebrating in Winnipeg South and across Canada. For many, the lunar new year is the most important and festive holiday of the year, a time to gather with family and friends.

During this week's celebrations, we welcome the arrival of the Year of the Rooster. The rooster symbolizes honesty, brightness, and ambition, and I hope the year is filled with these outstanding attributes.

I would like to recognize the numerous community groups and associations in Winnipeg which invited me to join their celebrations.

May the upcoming year bring members and their loved ones peace, prosperity, good health, and great happiness.

Xin Nian Kuai Le. Gong Hey Fat Choy. Happy Year of the Rooster.

*Oral Questions***ORAL QUESTIONS***[English]***FINANCE**

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, earlier this week, I asked the Minister of Finance if he was willing to adjust some of his high tax and high spend policies in order to adjust to the new reality in the United States. The United States, under the new administration, is cutting taxes and decreasing regulations. They are committed to no carbon tax.

Instead of answering that question, the Minister of Finance talked about Canada-U.S. relations. Therefore, I ask again, not in terms of Canada-U.S. relations, but in terms of fiscal policy, what is the government prepared to do in order to keep Canada competitive with the U.S.?

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for that question.

Our government has made a commitment to invest in the middle class and those working hard to join it, and we have taken several measures since we have come to office.

The first thing we put in place was lower taxes for middle-class Canadians. We lowered them from 22% to 20.5%, and I have to mention that the party opposite voted against that decision.

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am glad the hon. member thanked me for the question, because I am going to ask it again as she did not answer the question.

We are talking about something that just happened this past November, a new administration in the U.S. Things have changed in Canada, in North America.

Is the government able to pivot? Are the Liberals able to make new policy decisions in the best interests of Canadians, or are they so ideologically attached to bad policies like the carbon tax?

The Liberals have their heads so far in the sand that they do not realize that things have changed. They need to change policies to keep Canadian businesses competitive.

Again I ask, is there any policy, even one of the policies that they have talked about, a high deficit, high spending, a carbon tax, they will say no to? Will they say no to even one of those policies to keep Canada competitive?

• (1120)

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again, our government is committed to working for the middle class and those working so hard to join it.

We are going to continue with our plan that we have to move forward for Canadians. We have lowered taxes for the middle class. We have put in place the Canada child benefit program that has helped hundreds of thousands of Canadians. We have helped seniors with the increase in guaranteed income supplement.

We have a plan, and we are moving forward for middle-income Canadians.

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal plan for the economy is failing. The Liberals seem to have millions of dollars for office renovations, a lot of money for vacations on private islands, and receptions with billionaires, but nothing for Canadians who are struggling, nothing in terms of support, and certainly nothing in terms of policy decisions.

When will the Liberals stop doing what is best for the Liberals and all of their friends, and start doing what is best for Canadians, for Canadian businesses, families, and jobs?

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government is doing plenty for middle-class Canadians, and we are going to continue to do more.

Once again, we have made historic investments in infrastructure, which is going to be creating wonderful jobs. Also, we have put in place the guaranteed income supplement for single low-income seniors, which in actual fact is going to give \$90 more per month to seniors who are going to benefit from that program.

We have also put in place a wonderful Canada child benefit program, which again is going to give Canadians much more money to help them raise their families.

We are going in the right direction, and we are going to continue to move forward.

* * *

[Translation]

TAXATION

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I asked the Minister of Finance two very simple questions: will he commit to controlling public spending and will he commit to not raising Canadians' taxes?

The minister did not give a clear-cut answer to either of these questions. On the contrary, he avoided the question as usual. However, one thing that this government is not avoiding is cutting funding for families. It has already eliminated tax credits that help Canadian families.

My question for the government today is very simple: will the government commit to not eliminating any more tax credits that help Canadian families?

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I once again thank my colleague for his question.

When the Canadian economy is working well for the middle class, it is working really well for Canada. We will proceed with our plan to invest in the interest of the middle class and those working hard to join it.

I will repeat that, on January 1, 2016, we lowered taxes from 22% to 20.5% and, once again, the opposition party voted against that tax cut.

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, 65% of Canadians are not getting the tax cuts that the government is so proud of.

Oral Questions

The real middle class, the people who earn \$45,000 or less per year, have not benefited from the government's so-called tax cuts.

The fact is that the government scrapped tax cuts that were helping families directly. I see the member from Toronto indicating that he thinks that is not true, but it is. It is time you stepped up and took responsibility for decisions you have made that are terrible for Canadian families.

I am asking you: Will you promise that, in the next budget, you will not get rid of tax credits that help all Canadian families?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I would like to remind the hon. member that “you” is to be used only when addressing the Speaker of the House, which was not the case because he was directing his remarks to the other side of the House. I want to make that clear so everyone follows the rules.

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, I am so pleased to have this opportunity to talk about the excellent program we introduced, the Canada child benefit. This program will help hundreds of thousands of children and families escape poverty. If a single mom with a child under six earns \$30,000 per year, she will get \$6,400 more. We will proceed with measures like that to help our middle class.

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DEMOCRATIC REFORM

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have 39% of the votes, 55% of the seats, and 100% of the power.

The Liberals are in a conflict of interest on the electoral reform file. Since the election, they have been telling us that they do not have a preferred voting system to replace the current one. The Prime Minister admitted in the House that he was leaning toward the so-called preferential ballot. That is a preferential system for the Liberals. When they realized that there was no consensus for the system that favoured them, then they simply decided to break their promise.

Do the Liberals take Canadians for fools?

• (1125)

Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Democratic Institutions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government listened to Canadians. It will continue to work on strengthening our democracy. Even though we did not reach a consensus on one specific electoral system to replace the current one, Canadians made it clear that we could do more to improve our democratic institutions. Canadians are proud of our democracy. We will continue to work to ensure that our democracy is consistent with Canadians' values.

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the report of the Special Committee on Electoral Reform was very clear. It reached consensus on a proportional voting system.

In their testimony, several experts noted that a proportional voting system would result in more stable parliaments and would elect more women. For a Prime Minister who calls himself a feminist, it is odd

that he would not want a system that would help elect more women to the House of Commons.

Is the government's priority to help elect more women from the Liberal Party only?

Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Democratic Institutions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very honoured to be the youngest woman appointed to cabinet. I am very proud to be a woman here in the House of Commons, and I am very proud to work with a feminist Prime Minister who has a cabinet made up of an equal number of men and women.

[English]

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, imagine being satisfied then that Canada ranks 64th in the world when it comes to electing women. One would think Liberals would be a little bit worried. They are obsessed with their so-called mandate letters, pretending a note from the Prime Minister is more important than the real mandate, which can only come from the electorate and the people of this country. We compared the old mandate letter with the new one and there was this very interesting small, but critical difference. Version one insists that we will deliver on all of our commitments, but in version two the word “all” is gone.

Would the Liberals like to tell Canadians what other promises they are planning on breaking like they did on electoral reform?

Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Democratic Institutions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I would like to repeat in English, I am incredibly proud to be the youngest woman named to cabinet in Canada. I am incredibly proud to be a woman in the House of Commons and I am incredibly proud to work with the Prime Minister, who is a feminist and who has a gender-equal cabinet. We listened to Canadians. We heard that they are proud of their democracy and now it is my job to make sure we continue to strengthen and work for our democracy.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in their desperate attempt to justify their betrayal on electoral reform, Liberals are reaching for any excuse however ridiculous or absurd. Liberals say that proportional representation will herald the rise of the alt-right forces in Canada. Well, Donald Trump was elected on first past the post with no problem, and yet, a fair voting system is the actual antidote to such campaigns like his or maybe Kevin O'Leary's. Proportional representation elects more women, more diverse parliaments, and forces parties to work together to help bring a country like Canada together.

Will the Liberals finally admit they broke their promise to fix the voting system, not because it was a threat to Canadian unity, but because it was a threat to the Liberal Party?

Oral Questions

Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Democratic Institutions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am incredibly proud to be part of this caucus that has a good percentage of women, that is incredibly diverse, that represents Canadians, and, most importantly, that listens to Canadians and how they feel about our democracy, which is proud.

Our government will continue to act to strengthen our democracy. That is why my new mandate letter includes protecting the integrity of our democracy by making our system less vulnerable to hacking, and improving transparency by making parties' political fundraising more open than ever before.

I will always work to protect, strengthen, and improve our democracy.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this morning we are hearing reports that some Canadian dual nationals have had their NEXUS cards suddenly revoked following the American executive order, yet all this week the minister has told Canadians that the government received assurances that Canadians would not be affected by the United States' executive order.

This is very concerning for a lot of people who are travelling across the border and use this particular tool to have free access to our country. I have a simple question. Has the minister asked for, and received, written assurance that any and all NEXUS cards will remain valid in light of the executive order?

● (1130)

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there are provisions under the agreements between Canada and the United States for the issuing of NEXUS cards and for the termination of NEXUS cards in appropriate circumstances.

If people feel that they have in fact been unfairly treated by the process on either side of the border, there is an appeal process and there is an ombudsman. Obviously at a governmental level, we will be working with our American counterparts to make sure that the rules are properly and fairly administered, and that Canadians have the access that they are entitled to with a Canadian passport.

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, with respect, I do not think that gives a lot of clarity to Canadians who are dual nationals who may be affected by this and who are wondering if their NEXUS card is still valid.

I am just going to give the minister another chance to answer the question. What assurances has the government sought from the American government that NEXUS cards will remain valid in light of the executive order? Has this been received in writing?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it was very clear right at the very beginning that a Canadian citizen, whatever their other national connections might be, with a Canadian passport has the same access to the United States that they have always had.

With respect to the NEXUS card, that is a special trusted traveller provision over and above the passport. We want to make sure that

Canadians entitled to a NEXUS card, which is discretionary on both sides of the border, are in fact treated properly and fairly.

* * *

INDUSTRY

Mr. Alexander Nuttall (Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last week another Ontario community lost over 600 manufacturing jobs because of bad Liberal policy.

It is not a coincidence that GM moved to Mexico 28 days after a Liberal carbon tax. After a decade of Liberal mismanagement, manufacturing is in steep decline in Ontario.

When will the Prime Minister stop driving the GMC Terrain to Mexico?

Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, nothing could be further from the truth. This government is creating jobs in the manufacturing sector, which is the cornerstone of our economy, employing close to 1.7 million Canadians.

In budget 2016, our government is making investments to help position Canadian manufacturing firms to grow and provide high-quality employment for the middle class. We have an innovation agenda. We are working on a Canadian free trade agreement. We have maintained jobs for Honda in Alliston, Ontario; Thomson Reuters, 1,500 jobs; GM Canada, 1,000 new engineering jobs in Ontario.

We have a darn good record.

Mr. Alexander Nuttall (Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, CPC): Mr. Speaker, obviously the Prime Minister and his government are proud of the 53,000 manufacturing jobs they transitioned out of Canada last year.

While the new American administration is reducing taxation and regulations on business, the Prime Minister is sending jobs across the border by increasing them. In the last year alone, the Prime Minister has taxed 97,000 agricultural, natural resources, and manufacturing jobs out of this country.

When will the government stop taxing Canadians onto the unemployment line?

Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as a government, we are obviously concerned and extend our compassion to those impacted by job losses when economies are in transition. However, our government is funding jobs, programs, and skills training to help workers and their families affected by job losses. We will continue to work with our regional development agencies to make strategic investments to build on competitive regional advantages.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, these are today's headlines: "Ottawa's Infrastructure Plan in Jeopardy"; "Federal Money Invested More Slowly than Expected"; "Federal Infrastructure Plan Flagged".

[English]

"Federal infrastructure spending lacks transparency".

[Translation]

With his usual straight face, the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities responded, "it is a remarkable accomplishment".

When will the minister stop managing and spending taxpayers' money as though it was Monopoly money?

• (1135)

[English]

Hon. Amarjeet Sohi (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I said yesterday, since taking office we have approved 1,200 projects with a combined investment, in partnership with the municipalities and provinces, of \$14 billion in infrastructure from coast to coast to coast.

I would also like to share with the hon. member that in the province of Quebec we have approved 58 projects with a combined investment of \$1.47 billion. After two years of nothing being done for Quebec, we are on the move to get the work done.

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NATURAL RESOURCES

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister told an audience in Peterborough that he plans to phase out the oil sands. That was tough news for the 425,000 Canadians who rely on the oil sands and related businesses for their paycheques. However, they are not the only ones who should be worried. The Prime Minister's policies are making life more expensive for families, and costing them their jobs across the board, not only in the oil sands. Can the Prime Minister explain why he is more focused on phasing out jobs than on creating them?

Ms. Kim Rudd (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we in this House feel for people who have lost their jobs in the downturn of the energy sector particularly. The low commodity price of oil has affected tens of thousands of jobs across the country. We will continue to work with the modernization of the National Energy Board to create a better system that will have the confidence of Canadians, and get Canadians back to work.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, President Trump has issued yet another executive order. This one has serious implications for all Canadian travellers or innocent Internet users. Trump's order excludes all non-American citizens from the U.S. Privacy Act. This is deeply troubling. President Trump wants to subject all visitors to the United States to biometric screening. What

is this Canadian government doing to protect the privacy rights of Canadians, and how will these screenings impact our industries that depend on speedy border crossings?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when I had the opportunity to speak to my new U.S. counterpart earlier this week, Secretary Kelly, I had the opportunity to discuss some of the elements of the executive order with him. I specifically raised the issue of the reference in the executive order to biometric screening and asked for further clarification from the United States with respect to that matter. Obviously, it is something that it is looking at toward the future, and we want to be completely informed about what it has in mind.

[Translation]

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Beloeil—Chambly, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are right to be worried about the protection of their privacy. The government still has not repealed Bill C-51, which breaches our rights, and now, one of President Trump's orders would hand over Canadian data to the United States without any legal protections.

Groups such as OpenMedia and the BC Civil Liberties Association are asking the government to stand up to Trump and protect Canadians' rights.

When will the minister take seriously the consequences of this order for Canadian citizens?

[English]

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has been very clear. Canadians expect this government to do two things equally well, first, to develop a good working relationship with our largest trading partner, and, second, to safeguard the values, the rights, and the privileges of Canadians. We will do both.

* * *

ETHICS

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is currently under investigation by the Ethics Commissioner after promising to set a new ethical standard, proving once again that it is ingrained in the Liberal DNA that government is not for the people, it is for Liberal friends and insiders.

This week, they defended a \$15,000 gift to their friends at Liberal Party think tank, Canada 2020, as an arm's-length decision. Well, the President of the Treasury Board is not arm's-length, and he gave them \$22,000.

Why will the Prime Minister not just stop giving taxpayer funding to Canada 2020?

Hon. Kirsty Duncan (Minister of Science, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government values science, scientists, and the important work they do.

As I have said before, the granting council is an arm's-length organization. It is able to issue contracts below a certain amount. The contract was below that threshold, and the granting council took a decision.

• (1140)

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals keep trying to defend the Prime Minister's law-breaking getaway and ride on a private aircraft over New Year's as a trip to visit a long-time family friend.

I will remind those who continue to defend it as such that the Ethics Commissioner has already warned a Liberal minister that he is not to have any dealings with a particular long-time family friend because of the potential conflict of interest that it could create.

My question is a simple one. Would the Prime Minister explain why the same rules do not apply to him?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member knows very well that this government will work very hard for Canadians. This government will continue to invest in communities to help create the conditions for growth for good jobs for Canadians to support their families.

When it comes to the member's question, the member knows very well that the Prime Minister has stated he will answer any questions that the commissioner has. We will continue to work with all offices of this place.

[Translation]

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, at a time when thousands of Canadians are looking for work because the Prime Minister is not committed to the economy and job creation, we know someone who will never be unemployed. The Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner has not been this busy since the sponsorship scandal. What both scandals coincidentally have in common is that they took place while the Liberal Party of Canada was in power.

If the Prime Minister will not put a stop to this government's elastic ethics, then who will?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as was already mentioned, the Prime Minister will answer all of the commissioner's questions.

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as you know, the more an elastic is stretched, the more likely it is to snap. That is exactly what the Prime Minister is doing when it comes to ethics: fundraisers with Chinese millionaires, private helicopter rides over the holidays, and paying his friends at Canada 2020.

As the member for Beaches—East York did yesterday, will the other Liberal members have the courage to stand up and speak out against the Prime Minister's elastic ethics before everything snaps in their faces?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member is confusing things, which we should be careful to not do here. We are here to work on

Oral Questions

behalf of Canadians, and that is what this government will continue to do. The Prime Minister has said that he will answer the commissioner's questions. We will continue working hard for all Canadians.

* * *

[English]

STATUS OF WOMEN

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, 50 years ago today, the Royal Commission on the Status of Women exposed widespread discrimination against women. Fifty years later, that promise of equality is still not realized.

Liberal and Conservative governments have ignored the commission's recommendations and cut social programs for women. The result is that since 1995, Canada has fallen from first on the gender equality list of the UN to 25th. Still, Liberals delay pay equity legislation.

How long with the government fail to rectify 50 years of inequality?

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, equal pay for equal value work is a human right. We are very proud to bring forward pay equity after a decade of inaction. Pay equity between men and women and fair treatment for all workers in the workplace, regardless of gender, is going to create growth for a thriving middle class. We will make substantive reform and implement proactive pay equity in the federal jurisdiction, which includes 874,000 employees and 10,800 employers.

We are absolutely committed to pay equity, and we will pursue that and bring it to a—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The hon. member for Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques.

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[Translation]

TAXATION

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as you are no doubt aware, nearly 75% of Canadians who own small businesses, family farms, and fishing boats want to transfer their business and retire within the next 10 years. However, they face a serious problem if they want to keep their business in the family.

The problem is that, by selling their business to their children, they will have to pay a lot more in taxes than if they were to sell it to strangers. My bill, Bill C-274, seeks to correct this injustice. It has the support of over 120 municipalities, chambers of commerce, and farmer and fisher associations.

Can the government confirm that it will let its members vote freely and according to the will of their constituents?

• (1145)

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

Oral Questions

Bill C-274 would weaken two anti-avoidance rules that have been part of the Income Tax Act for a long time. The government is concerned about the changes, which would increase opportunities for unfair tax avoidance. Bill C-274 would offer a targeted tax advantage to a specific group of taxpayers rather than to the middle class as a whole.

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[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mrs. Alaina Lockhart (Fundy Royal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, many New Brunswickers are still recovering from the ice storm that struck our province last week and knocked out power for thousands of people. We are grateful for the tireless efforts of the municipal and provincial first responders and recovery crews, as well as countless volunteers.

[Translation]

Can the Minister of National Defence tell us how the Canadian Armed Forces have been helping the region since Monday?

Mr. Jean Rioux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to commend the people of New Brunswick for their courage, their generosity, their great desire to help one another, and their community solidarity.

The federal government took action as soon as it received the call. The Province's initial request for aid was approved in 17 minutes, and troops arrived in New Brunswick the next day. In four days, our soldiers visited 4,500 homes. They distributed food and water. They cleared debris and helped things get back to normal faster. The presence of the armed forces made a real difference and brought peace and comfort to people in a very stressful situation.

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[English]

TAXATION

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, make no mistake, the Liberal cash grabs are making things so much worse for hard-working Canadians. The Liberal carbon tax will not just make gas, heating, and everything we purchase more expensive, it will also make businesses in Canada less competitive.

My riding is in danger of losing 5,000 jobs to the U.S., which would devastate our region. The U.S. is Canada's biggest customer and biggest competitor.

When will the Liberals protect Canadian jobs and can the carbon tax?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, unlike the party opposite, we understand that the environment and the economy go together.

We are very proud that we were able to come to an agreement with the provinces, territories, and indigenous leaders to develop a pan-Canadian plan that will grow our economy, create good jobs, and ensure we have a more sustainable future for our children.

EMPLOYMENT

Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC): Mr. Speaker, just two years ago while visiting London, the Prime Minister said he wants Canada to move away from manufacturing jobs. As a reminder, he said this in one of the regions where Canadians' livelihoods rely mostly on manufacturing jobs, like Elgin—Middlesex—London.

The Prime Minister is repeating the same mistakes of Ontario's Green Energy Act, which has caused hydro rates to skyrocket and businesses to shut down and leave Ontario.

Why does the Prime Minister insist on killing jobs and raising costs for hard-working Canadians?

Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, nothing could be further from the truth.

We are committed to the manufacturing sector. It is the cornerstone of our economy. It employs close to 1.7 million Canadians and accounts for more than 10% of our gross domestic product. We are investing in various sectors, including automotive, aerospace, life sciences, digital technology, and agrifood.

I can point out to the hon. member that we have invested \$15 million in Hanwha L&C Canada in the London—Fanshawe riding to expand production and to manufacture a new line of high-quality stone slabs. That is 85 new jobs.

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SMALL BUSINESS

Mr. Blake Richards (Banff—Airdrie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals ended the review of rules that would ensure small businesses like campgrounds would have access to the small business tax rate. Yet, when I asked the revenue minister about it, she claimed that Liberals had not changed the tax rules. However, just a few months ago, her department did in fact change the interpretation of those very rules.

Because of this new interpretation, thousands of campgrounds will be hit with huge new tax bills. So when the minister answered my question, was she misleading the House, or does she just have no idea what her department is doing?

● (1150)

[Translation]

Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to ensuring that all Canadians pay their fair share of taxes. We will continue to support small and medium-sized enterprises across Canada because we recognize the critical role they play in our economy. I want to point out that we have not changed the tax rules and that the same provisions on source of income still apply.

*Oral Questions**[English]*

Mr. Blake Richards (Banff—Airdrie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the war on campgrounds continues. Those were shameful talking points that clearly did not answer the question.

In budget 2016, they ended the review that we put in place, after deciding that some businesses were too small to be small businesses. Now the CRA has in fact changed the rules so that many campgrounds are no longer eligible for the small business tax rate. She might want to check her facts. This will force many campgrounds and other small businesses to shut down.

Will the Liberals stop unjustly punishing campground operators and let Canadians enjoy the outdoors without all the Liberal red tape?

[Translation]

Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will repeat my answer for my colleague opposite who seems to have misunderstood.

Our government will continue to support small and medium-sized enterprises across Canada because we recognize the critical role they play in our economy. I want to point out that we have not changed the tax rules and that the same rules and the same provisions on source of income still apply.

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*[English]***INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS**

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this week the Minister of Indigenous Affairs stated, “Negotiation, rather than litigation is our government’s preferred route to settle differences, and right historical wrongs.” Yet, her government not only halted the compensation awarded to the Huu-ay-aht First Nations, but it also launched an extensive judicial review of the decision.

Will the minister stand by her words, call off the government lawyers, and commit in the House today to paying out the award without further delay?

Ms. Yvonne Jones (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to reiterate that our government will always choose negotiation over litigation. As Canadians have witnessed this past year, we have made that happen in many cases across Canada.

We are continuing to work toward real reconciliation with indigenous people. That means inviting them to the table. That means negotiating in fairness and in good faith. We will continue to do that, just as we have decided to do with the Sixties Scoop, where we have started that process. We hope that all groups will come to the table and participate so we can have real reconciliation and a negotiated conclusion.

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HEALTH

Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP): Mr. Speaker, not only is the opioid crisis taking lives and destroying families in Canadian cities, but this public health emergency is also impacting smaller

communities, like the ones in my riding in Essex County, at an unprecedented rate.

Canadians need immediate action from the federal government, now. We cannot afford to wait for Bill C-37 to wind its way through the parliamentary process. Will the government immediately declare a national public health emergency and provide immediate and direct support to our Canadian communities?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are in a national public health crisis here in Canada, and the response to this crisis needs to be comprehensive, collaborative, compassionate, and evidence-based.

Building on our five-point action plan to address opioid misuse, the Minister of Health co-hosted a conference and summit on opioids that resulted in 42 organizations making concrete commitments to address this crisis.

I was also very pleased that yesterday at committee, all parties came together to rise above partisan politics and bring us closer to the passing of Bill C-37.

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HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, reports of the ethnic cleansing of Muslim Rohingya people in Burma may not get the same headlines as events in the U.S., but the terrible killings and other crimes in that country do require our urgent attention.

Burma is a major recipient of Canadian foreign aid, yet the Liberals have barely commented. What does the minister have to say about this dire situation, and what has the Liberal government done about it?

Mr. Matt DeCoursey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for raising the question and for his concern in this matter. Certainly we share his concern about the violence against the Rohingya people.

We continue to provide urgent humanitarian support in Myanmar, and support for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh: \$4.3 million alone in 2016. The government of Myanmar must do everything in its power to end the violence now, allow full access to humanitarian aid, and find a solution for the long term.

● (1155)

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I do appreciate the words from the parliamentary secretary, but I looked at the Facebook page for the Canadian embassy in Burma. It talks about Canadian winters, it talks about the new year, and it talks about a golf tournament, but it makes no mention of the systematic killing of minorities.

Oral Questions

The Liberals said, when they cancelled the Office of Religious Freedom, that all embassies would be promoting human rights, but that does not appear to be happening in this case.

Will the Liberals commit today to step up and do more, and ensure our embassies do more, to speak out and to help the people in Burma being murdered and raped because of their backgrounds?

Mr. Matt DeCoursey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know my hon. colleague across the way will stand with me and share condolences to the Muslim faith community in Quebec and right across the country today.

I remind him that Canada has stepped up to the plate and is providing urgent humanitarian support to the Rohingyas, \$4.3 million alone in 2016. The government of Myanmar must do everything in its power to end this violence, allow full access to humanitarian aid, and find the solution for the long term.

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MULTICULTURALISM

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Paul Yuzyk Award for Multiculturalism was established by the Conservative government in 2015 to recognize and celebrate the many cultural and ethnic communities that call Canada home. Official government documents show that the Liberals never bothered to even give out the award, blaming it on a lack of nominations. Well, it is impossible to give out an award if a call is never made for nominations.

Why are the Liberals failing to champion Canada's Paul Yuzyk Award for Multiculturalism?

Mr. Arif Virani (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage (Multiculturalism), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will note that this government and our country stands for values of tolerance, inclusion, and diversity. As proof positive, I have been appointed and have the honour to serve with the Minister of Canadian Heritage as the parliamentary secretary for multiculturalism. We will be entrenching those values in all of the policies we implement, including policies that will promote these important values going forward.

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INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Mr. Rémi Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the indigenous and northern affairs committee has heard that settling outstanding claims is an important part of our work toward reconciliation and to correct past wrongs. I am proud that our government has made it a priority to settle these claims through negotiation rather than litigation.

Could the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs update the House on the agreement signed between our government and the Siksika regarding the Castle Mountain claim?

Ms. Yvonne Jones (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for the great work he is doing in supporting indigenous issues in our country.

Reaching settlements is one of the most important steps along the journey of healing and reconciliation and has been established as a priority for our government. In January, we concluded the negotiation with the Siksika nation, and we are very proud of that. We have been able to resolve a long-standing claim over Castle Mountain in Banff National Park, which had been going on for nearly 200 years.

We are a government of negotiation. We are a government that really believes this is a path forward to real reconciliation with indigenous people.

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HEALTH

Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the MS Society prairie president Erin Kuan stated in January that it did not matter to her if MRIs were offered privately or publicly, as long as patients had access. Saskatchewan currently has an estimated 3,700 people with MS.

Instead of congratulating Saskatchewan for successfully providing more MRI options, the Minister of Health attacked Saskatchewan for modernizing health care services. It does not make sense.

Why are the Liberals punishing my province for not signing on to the Prime Minister's carbon tax?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we fully support the principles of the Canada Health Act, which are meant to ensure that all Canadians have reasonable access to medically necessary physician and hospital services based on the need and not the ability or willingness to pay.

Our government fully supports the principles of the Canada Health Act and is committed to working with Saskatchewan to strengthen our publicly funded universal health care system, while, at the same time, upholding the principles of the act. The Minister of Health has asked officials to work with Saskatchewan officials over the next year in this regard.

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THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I recently met with woodlot owners in my riding in Nova Scotia, and they are committed to help meet Canada's climate change goals through improved woodlot management and also carbon capture. However, they are wondering how a price on carbon will help them achieve this goal.

Could the Minister of Environment and Climate Change help them understand this?

● (1200)

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to creating well-paying middle-class jobs while attacking climate change.

Oral Questions

Woodlot owners will benefit from measures outlined in our made-in-Canada climate plan, which includes increased use of wood for construction and promotion of bioenergy and bioproducts. The provinces and territories have the flexibility to decide how they will price carbon pollution and this could include offset systems for improved forest management practices and the creation of new forests.

Together with provinces and territories, we are taking action in each sector of the economy to reduce emissions, drive innovation, and ensure a better future for our kids.

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[Translation]

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Mr. Alupa Clarke (Beauport—Limoilou, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Phoenix pay system fiasco has reached a new low.

Over 150 desperate public servants have turned to the Access to Information Act in order to find out the details of their pay file. The minister is bragging about being proactive and taking quick action on this file. I do not believe that to be the case, however. In fact, thousands of families have been hung out to dry, without knowing what happens next.

After all this, does the minister seriously expect us to believe that public servants still have faith in her leadership?

Mr. Steven MacKinnon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the member for Gatineau, and like all members of the House, I believe that the problems with the Phoenix pay system are unacceptable, but we are going to solve them. That said, I cannot believe I am hearing this from a member of the very party that left us the problem of the Phoenix pay system. He should come with me to my riding to explain why the Conservatives left us a problem like the Phoenix pay system. In any case, we will solve the problems caused by this system.

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INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, CBC/Radio-Canada released a Trump team document listing trade practices it does not like, such as supply management, softwood lumber, potential support for Bombardier, Hydro-Quebec's procurement policies, and patents, all of which are critical issues for Quebec.

This is worrisome because every time Ottawa signs an agreement, some Quebec industry pays the price. It happened with softwood lumber in the United States and cheese in Europe.

The government must stand firm and fight tooth and nail for Quebec's economy. Will the government commit to leaving the bargaining table if Donald Trump is unreasonable?

Mr. Jean-Claude Poissant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are working very closely with the new U.S. government on issues of mutual interest in the agriculture sector.

The minister will soon be meeting with the new secretary of state for agriculture. Our agriculture sectors are very closely linked, and

we are working to ensure that Canadian farm families continue to prosper.

We are working with dairy producers and processors to modernize their facilities, which will make them more competitive in the long term.

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OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, over the next 20 years, Statistics Canada projects a major decline in the number of people in Quebec and Canada who have French as a mother tongue and of those who use French to communicate. The threat to the French language are the language transfers that favour the federal language policy imposed on Quebec. The only solution is independence. Outside Quebec, the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada has said that this policy is a passive way to assimilate French.

Will the federal government finally acknowledge what is going on before French disappears entirely?

Mr. Sean Casey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as this is the first time I am rising in this role, I would like to say that I am very proud to be the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage and to have the responsibility to speak to the subject of official languages. Our two official languages, French and English, are at the heart of our history and who we are. We have launched a Canada-wide consultation and we will analyze all the data that might support us in preparing our first official languages action plan that will come into effect in 2018.

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QUEBEC

Ms. Monique Pausé (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in the aftermath of the tragic terrorist attack in Quebec City, we must do everything in our power to ease tensions and condemn those who fuel them. Unfortunately, a Vancouver commentator used the attack in Quebec City to incite hatred, by publishing an article in the *Washington Post* where he states that Quebec is a society whose unique culture produces a lot of lunatics prone to public massacres. He says that Quebec is a racist, anti-Semitic, and pro-fascist society.

Does the Canadian government condemn these racist and inflammatory remarks?

● (1205)

Mr. Arif Virani (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage (Multiculturalism), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question because it draws attention to a very serious situation.

We, government members, along with all other members of the House and all Canadians stand in solidarity with the Muslim community and the friends and families of those who lost their lives last Sunday.

Government Orders

We know that Quebecers and other Canadians espouse the values of tolerance, inclusion, and diversity that Canada is known for.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Mr. Speaker, I believe that if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent for the following motion: that the House strongly condemn the hateful remarks made against the people of Quebec by a columnist from Vancouver in the *Washington Post* on February 1, 2017, and urge the government to stand up for Quebec's reputation on the international stage.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Does the hon. member have the unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

PETITIONS

DEMOCRATIC REFORM

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition from my constituents about the state of our democracy. They say the consent of the governed is a foundational element of Canadian democracy and is the sole basis of the legitimacy of those elected to govern.

It therefore calls on us to ensure that any changes that are made to our electoral system only happen if there is a national referendum where people are consulted.

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QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

CANADA-EUROPEAN UNION COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC AND TRADE AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT

The House resumed consideration of Bill C-30, An Act to implement the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement between Canada and the European Union and its Member States and to provide for certain other measures, as reported (with amendments) from the committee, and of the motions in Group No. 1.

Mr. Francis Drouin (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House today to take part in the debate on the agreement between Canada and Europe. More

specifically, I would like to talk about the benefits it will bring to small businesses and to the agricultural sector.

In my riding, highly specialized agricultural ventures and small businesses play a vital role.

[English]

The comprehensive and economic trade agreement, or CETA, is one of the most ambitious trade agreements that Canada has ever negotiated. It will open doors and guarantee access for SMEs and agricultural exporters throughout the EU, the world's second-largest economy and import market.

• (1210)

This agreement will generate significant benefits for all Canadians. I want to speak, first, about the important of SMEs to the Canadian economy and why this agreement is essential to the success of our SMEs in global markets. In Canada, SMEs employ some 10 million Canadians, the equivalent of nearly 90% of Canada's total private sector workforce. SMEs clearly have a significant role to play in Canada's future prosperity. Our government firmly believes in supporting our hard-working SMEs in succeeding in this role.

In a recent profile by Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada on Canadian SMEs and their export characteristics, it was found that about 10% of our country's SMEs exported goods and or services in 2011, with export sales accounting for 4% of total company revenues. Notably, the report highlights the superior financial performance by exporters compared with non-exporters. SMEs that export generated, on average, higher sales, pre-tax profit margins, and returns on assets compared with non-exporters.

The report also found that exporters were more research-and-development intensive than non-exporters, spending 8% of annual revenues on R and D on average, compared with 6% for non-exporters. Exporters were more growth-oriented than non-exporters with about 10% growing sales by 20% or more per year over the 2009-11 period compared with 8% for non-exporters.

These findings are indicative of the importance of global markets to Canadian SMEs' success. One way to support our SMEs is by ensuring they have accessible opportunities abroad and creating advantageous conditions with these markets for them to compete. The negotiation of CETA furthers such an aim.

The European Union and its 28 member states are an important market for Canada. I have to say that this is an access to a market of 500 million people for our SMEs. The EU is Canada's second most important destination for SME exports behind the U.S., and key for global supply chains with more Fortune 500 companies than anywhere else in the world.

Government Orders

This important access to supply chain is an important avenue of opportunities for the global ambitions of many Canadian SMEs. CETA aims to lift barriers that have held our SME exporters from taking full advantage of accessing this lucrative market. CETA's comprehensive tariff elimination will result in many Canadian products as supported by SMEs to become more competitive in the EU.

Of the EU's more than 9,000 tariff lines, approximately 98% will be duty free for Canadian goods when CETA comes into force. Almost all of the remaining tariff lines will be eliminated when the agreement is fully implemented.

For Canadian SME service suppliers, CETA will provide the best quality market access that the EU, the world's largest importer of services, has ever provided in a trade agreement. As well, it is the most ambitious commitment on temporary entry the EU has ever granted.

Furthermore, CETA will open new opportunities for Canadian SMEs in the EU's estimated \$3.3 trillion government procurement market. Once CETA enters into force, Canadian firms will be able to supply goods and select services to all levels of EU government, including the EU's 28 member states and thousands of regional and local government entities.

CETA also includes other innovations that will save time and money for Canadian businesses, such as the protocol on conformity assessment that will allow Canadian manufacturers in certain sectors to have their product tested and certified in Canada for sale in the EU. This can be particularly useful for SMEs. CETA addresses many of the barriers noted by SME exporters head-on and will create advantageous conditions for SMEs to pursue new opportunities in the EU.

Our government is committed to supporting the dynamics and export preparedness of our Canadian businesses, particularly SMEs. CETA is a landmark initiative that furthers this goal.

The other important part of my riding is agriculture. The Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector is also a vibrant and important facet of our economy.

We are the fifth-largest exporter of agricultural and agri-food products in the world, and renowned as a reliable supplier for safe and high-quality products. As a medium-sized economy, our economic prosperity is built on open trade, and this is especially important for agricultural and agri-food exporters.

It is estimated that approximately half of the value of primary agricultural production in Canada is exported, either as a primary commodity or processed food and beverages product. The EU is an important market for Canada in this sector and holds strong potential for our agricultural exporters. Preferential market access to the EU, the world's second-largest importer of agriculture and agri-food products, will foster growth and create new opportunities for Canada's producers and processors.

CETA reduces tariffs and non-tariff barriers to create a more stable and transparent export environment for our agricultural sector. To give members an example, it is estimated that, because of CETA, \$1.5 billion of potential exports will happen for our agricultural

sector: \$600 million for our beef sector; \$400 million for our pork producers; \$100 million of grain and oil seeds; and \$300 million in processed foods, fruits, and vegetables. This is good news for our farmers.

Currently, Canadian agricultural exports to the EU face prohibitively high tariff rates, with average EU agricultural tariffs of 13.9%. Key Canadian exports, such as durum and high-quality common wheat currently face maximum tariffs of up to 148 euros per tonne. When CETA is fully implemented, most of these tariffs will be eliminated, making Canada's agricultural products more competitive and attractive to the EU's half a billion consumers.

CETA will also create new opportunities for the food processing and beverage industry. On the day of CETA's entering into force, all EU tariffs on Canadian processed foods, with the exception of sweet corn and refined sugar, will be immediately eliminated. This comprehensive tariff elimination across the board will directly benefit Canada's processed food and beverages sector to generate more opportunities, which will lead to more jobs, higher wages, and greater long-term prosperity for Canadians.

CETA also recognizes that barriers to trade extend beyond import tariffs. The agreement will establish mechanisms to address key issues of importance to our producers, including committees and regulatory co-operation.

CETA also includes provisions to address non-tariff measures in the EU, such as those related to animal and plant health, and food safety.

• (1215)

[*Translation*]

The Canada-European Union comprehensive economic and trade agreement is a good deal for our farmers and our small businesses. Access to a market of 500 million consumers is very good news for our country. At the end of the day, this agreement is good for small businesses and farmers.

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech.

I know that he is a member of the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food. Like people in many agricultural ridings, the people in my riding are concerned mainly about compensation promised to dairy and cheese producers in connection with the Canada-European Union comprehensive economic and trade agreement.

Government Orders

Under the previous government, when the agreement was first signed, there was a promise, a commitment to provide compensation to help the industry with the transition. Compensation was eventually pegged at \$4.3 billion over 10 years, which is about \$430 million per year.

The problem is that, when the Liberals promised compensation, the amount was much smaller, having shrunk to \$350 million over five years. That five-year amount is smaller than the yearly amount promised at first.

Can the member comment on the negative impact this dramatically lower compensation will have on dairy and cheese producers, especially in regions where the industry is extremely important to the economy?

Mr. Francis Drouin: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his question.

Being the finance critic, he must understand that we compare apples to apples, not to oranges. The compensation he is talking about covered two agreements, CETA and the TPP. The TPP has not been signed or ratified, so obviously, the numbers are different.

The estimated impact on our dairy producers under CETA is 1.4% compared to a 3.25% hit with the TPP. It is clearly not the same thing.

I am pleased to announce that \$100 million will be available to our processors and that \$250 million will be available to our dairy producers to help them make the transition and become more competitive.

I thank my colleague for his question, but he is not comparing the same things.

• (1220)

[*English*]

Ms. Karen Ludwig (New Brunswick Southwest, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I heard my colleague speak earlier about agriculture. He clearly has a strong understanding of its significance in his riding and his province.

Through the international trade committee, we heard consistently from agricultural producers about the importance of international trade. We live in a country with 33 million people, and the opportunity to expand our markets is absolutely critical.

My question to the hon. member ties in to the previous question about compensation. We heard from farmers who told us about compensation packages in conjunction with innovation so they are more innovative and competitive and can expand markets, not only for exporting but for importing opportunities.

What is our government doing to help our agricultural sector, in terms of imports and exports, become more innovative, such as the CanExport program? I wonder if you could elaborate on that.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I am sure the hon. member did not mean me but meant the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell. I would remind the hon. member to always please speak through the chair.

Mr. Francis Drouin: Mr. Speaker, I represent over 300 dairy producers in my riding, and they were extremely happy when our

government announced \$350 million: \$100 million to help our processors, and I have two processors in my riding; and \$250 million to help our dairy farmers transition to help make them more competitive.

The UN estimates that by 2050, we will have to increase our food production by at least 70%. CETA provides that vehicle, but we need to ensure that our farmers are well positioned to make Canada the best place in the world so they can compete with other countries.

The agri-marketing program helps our farmers bring over investors so they understand what happens here and so we can help position their products in other countries in the world.

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure and a privilege to rise today to speak to Bill C-30, an act to implement the Canada-European Union trade agreement.

I would first like to make some acknowledgements to our team members, the ones who made this possible. I speak, of course, of Mr. Steve Verheul and Kirsten Hillman, as well as their team, who worked long and hard and have proven to be some of the very best negotiators this globe has to offer. I speak, as well, of colleagues of mine. They are the member for Abbotsford, who was the former trade minister, and our thoughts and prayers are with him, as he has some health issues, and the former agriculture minister, who is the current trade critic and with whom I have the privilege to sit as deputy critic on the trade committee. We also want to congratulate the Liberals for doing the work that was necessary to bring this home. Today we are working toward signing the agreement and sending it on its way to make it a reality.

I want to start off with a quick history of trade.

We have always traded. People have always known that it is important. It is not only important, but it is impossible for us to acquire what we need without trade. Some of us are blessed with agriculture. Some of us are blessed with the ability to make things. Some of us have other abilities.

Throughout history, civilizations have moved with trade, but there has always been the issue of tariffs. There has always been protectionism that caused trade to slow down. There have been governments that, for their own selfish reasons and ambitions, have taken some of those hard earnings and the work of those who created the goods.

Throughout the history of the world, people and governments have worked toward freeing trade. I think we can begin with the 18th century. Adam Smith argued that we must more and more lower tariffs, eliminate tariffs, and make trade global. That continued in the 19th century and the 20th century. We saw two awful wars. We saw World War I, and the death and destruction it caused, and World War II, which seemed to accelerate the ability of people to wreak havoc on our lives.

Government Orders

There was a renewed call to make people work together and give them a reason to live in peace. Trade is a wonderful example of that. In 1949, the World Trade Organization was formed, and work went on to free up trade.

We saw what that led to. On our continent, it led to NAFTA, an amazing agreement that allowed us to work with the United States and Mexico to have a flow of goods continue to move back and forth, and that has resulted in some prosperity.

There have been some mishaps and some setbacks are happening in the United States at this point. However, here in Canada, we know that NAFTA has been a good thing.

We have also had a number of smaller agreements, but today we want to talk about CETA. CETA is amazing. It has been called the crown jewel of trade agreements.

Trade has lifted nations out of poverty. I read recently that the World Health Organization has stated that extreme poverty has been cut in half in the last 15 years. We know that these are things that work and benefit mankind.

Some hard work and coordination has taken place. The Conservative government's record is excellent on free trade. We understand the importance of free trade. I mentioned NAFTA earlier. There were some smaller agreements the Conservative government arranged, such as the free trade agreement with Korea, and then of course CETA.

We are a trading nation. The Conservatives believe in free trade that will generate increased economic activity, drive prosperity and job creation, and foster greater co-operation among our democratic allies.

• (1225)

In my home province of Ontario, we are quite excited about trade. It certainly has some great possibilities for us. My colleague likes to refer to it as the “reunification bill”, because most of us can trace our ancestry to Europe. Some of us can trace a very recent development with respect to that as well. My parents came from the Netherlands. I know, Mr. Speaker, that your parents came from Italy. I think we could go on and on in this House. There is no question that we have some great roots and ethnic abilities.

There are four things I want to talk about.

First, when CETA comes into force, nearly 100% of all EU tariffs on non-agriculture products will be duty free, along with close to 94% of EU tariff lines for agricultural products. Why does that make a difference to southwestern Ontario? In southwestern Ontario, we are blessed to have incredible land and a beautiful climate. We produce some of the highest outputs of corn, soybeans, and wheat. We also have an incredible greenhouse industry. It was started by Italian immigrants. This industry has spread and grown. My riding of Chatham-Kent—Leamington has the largest collection of greenhouses in North America.

There are possibilities and opportunities to move forward and present them to people who have direct roots in Europe.

Second, the Canada-EU trade agreement will also give Canadians service suppliers. Service suppliers employ more than 13.8 million

Canadians and account for 70% of total Canadian GDP. The best market access to the EU has been granted through this free trade agreement. The agreement will establish greater transparency in the EU service markets, resulting in better, more secure, and more predictable market access. We will have that opportunity as well, oftentimes with people we know, people we are accustomed to, and customs that we know. It will provide access to 500 million people and the largest GDP on the planet.

Third, the Canada-EU trade agreement will provide Canadian and EU investors with greater certainty, stability, transparency, and protection for their investments. Preferential access to the EU will attract investments in Canada from our largest trading partner, the U. S. Conversely, EU investors will look to Canada as a gateway to NAFTA. If that is true, then it is certainly true for southwestern Ontario and my riding, because we are right at the doorstep of the United States. We have the opportunity to trade with the United States, which will be looking to us to access Europe, because it is not participating in this EU agreement. As well, Europe will be looking to us for access to the United States. It offers us an amazing number of possibilities.

Fourth, the Canada-EU trade agreement gives Canadian suppliers of goods and services secure, preferential access to the world's largest procurement market. What does that mean? There are a number of countries in the EU that are in constant need of services and supplies for their governments. This gives us an opportunity to tap into those.

I want to close with the government's responsibility. I want to talk about the responsibility of government, which is to keep us competitive. We do that by lowering red tape, lowering taxes, and reducing debt. I wish I had more time to talk about that. I implore the current government to not make the mistake it is making by going further into debt, which will cause higher taxes and result in making us less competitive.

I will close by saying that the government's responsibility is to make sure that this agreement works. It is the people's responsibility to be creative and to offer products at reasonable rates that will be attractive to their clients, but it is the government's responsibility to make sure that it will work. It is its responsibility to do that by keeping taxes low and regulations low. I am looking forward to this agreement being signed.

• (1230)

Ms. Karen Ludwig (New Brunswick Southwest, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first, I want to thank my hon. colleague for his helpful presentation of the historical context in which we find ourselves today.

As a fellow member of the trade committee and a strong free trader himself, does the hon. member share my enthusiasm for an agreement that may well serve as a model to the world in these changing times internationally?

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren: Mr. Speaker, I must say that we work on a great committee and have been working on this agreement for quite some time.

Government Orders

Yes, I do. I know that she, as well, has spoken about the opportunities that will exist in her riding and how they will help change the lives of her constituents. I am very optimistic. I feel that this agreement will open up new agreements. It is a benchmark. We used to hear the Americans talk about their city on the hill and their beacon. This is a beacon. This is a beacon of free trade for the rest of the world.

I am very proud to be part of a government and a country that is moving this trade agreement forward.

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I certainly agree with the member that we want to reduce red tape for businesses. We want businesses in our country to trade globally, to flourish, to thrive. Government's role is to support businesses and reduce barriers so they can get products to market, but it is also government's role to protect everyday citizens, especially the most vulnerable or those facing challenges in access to health care.

With the changes to intellectual property rules for pharmaceuticals under CETA, drug costs are expected to increase by over \$850 million annually. The Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions has also warned that it could make it more difficult to bring down prices through a national pharmacare program.

Is the member concerned that CETA would lead to increased costs of prescription drugs for Canadians, given that Canadians already pay more for prescription drugs than almost every other OECD country? Is the member willing to support a trade deal that could increase costs for the people in his constituency?

•(1235)

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren: Mr. Speaker, that topic was raised repeatedly. There is no question there were some strong concerns about that. When the trade negotiators and the expert panel were at committee, we repeatedly asked that question.

I must confess that there is no uniform agreement on how that is going to work, but I was convinced by the testimony that I heard that this should not affect our costs, inasmuch as they will increase. There is a real possibility that we could see a decrease.

There are other things governments could do as well. I think provincial and federal governments have been talking about how we could pool our purchasing power. That is probably the direction in which we will have to go. I share his concerns about those who are most vulnerable and those who are poor. We want to make sure that any time we enter any agreement, our eyes are on those individuals. We want to make sure their lives are being bettered by it as well.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are debating a very important trade agreement between Canada and the European Union. My question is related to getting this bill through given the importance of trade to Canada. With what is happening in the U.S. today, we are in a great position to capitalize on being a corridor of trade that would flow from the EU to Canada and into the United States.

I wonder if the member could provide some thoughts on that.

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren: Mr. Speaker, I agree with the hon. member that this is a great opportunity for us to be the link between the United States and Europe. We will be in the enviable position to

be the only country between those two great economic powers. I am looking forward to it. I think we are headed in the right direction with this agreement.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Linda Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased to listen to my colleague, who sits with me on the Standing Committee on International Trade. I am very proud to have been serving on that committee for the past year now.

I rise today to speak to Bill C-30, the Canada-European Union comprehensive economic and trade agreement implementation act, which has reached third reading.

Having had the unique opportunity of sitting on the Standing Committee on International Trade for almost a year now, I can attest that the Canada-European Union comprehensive economic and trade agreement, also known as CETA, is not only a priority, but also a great source of Canadian pride for our committee.

As I indicated at second reading, CETA was already a major topic of discussion when I was a member of the Quebec National Assembly as far back as 2007. At the time, I was lucky enough to be the critic for economic development, and I strongly supported economic diversification in Canada and Quebec, specifically through the diversification of our trading partners. I remember how difficult the 2008 financial crisis was for Canada, but I never lost faith in our people and our institutions to get through that difficult time.

Significant changes have taken place on the world stage recently, especially when it comes to trade. The global economic and trading conditions have shifted on every continent. Just look at the United States and how it withdrew from the trans-Pacific partnership negotiations, on which we worked so hard over the past year.

The shift is inward facing. Some of the speeches we have heard could even be described as having protectionist overtones. We have seen it in Europe, where the European Union will now have to negotiate with Great Britain, and even south of the border, where our neighbour's new leader has been making major trade announcements.

During these trying times, I am personally very proud to see Canada assert its leadership on progressive international trade and move forward while protecting Canada's economic interests.

Government Orders

Many economists agree: market diversification is key to the success of our businesses here at home from coast to coast. To our government, progressive trade represents growth, and growth represents more jobs here in Canada and in our local communities, who are all desperate for work.

I know and am convinced that the comprehensive economic agreement with Europe will bring about growth and also real opportunities to strengthen Canada's middle class. Let us not delude ourselves, however. As we have seen in 2008, when our main trade partners' economies falter, Canada is also hit hard. It is in this context that Canada leads the way by negotiating one of the most ambitious and progressive economic agreements ever.

The implementation of CETA, and passage of Bill C-30, is a real Canadian success story that all Canadians can be proud of because we must diversify our economy and accept new trade partners for the sake of our children, our small businesses, and future generations.

Greater access to European markets is the natural next step not only because we have similar values but also because we want to diversify our economies and our trade partners. It is natural for Europeans to want to trade with countries like Canada. First we are staunch supporters of human rights and workers' rights, and we are also an economic hub for innovation and knowledge. Canada is a country that provides excellent training, our workforce is highly skilled, and we understand that the knowledge economy is the economy of the future and of the 21st century.

I can say that my riding in the northern suburb of Montreal has many innovative businesses and leaders in a multitude of key Canadian economic sectors including manufacturing, robotics, automation, aerospace, informatics, and food processing.

• (1240)

I have all of that in my riding. The signing of CETA will lead to many new opportunities for those companies. Since the election, I have been meeting with companies. I have visited their facilities and I have listened to what they have to say about what works for them and what does not. One thing these companies always mention is how they are looking forward to CETA's coming into force.

The implementation of CETA will have an unprecedented impact on these companies. They will be able to increase their production because European markets will now be open to them. The opening of these markets will allow a number of companies, not only in Rivière-des-Mille-Îles but all across Canada, to really take off and finally gain access to a larger demand in some sectors where the customer base may be somewhat limited.

I often hear Canadians saying that SMEs, companies in my riding and across the country, are trapped in the valley of death. Access to European markets will allow many of them to finally cross that valley, find new clients, and have new opportunities that will allow them to really take off.

CETA also provides an opportunity for Canadian and European companies to share best practices in their field, and it may also allow some companies to be able to grow quickly and achieve their full potential.

The sharing of best practices is essential, and it is one of the agreement's strongest elements, as is the provision that facilitates labour mobility. Once this important economic agreement comes into effect, this little-known provision will allow greater labour mobility in a number of key sectors in the Canadian economy, especially the service industry, which has been booming for the past few years. It is also important to note that, not only is the European Union the second-largest economy in the world, boasting a market of 500 million people, but it also has one of the most developed and advanced service industries on the planet.

This agreement will put more Canadians to work; it means growing channels of innovation; and it means exciting times for our small and medium-sized businesses in many sectors.

While much of the rest of the global economy is closing its borders, Canada, for its part, is opening its arms, well aware of the important role it has to play. When CETA comes into force, Canada will be in an enviable position, for it will be able to eliminate tariffs and will be the only country to have such a massive trade agreement with European markets.

As Canadians, we can all be proud of the Canada-European union comprehensive economic and trade agreement that was concluded and, as a result, the opening of our markets with Europe. I am very proud of this. I hope all my colleagues in the House will enthusiastically support this agreement and Bill C-30.

• (1245)

[*English*]

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to ask my colleague to share a bit about the consultation process that goes into a trade deal like this one. It is obviously an important aspect of the discussion.

I think some people criticize trade deals because they say the discussions happen in secret, but the reality is that many stakeholders are invited to provide their input, within the privacy necessary for those negotiations.

As was the case with the negotiations on the trans-Pacific partnership, the same process was followed for CETA, where different stakeholders were able to be engaged in the conversation throughout.

I wonder if the member could comment on that process and the importance of the ongoing consultation that was done by the previous government in the context of negotiating this important trade deal.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Linda Lapointe: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. Of course consultations are important. We held a lot of consultations about the trans-Pacific partnership. We also held consultations about CETA even though the process was pretty far along.

Government Orders

There are so many different perspectives. Some people are really going to like it; others are not. For example, when it comes to fish and seafood products, people in the Maritimes will definitely benefit from this agreement because it will eliminate tariffs of up to 25%. Great opportunities will open up for regions on both the Pacific and Atlantic coasts. In my riding, the manufacturing sector will be the biggest winner.

Ultimately, we will have access to European Union markets. We will be in an enviable position as the only country in America to have that. We will be a gateway. All in all, this is a win.

[*English*]

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, did the member consider the recommendations at the trade committee or will she support the CETA revisions we are proposing in the House today, which will give me confidence as the member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith that some very specific businesses and industries in my region will be protected?

I understand that Vancouver Island cheese producers who use words like “feta”, “brie”, and “Camembert” in their packaging will no longer be able to do that. This will affect the Comox cheese, Natural Pastures, and Salt Spring Island cheese companies, which are big businesses in our region. They will not be allowed to use those words anymore.

The government, both the Conservative and Liberal, failed to negotiate similar protections for our local brands, the Nanaimo bar, for example. Will a European company be able to market a Nanaimo bar? Will it be able to market Saskatoon berries?

I am very concerned that there are no protections for wineries in Nanaimo. Both Chateau Wolff and Millstone are growing wineries in my region. I am afraid the provisions will in fact exacerbate the existing tremendous trade imbalance between European and Canadian wine. The Canadian Vintners Association asked for protections in order to accommodate, but it received no assurances.

I am very concerned about local jobs in the maritime industry. If we no longer ensure it has to be local people, who know our waters intimately, and if they no longer have those jobs, safety is jeopardized and absolutely coastal economy is jeopardized. Three thousand jobs are at stake, and now those can be offshore.

Could the member please assure me that she gave those recommendations serious consideration at committee and that she will support the motion brought forward by the member for Essex which proposes to make CETA a better deal for Canada?

•(1250)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Linda Lapointe: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for sharing her constituents' concerns with me.

She talked about dairy products and feta cheeses. As a representative from Quebec on the Standing Committee on International Trade, I can tell her that Quebec is the largest producer of fine cheese in Canada and that we are very large consumers of it.

It is true that Europeans produce a lot of cheese and dairy products. However, Canadian companies are very competitive in terms of the quality and variety of their products. Of course an

agreement as progressive as the one we are signing will raise some concerns. However, I maintain that this will help create jobs.

I have a hard time with the protectionist talk around the issue. Considering what is happening right now in Europe and the United States, we understand all the problems protectionism can cause. It is my sincere belief that opening the job market and signing the Canada-European Union comprehensive economic and trade agreement is the right thing to do. Of course this is something we consider when we sign a free trade agreement.

[*English*]

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin my comments by sharing a few small but important examples with the House on why trade is important to my riding.

Back in 2013, the former minister of agriculture, known in this place as the member for Battlefords—Lloydminster, signed a deal with China that would result in an innovative new way to send B.C. cherries to China. It was not only innovative from both a food science and regulatory perspective, it actually resulted in B.C. cherries being able to access the Chinese market two weeks faster than our competitors from other countries. Two weeks is a massive time savings when we consider cherries have a one-month shelf life.

I mention these things because one day I had a meeting with a group of local fruit growers. The growers came to my office not to request more government funding or support, but rather to share with me that this new opportunity in China was working incredibly well for them and was creating very lucrative returns.

Many people in my area are concerned about keeping farmers farming. If there is a good income to be made, the fastest and strongest way that any government can support farmers is to ensure that they can receive those returns. Again, I go back to it. In other words, they wanted me to know what their government had done and that it was working for them.

Now I will briefly provide another quick example. A local winemaker shared with me news that he done a million dollar deal selling his wine direct to Asia. For a small family winery, that is simply massively exciting news for them. More so, when we consider that this same small family winery still cannot sell directly into Ontario. However, that is a topic we will save for another day.

The point of these examples is that trade creates new opportunities that in turn create prosperity. Best of all, it is not government largesse but opportunity that they want. We know now that when Canadians compete with the world, we can and do succeed every day, allowing us to thrive and for these farm families, these small businesses, to flourish.

Government Orders

I say we know now because, of course, as a country, we did not always know that. There was a time shortly after the first free trade agreement when the free trade agreement with the United States was announced, some B.C. vintners threatened to tear up their grapes, so convinced were they that they could not compete with the vast acres of the massive California wine industry.

Today one of my constituents frequently consults and provides his expertise to the California wine industry. Another one of the wineries in my riding is actually buying up a few California wineries.

I believe members can all understand my enthusiasm and my support for what new opportunities will become available with the implementation of the comprehensive economic and trade agreement deal.

On that same theme, I would like to commend the government for carrying on the good work of the former government to see this CETA deal moving forward. Having said that, I do have a few serious concerns I would like to share.

None of us in this place know exactly what changes, if any, may become of our most important trade relationship south of our border. However, I believe we would all agree that diversifying and creating new trade opportunities is the type of due diligence and leadership that we can collectively provide in Ottawa.

However, we must also be very careful. So much as market access is critically important, we also must not forget that trade is always a two-way street. If our side of the street is full of road bumps that slow things down and is more expensive to travel on, then trade can become more of a one-way street and flow more in one direction.

● (1255)

How do we prevent that? Here is the good news. On the regulatory side of things all parties in this place voted in support of the Red Tape Regulatory Reduction Act that was approved in the 41st Parliament. I mention this as the new president has indicated that he will introduce similar measures in the United States, even going a step further than our one for one regulatory reduction, calling for a two-to-one reduction.

Historically, also working in Canada's favour is the fact that we have had lower corporate and small business taxes, something members may recall the Burger King Corporation was eager to take advantage of when it moved its head office from the United States to Canada. Here again the new president has indicated he will seek to lower U.S. corporate taxation rates similar to Canada.

Most of the world has paid no attention to the fact that the president is doing these things because people are mesmerized instead by his presidential Twitter feed. Rest assured that in Canada we need not lose focus on the big picture, and it is the big picture about which I am most concerned.

The Liberal government has dictated a national carbon tax regime that will increase the costs of doing business in Canada. We must keep in mind that none of our major competitors, not the United States of America, not China nor India are following our lead on this. When people are no longer following us, then we are no longer leading the way.

The Liberals say that these increased carbon tax costs will not make a difference to our competitiveness. Here is some food for thought on that.

In British Columbia, in 2008, at the time the B.C. carbon tax was introduced, basically 100% of all cement used in British Columbia was manufactured in British Columbia. Why not? Concrete is not exactly a lightweight, inexpensive product to import and then transport from other jurisdictions. What happened when B.C. produced concrete that was subject to a carbon tax in 2008? It became more expensive.

By 2014, B.C.-produced concrete only accounted for roughly 65% of all concrete used in British Columbia because cheaper concrete was being imported from jurisdictions with no carbon tax. As result of this, the B.C. government is now providing financial subsidies to the B.C. concrete industry. Now the B.C. pulp and paper sector is looking for similar carbon tax relief.

It should also be pointed out that B.C. greenhouse growers have also secured B.C. carbon tax exemptions, not unlike many of Ontario's worst industrial polluters that have also received extensions and exclusions from the Ontario cap and trade way of taxing carbon.

In every one of these situations, these exemptions or subsidies are being provided to protect jobs and support local economies. However, we must not overlook who they are protecting these jobs from, and that is ourselves. It is our own government-imposed carbon taxes that we are now in turn subsidizing to compete against jurisdictions that do not have a carbon tax. Let us not forget the exceptions of the B.C. government that has a balanced budget. Many of these subsidies are being provided with borrowed money, borrowed money that taxpayers pay interest on, and this is over and above the carbon tax they pay. We must also consider that in jurisdictions like Ontario, government policies have created some of the highest energy costs in North America.

In Ontario, over 600 jobs are being lost as General Motors is closing a car manufacturing plant and moving jobs to Mexico where they have considerably lower production costs, all at a time when the Liberal government is dramatically increasing the costs on employers through a new carbon tax called big CPP. Even the finance department has said that the big CPP will harm jobs and the Canadian economy for somewhere between 20 and 25 years. We should think about that.

I want to recap something. I am supportive of these opportunities. It is incredibly important that government support these things, but let us not lose sight of the big picture here. The big picture in this government is making us our own competitors. We need to be showing the way in a way that our industries can compete internationally.

● (1300)

Mr. Dan Vandal (Saint Boniface—Saint Vital, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the hon. member for a reasoned speech. I do not agree with everything in his speech, but there were some excellent points.

Government Orders

I think he would agree with me that last November the world changed with the election of a new president of the United States who is wildly unpredictable, more protectionist, and wants to renegotiate NAFTA. I wonder if he could comment on the fact that given those realities of protectionism, unpredictability, and renegotiating of the North American Free Trade Agreement, it becomes more important than ever to actually finalize and approve CETA, and CETA becomes more important than ever for Canada to approve and implement.

Mr. Dan Albas: Mr. Speaker, I think I did make it very clear that I was supportive of CETA, but I also mentioned that trade is a two-way street. Inevitably, if we make it more difficult here in Canada for Canadians to compete internationally, if we make it so that we either do not have proper access, or we have more red tape, or higher taxes, and all the things that go along with many of the policies of the government, we will inevitably see trade dry up on one side of that street. We will see Canadian businesses burdened and not able to employ people. We will continue to see those 600 jobs, and more, go from Canada south to Mexico. Why is that? It is because with those increased costs, we cannot compete successfully.

Those farmers I met with could compete because they needed the access, but we need to continue to make sure they can compete, or else we will end up subsidizing and exempting, all to make sure we do not lose the big picture.

I am just asking the current government to take these things to heart, and if it is ready to actually engage, to do the right things and not put us down a road that we are going to regret five, 10, or 20 years out.

Ms. Georgina Jolibois (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question is in line with world changes happening currently with the election of President Donald Trump and with the Brexit vote. If the U.K. triggers its exit from the EU and also leaves CETA, is the member comfortable with the concessions Canada has made in CETA, given that the U.K. represents nearly half of Canada's export market to the EU?

• (1305)

Mr. Dan Albas: Mr. Speaker, first, the United Kingdom cannot engage in any new trade deals until after it has formally triggered Brexit. Given our long-standing ties with the many Commonwealth countries, particularly the United Kingdom, it would be helpful, and I would hope other members would support this. My understanding is the United Kingdom was very key in the negotiations of CETA, and perhaps we could come to terms rather quickly and maintain that market access. Of course, that would take the government to engage with the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom has been talking to many other liberal western democracies, such as the United States, because it believes it is in its interest to keep trade lines open.

Therefore, I really hope the government will be quick on its feet and that it has pounded on the door to let the United Kingdom know that Canada wants to not only continue that relationship but increase it.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise to speak to Bill C-30 for the second time now. It is a great event when we can implement a progressive trade agenda between Canada and our second-largest trading partner, the European Union.

It gives me great pleasure as the chair of the Canada-Italy Interparliamentary Group, as an Italian citizen, a European citizen, as well as a Canadian citizen to say that our two communities are working together. This is an unprecedented trade deal in the world we live in. It will bring great benefits to the Canadian economy as well as the European economy. It will open up new markets for our manufacturers and our service providers, firms looking to create personal wealth for their citizens. It will drive long-term economic growth.

When I look at the trade deal that we brought over the finish line, that we completed as a government, I must congratulate our current Minister of Foreign Affairs for her work on completing the agreement, and I congratulate the European Parliament for passing the agreement and now it will go to the individual European Union members.

When I look at what we are putting in place as a government, I say how are we growing the middle class, how are we strengthening the middle class, which is the backbone of our economy, the backbone of Canadian society for generations, and that is the way it will continue.

This morning we created a thing called Toronto Global, where we joined with our municipal partners and our provincial partners and we invested funds to help grow the Toronto economy, an investment hub in Toronto. Toronto as we know is an economic generator in Canada, along with the oil patch in Alberta, along with the manufacturing sector in the heartland of Ontario, and here we are investing.

A few months ago, the Minister of Foreign Affairs created this Investment Canada hub downtown, \$218 million over five years, again, to attract investment to Canada. Why? To create good-paying, middle-class jobs for all Canadians, for the future of my daughters, and for folks here who may be grandparents or parents, so that they will have good jobs for their kids.

I look at our progressive trade agenda that has been implemented with the European Union. I look at some of the things we have done with this deal. There is a chapter on environmental protection, a chapter on sustainable development, and a chapter on labour. This is what I would call a trade deal that is win-win, fair, right, and progressive. We need to underscore it, because that is important for our relationship with all countries around the world, and specifically with the European Union.

I look at companies such as Fiat Chrysler Canada, which is part of FCA group headed out of Turin, Italy. I look at investments they have made in cities like Windsor and Brampton. I look at the jobs that they are creating, the good middle-class jobs that they are providing for Canadians from coast to coast to coast. It is very important.

I look at my own personal background and what trade has done for me. I grew up in northern British Columbia. To pay for my university education, I worked at the Canadian grain elevator, which as we can imagine exported wheat, barley, and oats through Prince Rupert to countries all over the world. These were very good, and still are very good, above-average paying middle-class jobs.

It gives me great pride to acknowledge that trade grows our Canadian economy. Trade is good, and that is what this deal does. The European Union alone imports over \$2 trillion worth of goods and services. That is larger than the Canadian economy. We think about the opportunities that Canadian companies will have to export their manufactured goods, but even above that, above the manufacturing sector, we think of the services, so we think of consultants, we think of organizations. We look at the opportunities for procurement, for transportation companies to not only bid on jobs in the European Union, but also to employ Canadians. The opportunities are tremendous.

We look at what we have done to strengthen the middle class in addition to CETA. We look at our plan for infrastructure in Canada. Obviously that will be a plan that will strengthen our ports, our airports, and our waterways, so goods and services can be exported expeditiously and efficiently to countries in Europe.

Another bonus is our plan for middle-class Canadians in terms of taxes. We lowered taxes last year. Nine million Canadians now pay lower taxes in Canada. Over \$20 billion of tax relief is another measure to strengthen the middle class. The Canada child benefit is something to strengthen the middle class. CETA is something that will strengthen the middle class. I am very proud to speak to this measure today.

• (1310)

When I look at the country of Italy where my parents came from, the trade that goes back and forth and the strong cultural and historic ties, I can only say that CETA is a win-win for both where I came from and for the country we now call home and love. CETA provides us with a tremendous opportunity to strengthen ties, to invest in both countries, and to create those good-paying middle-class jobs.

I would say to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle that if they look at the economic data on Canada, we have had very strong gross domestic product and employment numbers in the last two to three months. We have seen a pick-up in Canada. There is uncertainty, but the only thing we can do with uncertainty is to have a steady hand. That is why we have a foreign affairs minister doing what she is doing and a trade minister doing what he is doing, which is reaching out to our counterparts and allies. We will stand together with them, grow the economy through CETA, and continue to do that. I am proud to be a part of that.

On the infrastructure side, there is \$181 billion over 12 years. As we know, infrastructure allows for the strengthening of economic growth, today and tomorrow. We will continue to implement that. In a few months, in the riding I am from, they will open a new subway, the York-Spadina subway extension from the city of Toronto. That is infrastructure that is being put to use. Approximately three or four weeks ago, I was proud to announce an investment by the Canadian government for a new inter-regional transit terminal in the city of Vaughan. That will again strengthen the local economy, move goods and services, move people, and strengthen the middle class.

CETA is a trade deal that will help us grow the economy, create good jobs, and at the same time strengthen the middle class. I have to underline that.

Government Orders

CETA's improvements for services, investments, labour mobility, and government procurement are groundbreaking. It will be a model for other trade deals that will occur throughout the world. For Canadian companies, 98% of Europe's tariff lines will be eliminated. Again, this is all great for the economy.

As I have heard this morning and in past days, we have been hit with uncertainty on the horizon. However, CETA provides an avenue of certainty for Canadian firms to know that they can trade and invest with the second-largest economy in the world and the second-largest trading partner for Canada. That will allow us to grow a stronger economy.

I will also look at the other measures we have implemented to strengthen the middle class, such as the CPP enhancement, which was groundbreaking for us. It will allow the next generation to know that they will have a strong and healthy retirement, and allow them to retire in dignity.

I think my time is almost up. However, I would like to say this with respect to the CETA deal. It demonstrates to us just how important relationships are in today's world. I believe that the majority of members in the House are in support of the deal. It demonstrates to all of us the path forward that we, as a government, must take with our international allies, a path forward where progressive trade deals and a progressive agenda win. That is the way we will grow our economy. That is the way we will strengthen our middle class. I continue to underline that.

In reading over CETA and the chapters on environmental protection, the innovative approach to investor protection and investment dispute resolution provisions, and the safeguards that are in place regarding our manufacturers—we have obviously excluded the social services aspect from the deal—this deal is groundbreaking. We have finished it, and I am proud of that fact.

To conclude, as someone who has worked internationally, both in New York City and for some time in London, England, and has travelled extensively in Europe and the United States, I look at this deal as almost guaranteeing for my children the opportunities that I have had. That is effectively what it does. It allows us to grow our economy and provide opportunities for individuals and businesses who want to trade, invest, create wealth, and create good-paying Canadian jobs.

• (1315)

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the Liberal government on having successfully rebranded the trade deal that the Conservative government negotiated.

I want to ask the member about trade in the Asia-Pacific area. Of course, with the new President of the United States, there is some doubt about how that will proceed. Our view is that it is certainly important for us to continue to pursue trading arrangements, especially with like-minded democracies in the Asia-Pacific region. In that vein, it is very important for our Prime Minister to speak out about the importance of the open economy, which we have not seen a lot of.

Government Orders

Can the member reflect on the future of trade in the Asia-Pacific, and on what more the Prime Minister needs to be doing to communicate the value of trade in a clear way?

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Mr. Speaker, the member can look at our government's actions in terms of promoting trade and investment to Canada with the recent appointment of the new ambassador, our former hon. colleague. He can look at our government's commitment to grow trade, whether on a large multilateral basis or on a bilateral basis.

Our government, and even from our platform, emphasizes trade as a way of growing our economy and strengthening our middle class. The member has seen our recent actions with the appointment of the new ambassador, our discussions, and the Prime Minister's trip to China a few months ago.

We are committed to strengthening our trade ties with the vast majority of countries, and doing it smartly, with the appropriate and pertinent safeguards in place. We will continue on that path.

Mr. Romeo Saganash (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, NDP): Mr. Speaker, one of the aspects that we seem to forget when we talk about international agreements is the impact that these agreements have on indigenous people, and the constitutional rights of indigenous people in this country. The government has committed to a renewed relationship, a nation-to-nation relationship, with indigenous peoples. Most importantly, in my view that nation-to-nation relationship needs some sort of true meaning.

As I said, these agreements have impacts on the rights of indigenous peoples. With that in mind, I have two simple questions for the member.

Will future bilateral or multilateral negotiations with Canada include the full participation of indigenous peoples because of those rights that are so important to them? When the national chief made his presentation last June to the Standing Committee on International Trade, I think he made that point very strongly. The same principle applies in this case.

Second, there is a constitutional duty to consult and accommodate first nations whenever we affect their rights. Has this duty been carried out in this case with regard to the bill before us?

• (1320)

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Mr. Speaker, I grew up on the northern coast. Approximately 50% of the population in the city I grew up in was indigenous. I know many of the issues that have affected the community, and I have many friends from that community.

When it comes to trade deals, in my personal opinion, it is very simple. We want the benefits of those trade deals to flow to all Canadians, including indigenous Canadians. We want to strengthen the middle class. We want to strengthen the opportunities that are available for the folks I went to high school with, and the folks that remain in the city I grew up in, Prince Rupert. That is the best answer I can provide on this issue. We need to make sure that trade benefits all Canadians, including indigenous people.

An. hon. member: Oh, oh!

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Before resuming debate, I want to remind hon. members that there are

protocols in the House, and yelling across the floor is not one of them.

The parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure and a privilege to rise to speak on what I believe are national issues of great importance. This is one of those issues, because it is all about trade.

For a number of years, the leader of the Liberal Party spoke quite well about the importance of Canada's middle class. He started talking about Canada's middle class prior to it becoming a popular topic of discussion or debate in the chamber, in fact, when he was the leader of the third party. Then, during the election campaign, he made it very clear that, from a party's perspective, priority one was Canada's middle class and those working hard to become a part of it.

I am very happy that Canadians recognized and supported that priority. Now the leader of the Liberal Party is, indeed, the Prime Minister of Canada and the government has been able to deliver in many different ways on something very tangible for Canada's middle class and those striving to become a part of it.

In the debate on CETA today, I agree with many of the comments put on the record by my colleague across the way. It is important. Trade really does matter. Canada is a trading nation and this file has been handled so well in the last 18 or 19 months. The former minister of international trade, now the Minister of Foreign Affairs, did a phenomenal job representing Canada's best interests and the Government of Canada.

We need to recognize that the Canada-European Union trade agreement was not a completed deal. The government spent numerous hours finalizing the agreement, and that is important to recognize. Many members opposite made accusations that we dropped the ball, that we were not successful at getting this agreement across the goal line. Not only did we get it across the goal line, but we accomplished many other things related to the trade file.

Whether it was the signing of the Ukraine trade agreement, the ratification of the World Organization Trade agreement legislation that dealt with numerous countries around the world, or some of the pet projects, such as the canola issue in the Prairies with respect to China, or beef and pork exports, we have been very proactive on this file. Why? The Prime Minister has it right when he says that trade does matter. It is through trade that we generate the opportunities for Canada's middle class to grow into the future, and Canada is that trading nation.

Private Members' Business

I am somewhat disappointed. The New Democrats are like a broken record on trade. Yet again we have an opportunity and it does not matter. There is no appeasing the New Democrats on this file. They oppose this agreement. I do not agree with the NDP. I really believe that it has, once again, lost sight of the end goal, which is to ensure there are good quality jobs into the future and protecting, where we can, the industries that are so critically important to our nation. The NDP is going in a totally different direction on such an important file, especially if we take into consideration what is happening south of us.

I listened to the questions being put forward by the New Democrats today, and previous days, and the only word that comes to mind is “hogwash”. At the end of the day, who are they trying to kid? No matter what agreement we come up with, it is in the DNA of the New Democrats, at the national level anyway, to oppose trade agreements. That is what we are hearing yet again.

● (1325)

The New Democrats are critical of us saying that we have taken different positions on trade agreements. The simple reason is that if there is a trade agreement that is in the best interests of the Canadian economy and Canada's middle class, Canadians will know that we as a party will support it.

We know what it is we speak of. In fact the last time we actually had a trade surplus, it was under a Liberal administration. We actually had a multi-billion dollar trade surplus. We understand the importance of trade. Whether it is the manufacturing industry in the province of Ontario, commodities in the province of Alberta, or my home province of Manitoba where there is a wonderful mixture, we are seeing more and more throughout Canada a diversity in manufacturing, commodities, and so forth. We recognize the actual value of trade.

I often make reference to the pork industry in Manitoba. It is an industry I am familiar with. The Maple Leaf plant is so dependent on being able to export its products. We can look at the Maple Leaf parking lot and see the cars of employees. There are over 1,400 employees working there. They are driving cars, renting and buying homes and furniture, and feeding their families. Manitoba has more pigs than people. The vast majority of that product goes outside of the province of Manitoba. That applies to so many industries.

Some of the very best buses, and I may be a little biased but I would argue that they are the very best buses, are manufactured in my home city of Winnipeg. I can talk about tractors. I can talk about pumps. All sorts of aerospace industry parts and products, from jets, to propellers, to rockets, are manufactured. All sorts of industries are so well developed not only in my home province but throughout this nation.

Canada does not have to take a second seat to any other nation when it comes to quality products. We can market to the world. This government, unlike the New Democrats, values the work and efforts of the industries we currently have. We believe that we can be a conduit that will allow for increased sales abroad, which will in fact create the jobs that Canadians really and truly want.

Jobs are important. We have talked a great deal about the middle class. We know that if there is a healthy middle class, we will have a

healthier economy. That is something this government has taken very seriously and will continue to do so.

The Canada-European Union comprehensive economic and trade agreement that we are debating today allows Canada to go even further than one might think, given some of the things that are taking place in the U.S. today. We have an opportunity to be like a gateway into the United States, and to a certain degree a gateway going from the United States to the European Union.

We need to keep the trade file as a high priority. I know that the Prime Minister and the cabinet are committed to continuing to push on the trade file. We know that by doing so we are creating future opportunities. I am talking about those valuable jobs that Canada needs in the future in order to continue to prosper.

It is with pleasure that I was able to add a few thoughts about the importance of trade. I know I am quickly running out of time, but I hope to have the opportunity to answer questions and comments the next time we debate this bill. I know my colleague to my left is quite eager to ask some questions.

With those few words, I look forward to seeing the government continue to push the trade file, because it is important to all Canadians that we do just that.

● (1330)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The hon. member for Winnipeg North will have five minutes for questions and comments when we debate this bill again.

[*Translation*]

It being 1:30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*English*]

NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE AND OTHER DEMENTIAS ACT

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-233, an act respecting a national strategy for Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, as reported (without amendment) from the committee.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): There being no motions at report stage on this bill, the House will now proceed, without debate, to the putting of the question on the motion to concur in the bill at report stage.

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Niagara Falls, CPC) moved that the bill be concurred in.

(Motion agreed to)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): When shall the bill be read the third time? By leave, now?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Hon. Rob Nicholson moved that the bill be read a third time and passed.

Private Members' Business

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is a great honour to rise in this chamber to address my bill, Bill C-233, an act respecting a national strategy for Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, on the occasion of its third and final reading. I am most gratified that, to date, this proposed legislation has had the support of the majority of the members of the House.

Alzheimer's disease currently affects three-quarters of a million Canadians and their families, and that figure is expected to double within a generation. In addition, three out of four Canadians know someone who is affected by Alzheimer's or dementia. That is 75% of all Canadians.

It is imperative as we prepare to cross the finish line with this legislation that we complete this task together. Canadians are counting on it. It is most heartening to know that in matters of great concern to the citizens of our country and their families that we, as members of Parliament, can work together across party lines to unite and advocate for research, collaboration, and partnerships to find cures, provide timely diagnosis, and offer support for treatment. This co-operation will lead to positive health outcomes for Canadians who suffer from Alzheimer's and dementia, and will reassure their loved ones who provide care. Canadians expect that parliamentarians will work on their behalf to resolve these critical issues.

Members from across the aisle have demonstrated their willingness to work together to ensure that a national coordinated strategy is put in place to alleviate the suffering of Alzheimer's victims and their families. They have brought the very best of Canadian principles to the floor of the House of Commons to ensure that Bill C-233 will be passed for the greater good of Canadians.

I reiterate that no one should have to witness the slow and painful deterioration of a loved one or a family member suffering from this cruel illness. Far too many Canadians endure the long goodbye.

I know that I do not stand alone, as I am joined by many of my colleagues in this House who have dealt with, or are dealing with, a family member, a friend, or a loved one who is suffering from various forms of dementia.

Alzheimer's is no respecter of persons. From former President Ronald Reagan to our next-door neighbour, this terrible disease knows no bounds. It takes a terrible toll among its victims and their families.

It is important for me to once again acknowledge and express my gratitude to the member for Don Valley West for seconding this legislation when it was introduced in Parliament. The member has shared heart-wrenching stories of parishioners he dealt with in his work as a United Church minister, and I know he shares my desire to see this bill become a reality. I thank him for his support. I want to acknowledge as well the work of former member Claude Gravelle on this important issue. It once again demonstrates that we can work together in a non-partisan manner. When we do that, we can accomplish much for Canadians.

It is in this vein that I once again ask my colleagues in the House to walk shoulder to shoulder with us to ensure that Bill C-233 is passed into law for the millions of Canadians who will depend on it. We have come too far to let them down now. By acting now, we are remembering those who cannot.

● (1335)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the work he has done on this extremely important file, which was also very dear to the heart of one of our former colleagues, Claude Gravelle.

Claude introduced a similar bill in 2012, Bill C-356, which sought to create a national strategy for dementia. Unfortunately, the bill was defeated by a single vote in 2015. Those who opposed it were mainly Conservative and Bloc Québécois members. In the end, because one Liberal member forgot to stand up and vote, the bill that Claude had been working on for a long time was defeated.

I would like the Liberal member to tell me why he wanted to introduce this bill. What is the difference between this bill and the bill that our colleague introduced a few years ago?

[*English*]

Hon. Rob Nicholson: Mr. Speaker, there are a couple of changes in this. I was very careful to make sure that the bill did not require a royal recommendation, which in effect would kill the bill here in the House of Commons. As well, I wanted to ensure that it did not in any way restrict the jurisdiction that applies to health care issues. There are provincial jurisdiction issues here, and we wanted to be very careful.

That is why I sat down with my colleague across the aisle. I let him have a look at it and told him the reasons there were some challenges with the previous bill, which was well-intentioned. He had a chance to look at that. He spent a couple of days with it. He agreed with me that with the new wording, we would not have the worry about a royal recommendation. We would also make sure that there was nothing too restrictive with respect to the health ministers across the country.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is great that we have wonderful support from the House, but I am sure the member would agree that it is also great to recognize that there are many organizations, non-profit groups, and individuals that have put an incredible effort into supporting this legislative initiative and providing advice on an important issue that affects so many Canadians.

As the member has pointed out, over a quarter of a million Canadians are affected, and that number is going to continue to grow. We know that in excess of \$250 million has been invested in research on dementia over the last decade. These are all positive things. There are a lot of people we should be recognizing who poured their hearts and souls into such an important issue, which I believe all Canadians recognize. Would he not concur?

Private Members' Business

• (1340)

Hon. Rob Nicholson: Mr. Speaker, that is actually a very good point. I will start off with the Alzheimer Society. It has been very supportive and encouraging. I recognize the effort it has made to get information out about this particular piece of legislation. It has acknowledged, as well, how important it is that we move forward on this. It is important for individuals and groups to make sure that these issues are not buried or lost here in Ottawa. I, for one, have been very appreciative of groups like the Alzheimer Society and others.

I am quite appreciative as well of the many people who have contacted me, or even stopped me on the street, to raise this issue with me. As I indicated in my opening remarks, three-quarters of Canadians know or have a family member, a neighbour, or someone they know who has suffered from Alzheimer's or other types of dementia. They know what a toll it can take.

I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, and the House how appreciative I have been that so many people have reached out and supported what we are doing here today. I particularly wanted to mention the Alzheimer Society and other groups for their support on this.

Mrs. Alaina Lockhart (Fundy Royal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise today to speak to Bill C-233 and to have the opportunity to speak about dementia.

I want to praise the hon. member for Niagara Falls and heartily agree with his sentiment that this issue does transcend partisanship.

Dementia is a syndrome caused by a variety of brain diseases, the most common of which is Alzheimer's, which is characterized by slow and progressive deterioration of cognitive function. It affects memory, thinking, language, and judgment, along with mood and personality. This is a most curious and mysterious disease.

As our population ages, dementia is of growing concern in Canada and internationally. From 2011 to 2030, the number of Canadians with dementia will double. Right now, more than 7% of Canadians over the age of 65 are affected by dementia. Over 35% to 40% will be affected by the time they reach 85.

My home province of New Brunswick is particularly sensitive to this issue. As it stands, New Brunswick has the highest proportion of population over the age of 65 compared with other provinces. Dementia is on the rise in New Brunswick with over 16,000 people diagnosed and another 3,000 diagnoses expected this year. The impact is compounded by the fact that many seniors are also dealing with additional chronic diseases.

Keeping seniors in their homes helps them to thrive. Knowing this, I am reassured that the provincial and federal governments have made home care a priority when addressing health care in New Brunswick. The Government of Canada has committed over \$125.1 million over the next 10 years for home care in New Brunswick.

The fact that there is no current treatment to cure dementia can be devastating to people with dementia and their loved ones. However, we know that research can help find a cure or a way of altering the course of dementia.

I cannot emphasize enough that our government believes in the power of research evidence, which is what we have signalled

strongly in the last months. The Government of Canada will undertake and use research evidence to make informed decisions concerning health care. Investing in health research is an investment in a healthier Canada and healthier Canadians.

Research drives the way we diagnose, treat, and care for those with dementia and their caregivers. It has not only helped improve our understanding of dementia and the neurodegenerative diseases causing it, but it has created new possibilities for better diagnosis, treatment, and quality of life for patients and their families.

The Alzheimer's Society continues to promote the benefits of early diagnosis. As a 2011 study revealed, 50% of Canadians live for more than a year with their symptoms before seeking diagnosis. We need to do better.

Canadian research has highlighted a link between dementia and stroke. Dr. Sandra Black of the University of Toronto has been collecting brain scans of patients with dementia since 1995. These scans uncovered the prevalence of silent strokes, or strokes that leave small holes in the brain without any obvious symptoms. This research has opened the door to the possibility for earlier diagnosis for Canadians using brain scans. It suggests that reducing the risk of stroke may help prevent dementia. Continued research like this is vital. Our investments in this area are essential to changing the course of dementia and unlocking a cure.

The Canadian Institutes of Health Research, or CIHR, is the Government of Canada's primary vehicle through which we support research and move results into practice. In the last five years, CIHR has invested more than \$193 million in dementia-related research. This funding supports the best, most intriguing research questions that Canada's brightest and most promising scientists have to offer. This is research that has the potential for big impacts for Canadians and the Canadian health care system.

For example, Halifax researcher Dr. Janice Keefe has spent 20 years focusing on at-home family caregivers, whom she calls "the backbone of our current health system". As Canada's aging baby boomers increasingly care for a spouse or parent with dementia, these family caregivers need support to avoid becoming patients, and not necessarily for dementia. Dr. Keefe co-developed a groundbreaking, evidence-based questionnaire that captures the diverse and complex needs of family caregivers.

Private Members' Business

The C.A.R.E. tool is influencing policy development and support programs for this often overlooked but vital population. First piloted in Quebec and Nova Scotia, practitioners are now using C.A.R.E. in Ontario and Alberta and it has been culturally adapted for use in France and New Jersey. As the prevalence of dementia increases in Canada, so will the number of caregivers. A tool like this, which helps identify needs and therefore support programs for those who are dedicating themselves to others, is invaluable.

● (1345)

I am pleased to say that by leading its dementia research strategy, CIHR is acting strategically to focus research efforts not only in Canada but internationally. This approach brings together partners from different sectors to support the latest dementia research related to three specific themes: prevention, treatment, and quality of life for those affected by the disease and their caregivers.

The domestic component of the strategy, the Canadian Consortium on Neurodegeneration in Aging, is known as Canada's premier research hub on neurodegenerative diseases affecting cognition, including dementia. The number of funding partners CCNA has brought together is now up to 15.

With these funding partners from across Canada, CCNA helps accelerate the development of dementia treatments and care for Canadians. To do this, it involves over 350 researchers, who are examining issues important to all Canadians, including specific vulnerable groups, such as indigenous people and those living in rural communities. In this regard, dementia rates in Canada's indigenous communities have been steadily increasing for the last seven to 10 years. Alarming, the onset of dementia is now occurring an average of 10 years earlier than in non-indigenous communities.

Drs. Kristen Jacklin and Carrie Bourassa are leading research into how indigenous culture and community affect how people experience dementia. Their team is working with indigenous communities to develop culturally grounded approaches to dementia diagnosis, care, and health education. This research will produce a range of results to help clinicians. It will help them adapt their approach to ensure that indigenous people feel more comfortable and safe when meeting with health professionals. It will also help build appropriate community and cultural strengths into existing programming for people with dementia and their partners.

The dementia research strategy developed by CIHR also has an international component, which has enabled Canadian researchers to participate in key international partnerships across its three themes. Through this component, Canadian researchers have been able to collaborate with colleagues from across the globe.

Canada is recognized as a leader in this domain. For example, Canada was the first country outside of Europe to join the joint program on neurodegenerative disease, the largest global research initiative tackling the challenge of neurodegenerative diseases. Let me give members concrete examples of the research funded through the international collaboration.

This program funds the work of Drs. Jörg Gsponer and Paul Pavlidis from the University of British Columbia. They are working on an international team with researchers from Germany, Norway,

and the Netherlands to shed light on the genetic risk factors of neurodegenerative diseases like Alzheimer's. This fundamental research will help us find new biomarkers as ways to measure deviations from healthy aging, along with novel treatments and diagnostic tools.

Together the scientific efforts through the strategy's domestic and international components have defined Canada as a leader in dementia research. We are proud to support world-class researchers as they participate in the global pursuit of finding a disease-modifying treatment for dementia by 2025.

Dr. Alex Mihailidis, from the University of Toronto, has developed a mobile robot to help people living with dementia. Sometimes people with Alzheimer's disease have a hard time remembering the sequence of steps required for everyday tasks. Dr. Mihailidis has created an automated prompting system, called the COACH, which helps them remember the steps required in basic tasks like handwashing. Already working well in long-term care facilities, his team is now adapting the COACH to help those living at home.

As members can see, the results of research provide hope that new tools, services, and treatments will soon be available to better prevent dementia and improve the outcomes for Canadians living with this terrible disease.

I am pleased to say that through CIHR, the Government of Canada has established a clear research strategy on dementia. This government will continue to invest in dementia research. We know that our investments in research will go a long way to improving the lives of Canadians living with dementia, their families, and caregivers.

It was an honour to participate in today's debate, which highlights the challenges and growing concerns surrounding dementia. My father, and by extension, my mother and my entire family, is currently struggling with the impact of this terrible disease. Knowing that such amazing research is happening right here in Canada is not only comforting but provides hope for all of us that we may someday find a cure that will allow more Canadians to live a longer, healthier, and happier life.

● (1350)

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Nanaimo Alzheimer's walk raised \$18,000 last year to promote critical research to reduce the effects of Alzheimer's, to provide services for those living with or assisting those with Alzheimer's, and to ease the personal consequences that exist for people and their families every day. I hope people in my region will come to the fundraising walk in Nanaimo on May 7.

It is in that spirit that I speak today on Canada's responsibility to improve care for the hundreds and thousands of Canadians suffering from dementia and to better support their families and caregivers. I support Bill C-233, which calls for the development and implementation of a national and comprehensive strategy to improve health care delivered to persons suffering from Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia.

Here is a call from Susan Barr, who wrote to me from the riding of Nanaimo—Ladysmith. She wrote, "I am a senior with Alzheimer's on my father's and mother's line, and am now starting down that dark path of dementia myself.... Unless a dementia patient has sufficient means they have to share rooms with others who often are difficult to live with and/or are violent. I urge you to go and spend two or three hours in a government funded senior's care home with a closed dementia ward and ask yourself — do you want to be treated like this?"

She also describes her brother-in-law, who used to be the gentlest, kindest soul. He has been held in hospital with Alzheimer's for long periods of time because there is no space for him in a care unit elsewhere on Vancouver Island. He has been tied on stretchers and denied showers because of fears about his aggressive behaviour. This is bad for caregivers, for families, and, of course, for the patients.

The need is great. Three-quarters of a million Canadians lived with dementia in 2011, which is 15% of seniors, and this costs our economy \$30 billion each year in medical bills and lost productivity. Left unchecked, that number could skyrocket to \$300 billion within 25 years.

Canada has fallen behind countries such as the U.S., the U.K., Norway, France, the Netherlands, and Australia, all of which have coordinated national dementia plans in place. Canada is one of the few G8 countries without one. As our population ages, we must prepare our health care system and communities for the increasing number of Canadians suffering from dementia. It is expected to double by 2031. To paraphrase Tommy Douglas, the father of medicare and a New Democrat, "Only through the practice of preventive medicine will we keep the [health care] costs from becoming...excessive..."

In talking last night with the Canadian Association for Long Term Care, I was reminded that Canada has had 40 years to get ready for this wave of aging baby boomers and yet our country had no strategy and failed to plan. The Canadian Association for Long Term Care notes that the proportion of long-term care residents with Alzheimer's disease or other forms of dementia has grown steadily, with 87% of residents affected by the disease since 2010. It also notes that modern home designs and increased privacy are increasingly important for residents with dementia, who could become upset and aggressive when they are unable to get the personal space they need.

Canadians have lost precious time on this, something that is especially important to those suffering from a degenerative and progressive illness. This has had real human impact. I have heard countless heartbreaking stories about the impacts of Alzheimer's disease and dementia on my constituents.

Lynn Myette gave me permission to read this note. She said:

Private Members' Business

Our Grandfather suffered from Alzheimer's now our Mom is in a secure unit with Alzheimer's, too. We know what it is like to watch a loved one decline and lose all of their dignity to the point that they are no longer their former being. To be tied into a wheelchair and left to fall asleep sitting there, to lose all their appetite and not eat, to wear diapers and lose control of bodily functions, to no longer recognize close family members, to develop anger, these things along with drugs to numb their being to the point of comatose, happen.

Many cannot afford quality home care for their parents. I talk to so many people in my riding who are trying their very best to look after their aging parents at home. They are not getting the support they need. The smallest amount of support would make a big difference to them. They know they are saving the health care system money, and yet it is shameful that the Liberal government abandoned its election promise to invest \$3 billion in home care.

● (1355)

The Liberals promised \$3 billion over the next four years during the 2015 campaign. They separated this from the health accord. That means the money should have flowed in 2016, but it has not been delivered almost two years into their mandate. Instead, the Liberals are using home care dollars to try to lever agreement around the health accord. Provinces representing 90% of Canadians still have not received a nickel of this promised home care support. The need is pressing. The burden of caring for patients with dementia and Alzheimer's falls heavily on family members.

In Canada, family caregivers give millions of unpaid hours each year, caring for dementia patients. That represents \$11 billion in lost income, and one-quarter of a million lost full-time equivalent employees in the workplace. If nothing changes by 2040, it is estimated that family caregivers in Canada will spend 1.2 billion unpaid hours per year caring for their loved ones. A quarter of family caregivers are seniors themselves.

Long-standing under-investment in care homes means that the alternatives can be dire. Lori Amdam from my riding writes the following:

Why does Canada need a national dementia strategy? We need one because the baby boomers I know are scared to death of developing dementia—they believe that life in a Canadian nursing home would be a fate far worse than death.

When I teach dementia care to students, I often ask them to bring to mind the worst care facility they have seen. They describe an old, hospital-like unit with narrow corridors, paint chipping off the walls and no access to the outside. Then I ask "What if we exchanged the twenty people with dementia who live on this unit with twenty children dying of cancer? Would this place be an acceptable environment for them to live out their last months?" Of course the answer is a resounding no. Why, then, is it an acceptable place for persons with dementia, who have no voice and no power, to live their last years?

...I see more and more incidences of unsafe and unethical practices in acute care. Recently, I had to intervene on behalf of a 90 year old woman with dementia when the hospital tried to admit a young man into the other bed in her double room. She was terrified, yelling "Get that man out of my house! Get him out!"

Creating the framework which would mandate provision of dignified and respectful care for this population of vulnerable people is simply the right thing to do. It is no less than they deserve—they deserve to live in comfort and safety—they built this country.

Private Members' Business

I can think of no better testimonial for the need for Canada to have a national strategy on Alzheimer's care. Canadians deserve no less. The New Democrats have a long and proud history of advocating for federal leadership on health care issues. We stood unanimously in the House supporting an NDP bill on a national dementia strategy in 2015.

We stood in the House in 2016 and will stand in 2017, despite the fact it was voted down by the previous Conservative government. We are very much encouraged that the member is bringing this bill forward today, even though he voted against our version of it.

We will stand in the House this year and we will vote in favour, and we will work so that every Canadian, every Canadian family, and every caregiver can have a world-class dementia strategy. All parliamentarians should continue to fight for this good cause.

• (1400)

Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a great honour to rise in this House today to debate this important bill brought forward by my friend and colleague, the hon. member for Niagara Falls. I do want to thank the member for Niagara Falls not only for bringing forward this bill, but for his years of service in this place. I think his service to this august chamber is a testament to his hard work. Certainly as a new and younger MP, it is a great honour to receive guidance from people like the member for Niagara Falls. I thank him for his great service to this institution and for bringing forward the bill.

The bill, an act respecting a national strategy for Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, is an extremely important bill. I think all Canadians, no matter where they may live, will be in one way or another affected by Alzheimer's disease or other dementias. Certainly this is true for places like Perth—Wellington.

In Perth—Wellington we are lucky and quite privileged to have great organizations like the Alzheimer Society of Perth County and the Alzheimer Society of Waterloo Wellington. These organizations provide great opportunities and services to individuals suffering from Alzheimer's and other dementias, and also to their families and their loved ones.

Just last night, in fact, I was speaking with my sister who works at a long-term care home in the small town of Milverton in my riding. She told me about a program at that facility called iPods for Memories. It is a great program that provides an individual with Alzheimer's or dementia with an iPod that has music and memories from the individual's younger days which the person can listen to and have a spark of memory. To see the smiles on their faces, to see the laughter of those individuals who all of a sudden have a happy recollection, a happy memory of their younger days is so important. My sister said that anything we can do as a federal Parliament to encourage programs like that, to encourage the ability of those suffering with this terrible disease to have that spark of memory, to have that opportunity to go back to some of those great memories from their younger days is so important.

Just last month I met with board members from the Alzheimer Society of Perth County. We talked about the importance of the bill and the importance of other opportunities that we as parliamentarians and as Canadians can do to help those who suffer from Alzheimer's

and help those whose families are also suffering from the effects of having a loved one with this terrible disease.

One way I am hoping to help, and my office is helping, is by becoming a dementia friend. My office staff and I will be undertaking training to make us more aware of the challenges of dementia and how we can serve our constituents that much better by being aware of the challenges of individuals who may come to our office for service who may be suffering from dementia.

We think about the challenges of Canadians who are suffering from Alzheimer's, and also their loved ones. I think we are all impacted by it in one way or another, to see a loved one slowly slipping away, losing their memories, and almost losing a sense of themselves as well.

The unfortunate thing is that each and every year, as many as 25,000 more Canadians will be diagnosed with Alzheimer's or another form of dementia. While we as individuals often assume this is a disease that affects only seniors, unfortunately, we are seeing a growing trend of younger and younger Canadians being affected and being diagnosed with early onset dementia and Alzheimer's and the unique challenges that face younger Canadians, whether it be a loved one, whether it be a husband, a wife, or a parent, who is being robbed of those years of fellowship and comradeship and family that they are no longer able to experience because of the impacts of this terrible disease.

In fact, as many as 747,000 Canadians are currently suffering from Alzheimer's or some form of dementia. I think of Canadian seniors, those who built our country, those who are often referred to as the greatest generation, who have developed so much of our history and who, within themselves, have such great memories, such wisdom, but who, because of the tragedy of this disease, are having these memories, this wisdom stolen from them, taken away from them. When they lose those memories, when they lose that wisdom, we all lose something.

I am very proud to speak in favour of this important bill. I know the Alzheimer's Society of Canada has encouraged all members of Parliament to support the bill, and I am extremely heartened to hear members on all sides of this House speak in favour of the bill.

• (1405)

It is a testament to not only the work that the hon. member for Niagara Falls did on this bill, but to all Canadians and all members of this House who are impacted, and who listened to their constituents and loved ones who suffer from this disease.

Therefore, I am proud to speak and to vote in favour of this bill.

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Niagara Falls, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank all of my colleagues in the House of Commons for their support for this bill. The support is across the aisle and throughout the chamber, and one that I very much appreciate.

As a cabinet minister for about 10 years, I was not able to introduce private member's bills. Even though I have been here for close to 22 years, this is the first bill that I have had pass. Even when I was not in cabinet, back in the eighties, one had to have unanimous consent of the House of Commons to proceed with a private member's bill. My private member's bill was to have a national holiday for Sir John A. Macdonald at around this time of year, and I could not get unanimous consent on that. Nonetheless, I was proud to have the opportunity.

One of my colleagues around that time, the Hon. Pauline Browes, introduced a private member's bill for a statue of John Diefenbaker. She gave me the honour of seconding that bill. Much to our surprise, to a certain extent it was supported by all members of the chamber, and the statue of John Diefenbaker is outside here. I remember that Prime Minister Mulroney was so pleased and excited, he said, "Make sure you let everybody know and we'll put one up to Lester Pearson as well." It is appropriate to have the statutes of those two prime ministers.

Private Members' Business

My colleague from Don Valley West, a member of the Liberal Party, was good enough to support this. He had a look at it and was in favour of it. I very much appreciate that. This is a great example that, on many occasions, this chamber can work together in the best interests of all Canadians.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed)

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): It being 2:10 p.m., this House stands adjourned until Monday at 11 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 2:10 p.m.)

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